



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
LANSING

ORLENE HAWKS
DIRECTOR

Brandon Dreffs
YMCA of Greater Flint
411 E Third
Flint, MI 48503

November 29, 2022

RE: License #: CR250200891
Investigation #: 2022C0129005
YMCA Camp Copneconic

Dear Mr. Dreffs:

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. If I am not available, and you need to speak to someone immediately, please contact the Grand Rapids Office Support, at (616) 356-0101.

Sincerely,

David Martin, Licensing Consultant
Bureau of Community and Health Systems
Ste 3
931 S Otsego Ave
Gaylord, MI 49735

enclosure

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

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

License #:	CR250200891
Investigation #:	2022C0129005
Complaint Receipt Date:	08/26/2022
Investigation Initiation Date:	08/30/2022
Report Due Date:	10/25/2022
Licensee Name:	YMCA of Greater Flint
Licensee Address:	411 E Third Flint, MI 48503
Licensee Telephone #:	(810) 232-9622
Administrator:	Brandon Dreffs
Licensee Designee:	Michelle Hilton
Name of Facility:	YMCA Camp Copneconic
Facility Address:	10407 N. Fenton Rd Fenton, MI 48430
Facility Telephone #:	(810) 629-9622
License Status:	REGULAR
Effective Date:	08/19/2021
Expiration Date:	08/18/2023
Capacity:	408
Program Type:	CHILD CAMP - RESIDENTIAL

II. ALLEGATION(S)

	Violation Established?
Camp did not properly train staff on acceptable techniques of camper supervision.	No
Camp did not follow their written staffing ratio plan.	No
Camp did not follow its written camper behavior management policy.	Yes

III. METHODOLOGY

08/26/2022	Special Investigation Intake 2022C0129005
08/30/2022	Special Investigation Initiated - Telephone Spoke with B. Dreffs to schedule on site meeting.
09/06/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Call to Grand Blanc Township Police Department requesting police report of incident.
09/06/2022	Contact - Document Sent Sent FOIA request to Grand Blanc Township Police Department.
09/06/2022	Contact - Document Received Received police report from Grand Blanc Township Police Department.
09/06/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Call to Grand Blanc Township Police requesting investigation records/FOIA request.
09/06/2022	Contact - Document Received Received full police report from Grand Blanc Township Police.
09/07/2022	Inspection Completed On-site Onsite completed by D. Martin.
09/27/2022	Contact - Document Received Received additional documentation from Executive Director, B. Dreffs.

10/27/2022	Contact - Document Sent Sent email to B. Dreffs requesting additional information as he was unavailable by phone.
10/31/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Call with A. McDonald, counselor at the camp.

ALLEGATION:

Camp did not properly train staff on acceptable techniques of camper supervision.

INVESTIGATION:

On 8/19/22, a mandated reporter contacted Centralized Intake of Children Protective Services to file a complaint. The mandated reporter was working with a camper from YMCA Camp Copneconic for mental health counseling from trauma experienced while at the camp during the summer of 2022. Centralized Intake sent a Law Enforcement Notification (LEN) to both the Metro Police Department and the Genesee County Prosecuting Attorney. I obtained the police report from the Grand Blanc Police Department and the allegation made by the mandated reporter.

On 9/7/22, I met with administrative staff members of YMCA Camp Copneconic in a conference room at YMCA Camp Copneconic. The camp was represented by the following people: Brandon Dreffs, Executive Director; Thomas Bawden, Assistant Executive Director; Justin Goodwin, Program Director. My interview revealed the following.

On 8/9/22, the Cheyenne and Quapaw cabins (conjoined rooms within the Arapahoe Lodge) were at rest period following lunch from 1:30 to 2:30 PM. Each cabin can house up to 10 campers with one or two staff in each cabin. There is a 45-inch permanent opening between the two cabins allowing campers/staff to go between the two rooms and for staff to hear of any issues occurring on the other cabin side. Campers were involved in both appropriate and inappropriate activities for rest period time. Some were appropriately using the restroom or being quiet on their own beds, while some were inappropriately climbing between beds or speaking loudly within the cabin. In Cheyenne Cabin, Campers A, B, and D gathered on the bunk of Camper A located in the Cheyenne part of the double cabin. Camper A created a hitting game where they would take turns punching each other. Camper A started the game and first hit Camper B, then Camper D in the “private area” using his fist. The game stopped after Camper A hit both Campers B and D as the two campers didn’t want to play anymore and climbed out of the bunk. Later during the same rest period, Camper A was using the blunt handle of a piece of plastic silverware (spoon) to continue the hitting game but now using blunt handle to hit with. He was hitting Camper B in the neck area. Camper A threatened Camper B that he would keep

hitting him if he didn't get back up on Camper A's bunk. Camper A instructed Camper B to lay down next to him on the bunk. They were not on top of each other and both campers were appropriately clothed.

