



## Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

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KERRI E. NEIFELD  
Commissioner

ROGER BEARDEN, J.D.  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

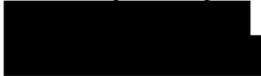
### **VIA USPS CERTIFIED MAIL & EMAIL**

July 7, 2022

Mr. Phil Garrett, Executive Director  
Paul J. Cooper Center for Human Services, Inc.



Ms. Mary R. Joyner, Board President



Dear Mr. Garrett and Ms. Joyner:

The purpose of this letter is to formally notify you of a change to the Early Alert status of Paul J. Cooper Center for Human Services, Inc. (Paul J. Cooper.) The agency was initially placed on Early Alert on December 18, 2015, for fiscal concerns that continue to be monitored by the Early Alert Committee. As of May 20, 2022, OPWDD's Early Alert process will also include monitoring of programmatic concerns identified by the Division of Quality Improvement's Bureau of Program Certification and the Incident Management Unit.

Specifically, Paul J. Cooper's Early Alert placement has been determined to also be necessary due to systemic and pervasive noncompliance in the following areas:

- Workforce and Hiring Practices, including failure to ensure that all background check clearances are completed, and agency staff meet minimum qualifications.
- Failure to provide sufficient safeguards, services and supports in accordance with individuals' needs.
- Failure to implement plans of corrective action.
- Ongoing systemic noncompliance in the area of incident management including meeting regulatory requirements for reporting incidents, submitting investigations, completing corrective action plans, Incident Review Committee (IRC) membership, and timely closure of incidents in the Incident Report Management Application (IRMA).

To ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities in New York State receive appropriate services and protections, the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) has established an internal Early Alert Committee. 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 and/or has significant fiscal issues that may affect the health and safety of individuals receiving services. OPWDD has placed your agency on Early Alert due to the following concerns:

While on Early Alert, OPWDD will monitor the Agency's progress and will determine whether your agency has the ability to remedy the deficient practices and sustain compliance going forward. While in Early Alert status, OPWDD will not consider any Agency requests for expansion of services and may suspend any expansion that is in process.

Representatives from OPWDD will meet with Agency leadership and the Board of Directors to further discuss the Early Alert process and OPWDD's expectations given this additional area of concern. This meeting will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for the agency and the Board. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please contact the Bureau of Program Certification, Eric Whang at (518)-937-0426 or [Eric.Whang@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Eric.Whang@opwdd.ny.gov) or the Incident Management Unit, Meg Adams at (518)-473-7032 or [Megan.Adams@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Megan.Adams@opwdd.ny.gov).

Sincerely,



Tammy Devine, Acting Deputy Commissioner

Division of Quality Improvement

cc: Board of Directors

Kerri Neifeld, Commissioner  
Roger Bearden, Executive Deputy Commissioner  
Brian O'Donnell, Statewide Director, DQI, Bureau of Program Certification  
Barbara Van Vechten, Statewide Director, Incident Management and Continuous Quality Improvement Units  
Karisa Capone, Director, Incident Management Unit  
Richard Cicero, Director of Internal Controls  
Abiba Kindo, Deputy Commissioner, Service Access, Program Implementation and Provider Relations  
Deborah Ellis, Statewide Operations Director  
Ann Marie Peterson, Associate Deputy Director, Service Access, Program Implementation and Stakeholder Support  
Eileen Haynes, General Counsel  
Joanne Howard, Director, Fiscal Reporting  
Earl Jefferson, Director, Central Operations  
Delia Tucker, Director, Region 4  
Josh Olsen, Deputy Counsel, Counsel's Office