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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
LANSING

MARLON I. BROWN, DPA
DIRECTOR

Michael Bach
Copper Country Community Mental Health Svcs Bd
901 W Memorial Drive, Houghton, MI 49931

September 25, 2026

RE: License #: AS310011113
Investigation #: 2026A0873016 - Stepping Stone

Dear Mr. Bach:

Attached is the Special Investigation Report for the above referenced facility. Due to the violations identified in the report, a written corrective action plan is required. The corrective action plan is due 15 days from the date of this letter and must include the following:

- How compliance with each rule will be achieved.
- Who is directly responsible for implementing the corrective action for each violation.
- Specific time frames for each violation as to when the correction will be completed or implemented.
- How continuing compliance will be maintained once compliance is achieved.
- The signature of the responsible party and a date.

If you desire technical assistance in addressing these issues, please feel free to contact me. In any event, the corrective action plan is due within 15 days. Failure to submit an acceptable corrective action plan will result in disciplinary action.

Please review the enclosed documentation for accuracy and contact me with any questions. In the event that I am not available and you need to speak to someone immediately, please contact the local office at (616) 356-0100.

Sincerely,

Garrett Peters, Licensing Consultant
Bureau of Community and Health Systems
Unit 13, 7th Floor
350 Ottawa, N.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
(906) 250-9318

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
BUREAU OF COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SYSTEMS
SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT**

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

License #:	AS310011113
Investigation #:	2026A0873016
Complaint Receipt Date:	07/29/2026
Investigation Initiation Date:	07/29/2026
Report Due Date:	09/27/2026
Licensee Name:	Copper Country Community Mental Health Srvs Bd
Licensee Address:	901 W Memorial Drive Houghton, MI 49931
Licensee Telephone #:	(906) 482-9400
Licensee Designee:	Michael Bach
Name of Facility:	Stepping Stone
Facility Address:	903 Sharon Court Houghton, MI 49931
Facility Telephone #:	(906) 487-7727
Original Issuance Date:	06/08/1992
License Status:	REGULAR
Effective Date:	01/09/2025
Expiration Date:	01/08/2027
Capacity:	6
Program Type:	DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

II. ALLEGATION(S)

	Violation Established?
Resident A was physically assaulted in the facility.	Yes
Additional Findings	No

III. METHODOLOGY

07/29/2026	Special Investigation Intake 2026A0873016
07/29/2026	Special Investigation Initiated - Telephone
07/29/2026	Contact - Telephone call received interview with Ms. Kangas
08/13/2026	Inspection Completed On-site
08/13/2026	Contact - Face to Face Interviews with Staff
09/22/2026	APS Referral APS is aware
09/24/2026	Contact – Telephone call made Interview with Erma Boyd
09/25/2026	Contact – Telephone call made Interview with Tiffany Piner
09/25/2026	Exit Conference With Todd Mattson

ALLEGATION:

Resident A was physically assaulted in the facility.

INVESTIGATION:

On 7/29/26, I received a telephone call from Copper Country community mental health residential team leader Rhonda Kangas that Resident A was punched in the face by his brother at the facility. Resident A's brother and guardian, Tim Ryan, came to the facility to take Resident A home for a visit. While there Resident A several times feigned as if he was going to get physical with his brother. At that point Mr. Ryan punched Resident A in the face and knocked him to the ground. Afterward the two left the facility together.

On 8/13/26, I interviewed employee Laine Maxson at the facility. Resident A has recently been putting his hands up to fight other employees and residents of the facility. Resident A is non-verbal but employees are concerned that this change in behavior could be due to Resident A getting into fights with his brother when they are away from the facility.

On 8/13/26, I interviewed residential team leader Rhonda Kangas at the facility. Resident A had a history of self-harm and employees had taken Resident A to the hospital several times because of it. Resident A would often come back to the facility from visits with family with bruises on his face. Employees believed this was due to Resident A self-harming but were concerned that Resident A may be physically abused off-site.

On 9/22/26, I interviewed adult protective services (APS) worker Jim Heinonen. APS substantiated the abuse allegations against Resident A's brother who denied the allegations. Houghton county sheriff was made aware of the allegations but there are no updates beyond that.

On 9/24/26, I interviewed employee Erma Boyd over the telephone. The day of the incident Mr. Ryan met Resident A in the hallway to take him out of the facility for the day. Ms. Boyd turned her back and Resident A and Mr. Ryan began to follow. Resident A turned to face Mr. Ryan and put his hands up. Ms. Boyd heard Mr. Ryan say "you aren't going to punch me!" and then Mr. Ryan punched Resident A in the face three times. The last punch knocked Resident A to the floor. Another employee witnessed this incident from the kitchen and began crying. Mr. Ryan got a chair and helped Resident A sit in it. Mr. Ryan started putting Resident A's shoes on and Resident A took the shoes and threw them at Mr. Ryan. Ms. Boyd checked on the other residents as some of them had clearly witnessed the incident and needed to be comforted. Mr. Ryan took Resident A outside to leave while Ms. Boyd messaged Ms. Kangas to ask what to do. Ms. Boyd then went outside to check to see if Resident A was okay. Mr. Ryan told Resident A "tell Erma you're sorry." Resident A communicated "sorry" and nodded that he was okay. Mr. Ryan said they were going

to go to McDonalds. When they arrived back at the facility Mr. Ryan did not come in with Resident A. Resident A came into the kitchen and fell to the floor. Ms. Boyd took Resident A to the hospital where they gave him a CAT scan. Everything happened so quickly, and there were other residents to take care of and it was during lunch time and Ms. Boyd was afraid of doing something wrong and getting in trouble. There have been discussions since the incident and employees have been told that if they feel threatened they have the right to immediately call the police.

On 9/25/26, I interviewed Tiffany Piner over the telephone. Resident A had her back to her during the incident. Ms. Piner was in the kitchen when she saw Mr. Ryan hit Resident A 3 times in the face. Each time Resident A's head kicked backward until after the third hit he fell to the floor. Mr. Ryan struggled to get Resident A up off the floor. After some time they went outside and left in Mr. Ryan's vehicle. After Resident A arrived back at the facility, while in the kitchen he seemed pale and clammy and fell to the ground. At that point Resident A was taken to the hospital. Since the incident Resident A has been refusing to attend church with Mr. Ryan on Sundays.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.681	Resident rights; licensee responsibilities.
	(1) A resident shall be treated with dignity and respect, free from exploitation, and protected and safe.
ANALYSIS:	Resident A was physically assaulted by his guardian and then taken away from the property. Police were not called until well after the incident.
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION ESTABLISHED

Exit conference with licensee designee representative Todd Mattson. When Mr. Mattson first heard of the incident he wondered why no one called 911 immediately after. Staff have been told that they are able to do this and there is an upcoming meeting at the facility in which situations like this will be discussed. I explained that licensing would like to see a frank discussion with the guardian on the inappropriateness of the incident and at least some consideration on removing his guardianship.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Contingent up an acceptable corrective action plan, I recommend no changes to the status of this license.

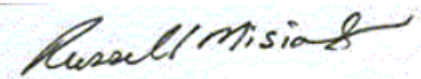


9/25/26

Garrett Peters
Licensing Consultant

Date

Approved By:



9/29/26

Russell B. Misiak
Area Manager

Date