Camper B then started a "humping" (a hip thrust) motion on the bed. Camper B commented to Camper A that he learned it from his dog. It is not known why Camper B did this action at this time. At this point in time, Camper C saw the two campers in the bunk "messaging around." He reported this to one of the cabin counselors, Filip Pomykalski. Mr. Pomykalski was lying on his own bed in Quapaw Cabin which was located out of view of the beds of Camper's A, B, and D as his bed is just around a wall. My measurements indicate that Mr. Pomykalski's bed was approximately 15 feet from Camper A's top bunkbed. This distance allowed for the counselor to be within hearing distance of any conversation or commotion. Mr. Pomykalski was awake and responded by yelling from his bed for everyone to return to their own bunks. The campers did comply after a few minutes. Mr. Pomykalski later commented to the administrative staff that that he was tired and that is why he didn't get out of his bed.

Two other counselors were also present during rest period. Cabin counselor Angel Mejia was supervising campers using the restroom. According to YMCA Camp Copneconic policy, one counselor stands in the doorway of the attached restroom so that they can monitor for any potentially inappropriate behavior in the restroom while also being able to hear what is happening in the cabin. Mr. Mejia was performing that task. In an interview with administrative staff, Mr. Mejia did not know anything about this incident. A third counselor, Andrew McDonald, was at the far end of the Quapaw cabin on a lower bunk. In my interview with Mr. McDonald, he informed me that a lot of the campers were being disruptive during rest period. He said that he did not hear anything unusual that day and does not recall hearing counselor Mr. Pomykalski yelling for campers to get back to their own beds. Mr. McDonald added that Mr. Pomykalski would often use a yelling voice for discipline. But he felt it was appropriate as rest period was a time that required a lot of discipline. Campers were often not cooperative during this period of the day.

While Mr. Pomykalski remembered yelling for all campers to return to their own bunks, none of the counselors in the cabin have any memory of the incidents involving campers hitting each other or being on each other's bunks.

On 8/11/22, Camper B related parts of the 8/9/22 incident to his counselor, Mr. Pomykalski and the camp health officer, Jillian Degroat. Mr. Pomykalski asked Program Director, Mr. Goodwin, to speak with the four campers, and he proceeded to conduct interviews with Campers A, B, C and D that evening. Following an administrative meeting, a decision was made that Campers A and B must be sent home from camp for inappropriate behavior by both boys. Camper A was picked the evening of 8/11/22. Camper B was not able to be picked up until the morning of 8/12/22. The camp conducted an internal review of the events of the week. As a result, Mr. Pomykalski was provided verbal counseling by Mr. Goodwin on

appropriate techniques to use during rest period. He was told that staff needed to get out of their bunks to be effective during rest period. This counseling was never documented.

The camp has a policy of each staff member receiving a written performance review at the end of the summer. All three staff had performance reviews conducted, but the camp only has a record of Mr. Pomykalski's review, and it is not dated. Administrative staff indicated that final reviews are sent home with the staff with no records maintained at the camp.

My review of YMCA Camp Copneconic staff training materials showed that behavior management skills, how to handle bullying, skillful discipline and camper supervision are all skills taught during this training time.

In skillful discipline, staff are instructed to "Lead close up." This is accomplished by "don't bark orders from the sideline, to get on the camper's level, and don't confuse supervision with just being in the vicinity of your campers." Staff are also instructed to "put on the brakes as soon as behavior goes too far" and "supervise campers' judgement. Don't assume they know what's right." The instructions include "Don't yell unless a camper is in immediate danger, yelling will likely cause the camper to shut down and stop listening."

