



CERTIFIED – RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

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September 4, 2015

Keisha Allen, Executive Director
Association for Metroarea Autistic Children, Inc. dba AMAC
25 West 17th Street
New York, NY 10011

Dena E. Toussaint, President
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Allen and Ms. Toussaint:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you that, Association for Metroarea Autistic Children (AMAC) is being placed on Early Alert due to its inability to achieve and sustain compliance with OPWDD regulatory requirements.

In order to ensure that New York State (NYS) citizens with developmental disabilities receive appropriate services and protections, the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) has established an internal Early Alert Committee. The committee is made up of OPWDD senior leadership and managers. The purpose of the Early Alert process is to monitor the performance of a provider that has been unable to sustain compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

OPWDD has a number of concerns with AMAC and its' lack of compliance with regulations as evidenced by systemic and egregious deficiencies in the areas of Fire Safety, Incident Management, Medication Administration, Habilitation Services, and Staff Training at the Day Habilitation program. These deficiencies have resulted in numerous 45 day letters being issued to the Agency. Additionally the expectation of the Agency submitting an acceptable plan of corrective action (POCA) to OPWDD within 20 days has repeatedly not been met.

Staff from OPWDD will work with you to address the above stated issues so that you may arrive at a solution that will be in the best interests of the individuals you serve and their families. During this time, OPWDD will make a determination regarding whether your agency has the ability to remedy the deficient practices and sustain compliance. If the agency can demonstrate the ability to sustain compliance over a significant period of time, the Early Alert committee will consider potential removal from Early Alert and you will be notified accordingly.

While AMAC is on Early Alert, OPWDD will not consider any requests for expansion of services and may suspend any expansion that is in process. Representatives from OPWDD will meet with Executive Staff from AMAC and its Board of Directors to discuss the Early Alert process further and OPWDD's expectations. OPWDD recommends strong representation and attendance from your Board of Directors at this meeting. All Board members are strongly encouraged to attend.

Prior to that meeting, please provide Mr. O'Donnell with the following:

1. Minutes of the Board of Directors (BOD) meetings and Board Sub-Committees meeting minutes for the past year.
2. Agency organization chart.

Please contact Brian O'Donnell, Division of Quality Improvement Regional Director at (646) 766-3467, within five business days of receipt of this letter, to come to a mutually agreed upon date where representatives from OPWDD Regional Office, DQI, executive staff from AMAC and its Board of Directors can meet.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. O'Donnell at 646-766-3467.

Sincerely,



Megan O'Connor-Hebert
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Quality Improvement

cc: Board of Directors
Kerry Delaney, Acting Commissioner
Helene DeSanto, Deputy Commissioner
Abiba Kindo, Associate Deputy Commissioner
Donna Limiti, Region 4 DDRO Director
Roger Bearden, General Counsel
Cheryl Mugno, Deputy Counsel
Jim Nellegar, Director, Audit Services
Tamika Black, Deputy Director, DQI
Brian O'Donnell, Regional Director, DQI
Leslie Fuld, Director, DQI/IMU