



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

CHILD CARE FACILITY MONETARY PENALTY AND PLAN OF CORRECTION

Date Letter Emailed: December 27, 2022

Center License #: 48CDPFWA-3817

Date of Investigation: October 6, 2022

Facility: Lil Blessings Child Care
& Learning Center

Licensing Official(s): Ashley Graham and
Mary Hampton

40498 Old Highway 45 S
Hamilton, MS 39746

Dear Mrs. Shelia Sanders:

On October 6, 2022, a representative(s) from the Mississippi State Department of Health conducted an investigation at your facility. The findings of this investigation provided evidence that the facility failed to comply with regulations as stated in the *Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities*. Documentation of this investigation was forwarded to the Child Care Central Office for review and assessment of monetary penalties and is enclosed for your review.

By the criteria as established in the regulations, a total monetary penalty of \$450.00 is assessed. As stated in Rule 1.25.9 (4) of the regulations, unless appealed, all monetary penalties shall be payable within 30 calendar days of being levied (date of receipt of this letter). According to Rule 1.25.9 (5) of the child care regulations, an operator has the right to appeal a monetary penalty imposed pursuant to this section of the regulations. Any appeal of a monetary penalty must be filed with the licensing agency within 10 calendar days of the date of the receipt of this letter.

Notice: Any Class I or II violation that is repeated within the same licensure term could result in a doubling of the monetary penalty(s).

You may go to the following link <https://www.msdhcc.webapps.ms.gov/home.aspx> and pay your monetary penalty of \$450.00 electronically. You may pay by Master Card, Visa, American Express, Discover, Debit Card, or ECheck (Electronic Check). Payment must be made within 30 days of this notice unless appealed as stated above. The Child Care Licensing Division is no longer accepting paper checks, money orders, or certified checks for payment of fees and monetary penalties. All payments must be made online electronically.

Should you have questions, you may contact the Bureau of Child Care Licensure at 601-364-2827.

Sincerely,

Lakeisha Bland, Supervisor
Complaint Unit - Bureau of Child Care Licensure

cc: Enclosure

143-B LeFleurs Square • Post Office Box 1700 • Jackson, MS 39215-1700
Bureau of Health Facilities • Bureau of Professional Licensure • Bureau of Child Care Licensure
Criminal History Record Check Unit
601-364-1100 • www.HealthyMS.com

Equal Opportunity in Employment/Services

Monetary Penalty and Plan of Corrections

INSTRUCTIONS: More information on each cited deficiency can be found in the attached investigation report. A corrective action plan specific to each cited violation should have been developed at the time of the investigation. For specific information, please refer to the investigation form and/or encounter form with the date of investigation listed below.

Investigation Date: 10.06.22

Facility Name: Lil' Blessing child care & Learning Center

Facility License Number: 48CDPFWA-3817

Findings: Refer to the Investigation report

Plan of Corrections: Refer to Investigation report- **POC developed at the time of investigation with the provider. Conditions of the POC are listed on the investigation report.**

Deficiency: 1.14.1 (5)

Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, ignoring, isolating (out of view of a caregiver), or corrupting a child.

Monetary Penalty(s): (50 x 2) =\$100.00

Deficiency: 1.8.1 (2)

Children shall not be left unattended at any time. Video monitors cannot be used as a substitute for the physical presence of a caregiver in a room.

Monetary Penalty(s): (50 x 5) \$250.00

Deficiency: 1.4.1

Monetary Penalty(s): (50 x 2) =\$100.00

MSDH Child Care Licensure Investigation Form

District IV

Date 10-6-22

Facility Name LIL'BLESSING CHILD CARE & LEARNING CENTER

License No. 48CDPFWA-3817

Address 40498 OLD HIGHWAY 45 S Hamilton, MS 39746

Purpose Complaint/Self-Report Director SHELIA SANDERS

County Monroe Telephone No. 662-343-8000

E-Mail sanderssw@att.net

Time In 9:40 a.m.

Time Out 1:30 p.m.

Upon arrival Ashley Graham and Mary Hampton met with Shelia Sanders.

The purpose of the visit was explained.

Allegations/Self-Report:

The complainant alleged that the facility is mentally abusing the children with a Halloween mask.

Subchapter and Rule:

Subchapter 14: DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE
Rule 1.14.1 Prohibited Behavior: The following behaviors are prohibited by anyone (i.e., parent, caregiver, or child) in all child care settings:
5. Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, terrorizing, ignoring, isolating (out of view of a caregiver), or corrupting a child.

Findings:

Investigators received video footage of two different dates. The date stamps on the videos were September 12th and October 4th. On September 12th, you see a caregiver go inside the classroom of the 2-year-olds with a mask while children were eating lunch. You hear children screaming and appearing terrified based on their screams and cries. The individual in the mask is Caregiver #1. She is not a teacher in the 2 or 3 year old classroom. Director stated this caregiver was on lunch during this time. Per the director, she normally has responsibility in another classroom. On October 5th, the same caregiver went to both classrooms starting with the 3-year-olds. In the video, you see Caregiver #2 open the door and the director stated that Caregiver #3 was recording. Caregiver #1 is in the mask scaring the children. In the video you can hear someone say "Get on to child #1 he is being bad, don't get on to child #2 he is being good". They then proceeded to the next classroom. These children in the other classroom were scared and hiding behind bookshelves. Caregiver #1 proceeded to go over to the children, and she is observed picking one child up as he was crying and screaming. You can hear them say something about the children supposed to be picking up toys.