In "What is Bullying?", staff are given specific information about what bullying looks like which includes "Hitting, slapping, elbowing..." and that the mistreatment can be both in a physical and psychological form. Staff are given additional information on how boys and girls are different in their bullying including "Boys may use more physical and direct aggression than girls." Staff are also taught that campers think that "tattling" is wrong as they do not wish to become embarrassed in front of their peers about the incident.

In staff training, counselors are provided with descriptions of appropriate and inappropriate camper behaviors which is followed by extensive role-playing scenarios by all the staff to explore how to handle difficult counseling situations.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.11109	Staff
	(10) A camp shall ensure that the program content for the pre-camp training is in writing and includes all of the following information: (e) Acceptable techniques of camper supervision.

ANALYSIS:	The camp's pre-camp training is documented and includes extensive techniques on how to appropriately supervise campers, discipline, and bullying behaviors. The three counselors in the Cheyenne and Quapaw cabins were all present and participated in staff training,
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION NOT ESTABLISHED

ALLEGATION:

Camp did not follow their written staffing ratio plan.

INVESTIGATION:

The written YMCA Camp Copneconic staffing ratio for the ages of the campers involved in the incident is "one Staff to six Campers." During this week of camp, there were three staff and 17 campers in the combined Cheyenne and Quapaw cabins. This resulted in a ratio of one staff person to six campers.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.11111	Number of staff.
	(2) A camp shall ensure that the ratio of adult staff members to campers at any one time is as follows: (a) For campers below the age of 13, during their awake hours there shall be 1 adult staff member for every 10 campers or a fraction thereof beyond the first 10.
ANALYSIS:	The camps' staff to camper ratio was within the standard established in rule.
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION NOT ESTABLISHED

ALLEGATION:

Camp did not follow its written camper behavior management policy.

INVESTIGATION:

During the staff training period of 6/11– 6/17/22, behavior management was taught on Tuesday, June 14. The 90-minute session covered the camp's policy, methods for positive behavior management, along with how to handle inappropriate

behaviors, and reporting methods for repeat bad behaviors or an incident that is totally inappropriate.

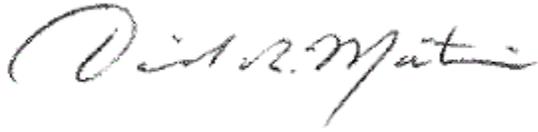
During the session, staff were taught to actively engage with campers on their level, and speak in a calm, non-threatening voice when seeking to change a camper’s poor behavior. Staff were informed to contact administration members if their cabin discipline techniques are not working or if there is a particular camper(s) that do not respond to the techniques of behavior management that they have been taught.

Along with teaching staff about appropriate camper behavior management, multiple role-playing scenarios had staff engaged in the “how to” of camper behavior management.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.11113	Behavior management.
	(1) A camp shall have and follow a written camper behavior management policy.
ANALYSIS:	<p>On 8/9, during rest period, the combined Cheyenne and Quapaw cabins were loud, not on their own beds and moving about the cabin. Mr. Pomykalski did not use the techniques he had been taught during staff training. Furthermore, when Camper C informed Mr. Pomykalski of campers not following rest period rules, Mr. Pomykalski did not follow camp protocols for inappropriate behavior management.</p> <p>Both Mr. Pomykalski and Mr. McDonald informed me that poor behavior during rest period was commonplace. Neither counselor sought administrative support to handle the problematic campers. This created a permissive atmosphere resulting in camper-on-camper abuse, inappropriate camper behaviors, and two campers eventually being sent home. Had the counselors followed camp protocols for behavior management, the likelihood of poor camper behavior would have been diminished significantly.</p> <p>The administrative documentation of staff performance during this incident is a single verbal counseling session with Mr. Pomykalski by Mr. Goodwin. As multiple staff did not follow the established behavior management policy, the camp administration should have been involved in additional follow up and evaluation of staff performance during the incident.</p>
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION ESTABLISHED

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Upon receipt of an acceptable Corrective Action Plan, I recommend no change to the status of the license.

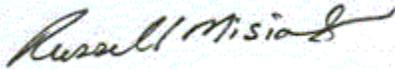


11/29/22

David Martin
Licensing Consultant

Date

Approved By:



11/29/22

Russell B. Misiak
Area Manager

Date