



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

ELIZABETH HERTEL
DIRECTOR

March 24, 2022

Susan Mitchell
Samaritas - Southwest
4341 S Westnedge ST 2000
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

RE: License #: CB390258392
Investigation #: 2022C0112008
Samaritas - Southwest

Dear Ms. Mitchell:

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 note that violations of any licensing rules are also violations of the MISEP and your contract.

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 area manager at (616) 204-6992.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Holly K. Austin". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Holly Austin, Licensing Consultant
MDHHS\Division of Child Welfare Licensing
Suite 200
121 Franklin Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
(269) 330-7082

enclosure

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF CHILD WELFARE LICENSING
SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT**

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

License #:	CB390258392
Investigation #:	2022C0112008
Complaint Receipt Date:	03/04/2022
Investigation Initiation Date:	03/04/2022
Report Due Date:	05/03/2022
Licensee Name:	Samaritas
Licensee Address:	8131 East Jefferson Avenue Detroit, MI 48214-2691
Licensee Telephone #:	(231) 936-1012
Administrator:	Suzy Mitchell, Designee
Licensee Designee:	Ann Meldrum, Designee
Name of Facility:	Samaritas - Southwest
Facility Address:	4341 S Westnedge ST 2000 Kalamazoo, MI 49008
Facility Telephone #:	(269) 345-5776
Original Issuance Date:	12/09/2003
License Status:	REGULAR
Effective Date:	05/28/2020
Expiration Date:	05/27/2022
Capacity:	Unknown
Program Type:	CHILD PLACING AGENCY, PRIVATE

II. ALLEGATION(S)

	Violation Established?
Youth has had their confidential mail opened by agency even after their court case with the state has been terminated and youth moved out.	Yes

III. METHODOLOGY

03/04/2022	Special Investigation Intake 2022C0112008
03/04/2022	Special Investigation Initiated - Letter Email to complainant to schedule interview
03/07/2022	Contact - Document Sent Email exchanges with Director & PM to schedule interviews on-site
03/07/2022	Contact - Document Received Email exchanges with complainant to schedule interview
03/08/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Interviewed complainant
03/10/2022	Inspection Completed On-site
03/10/2022	Contact - Face to Face Pre-exit
03/16/2022	Contact - Telephone call made Phone interview
03/16/2022	Inspection Completed-BCAL Sub. Compliance

ALLEGATION:

Youth has had their confidential mail opened by agency even after their court case with the state has been terminated and youth moved out.

INVESTIGATION:

On 3/3/2022 I received a complaint through the on-line reporting system from a former resident of an independent living home. The youth alleged that she had two pieces of mail that were delivered to the home/agency and were opened prior to her receiving them from the agency. She reported that one of the pieces of mail had her former foster care worker's name written on the front.

On 3/8/2022 I interviewed Youth A by telephone. Youth A reported that she has changed her mailing address with the post office, but she has still had some mail delivered to the agency or the independent living home in which she lived. She stated that, when this happens, the agency will send her mail to her in a manilla envelope. She states that on at least two occasions the mail she received in the manilla envelop had already been opened. One of these pieces of mail was

addressed to Youth A at the agency and was a check from the government treasury. This envelope was open and had her former foster care worker's first name handwritten on the front. Youth A provided me with a photo of this envelope which I reviewed on 3/8/2022. Youth A stated that she also received an opened piece of mail from the agency that contained a replacement debit card. This envelope had the youth's name and the address of the home in which she resided. Youth A stated that she did not know who opened the mail, but she suspected it was either Foster Care Worker or Lead Youth Specialist.

On 3/10/2022 I interviewed Program Manager and Foster Care Worker in person at the agency. Foster Care Worker stated she recalled mailing the envelope with the debit card to Youth A and stated that the envelope was already opened when she received it from the home. She stated that if the other piece of mail came to the agency office, agency support staff would have opened the mail and written Foster Care Worker's name on the envelope. She stated that this is how all of the youth's mail is handled even if the youth's case is closed. Program Manager stated that she wasn't aware that this was how youth's mail was handled and would be addressing it immediately.

On 3/10/2022 I interviewed Office Manager by telephone as she was working remotely. She stated support staff will open all mail received at the agency unless it is marked as confidential.

On 3/16/2022 I interviewed Lead Youth Specialist by telephone. She reported she has not opened any of Youth A's mail and if the agency received mail from the home that was already opened, she didn't know who would have opened it.

APPLICABLE RULE	
R 400.12213	Record Management.
	An agency shall do all of the following with respect to maintenance of required records: (c) Store and maintain each record in a manner to ensure confidentiality and to prevent unauthorized access.
ANALYSIS:	A youth's confidential mail was opened by agency staff.
CONCLUSION:	VIOLATION ESTABLISHED

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Upon receipt of an acceptable CAP, I recommend no change in the license status.

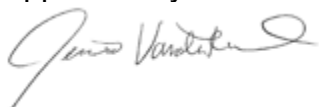


March 16, 2022

Holly Austin
Licensing Consultant

Date

Approved By:



March 21, 2022

Jessica VandenHeuvel
Area Manager

Date