This complaint was substantiated due to being able to confirm that this facility was the same facility seen in the video. This incident was also self-reported by the facility director. Per the director, all 4 of the individuals that were in the classroom or involved have been fired from the facility.

All individuals on site were interviewed on today's visit. Written statements were received, as well as, copies of children enrollment forms for children that were present on the day the last incident occurred. The director's written statement was provided as well.

All caregivers except for one, stated that they had no knowledge of any mask or anyone scaring children due to them being in their assigned classrooms. The classrooms involved were across the facility and doors were shut at the time the incidents were going on. One caregiver stated that she had witnessed inappropriate behavior in the past; however no masks were used.

The director stated she was not present during the incident that occurred this week and she is unsure about the incident from September 12th. Per the director, if she was on the premises she did not see nor hear any type of scaring with a mask. The director informed the investigator that last year one individual was addressed about scaring the children. The director stated she issued a verbal warning to the staff member; however, no documentation was provided of any write up nor was there any documentation of training with the staff after the first incident occurred.

Substantiated

Unsubstantiated

Follow-up Required?

Documentation Verified or Received:

Children enrollment forms
Caregivers files
Teacher statements
Director statements

An Emergency Suspension letter was issued to the facility.

POC:

The director will have a staff meeting if or when they are allowed to return to the facility. The director will go over Sub-chapter 14 and include all rule numbers listed in the regulations. Sub-chapter 14 outlines behavior that is prohibited at child care facilities. The facility will send an agenda and sign-in and out sheet for staff that attend this meeting.

Person Responsible:

Mrs. Sanders

Time for Completion:

10-6-22

Technical Assistance/Notes:

The LOS letters for all staff were in compliance on today's visit.

The facility does have video recorders; however they are only real time feed; therefore, no recording was available for the investigators to review.

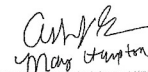
Technical assistance was provided on corporal punishment and Sub-chapter 14. Investigator explained that at no time can any caregiver terrorize or scream at the children or pose as someone/something that is a scary figure. Facility needs to develop a policy for personnel and make them aware that this is not appropriate. Additionally, the facility will need to have intense training on Sub-chapter 14 to ensure all staff are aware of discipline that is appropriate based on the age of the child.

The facility must have signed permission forms for staff or any individual to video tape or show pictures of children on any social media or send them to anyone via email, phone or on any other device.

"Class I and II violations may result in a monetary penalty. Repeated violations may result in the doubling of a monetary penalty, suspension or revocation of the license."



Center Director/ Designee/Individual



Child Care Representative

Subchapter and Rule:

Subchapter 8: STAFFING
Rule 1.8.1 General:
2. Children shall not be left unattended at any time. Video monitors cannot be used as a substitute for the physical presence of a caregiver in a room.

Findings:

Investigators observed in the video that the staff that was videoing was also the same staff that was supposed to be in the 2-year-old room. These two classrooms have a hallway/bathroom between them. However, at no time should the caregiver go between the two classrooms. The number of children in the classroom were verified by the sign-in and out sheet for October 4th. Based off the rooster for sign-in and out, there were 5 children in the classroom alone while the videotaping was taking place.

Substantiated

Unsubstantiated

Follow-up Required?

POC:

The facility will ensure that caregivers are not out of the room at anytime, unless another individual is in the classroom and responsible for the children.

Person Responsible:

Mrs. Sanders

Time for Completion:

10-6-22

Shelia Sanders

Center Director/ Designee/Individual

*Amber
Mays Hampton*

Child Care Representative

Subchapter and Rule:

Personnel Requirements Rule 1.5.7 (1) & (2)
Use of Director Designee: A director designee is an individual designated to act as the director, having all responsibility and authority of a director, during the director's short-term absence. A director designee shall, at a minimum have a high school diploma or GED and two years paid experience in a licensed child care facility or licensed/accredited kindergarten program. A director designee shall not retain sole director authority in a facility for more than 24 total hours per calendar week.

Findings:

Investigator was told by the director that she was not present on yesterday during the incident and that she had left the designee in charge while she went to get supplies. She stated she was gone for approximately 2 hours. The designee stated that the director reports to the facility on a daily basis. The designee stated that she opens the facility and then leaves by the afternoon.

Substantiated

Unsubstantiated

Follow-up Required?

POC:

N/A

Person Responsible:

Time for Completion:

Sheela Sandert

Center Director/ Designee/Individual

Cheryl Hampton

Child Care Representative

Subchapter and Rule:

Subchapter 4: FACILITY POLICY AND PROCEDURES
Rule 1.4.1 Parental Information: Before a child's enrollment, the parent shall be provided with the following: d. Policies prohibiting the photographing of a child without parental consent.

Findings:

All files were reviewed and there are two children that application's state they can not be videotaped nor can their pictures be posted on any social media. There was also one child whose file stated no pictures of any kind could be taken or posted anywhere.

Substantiated

Unsubstantiated

Follow-up Required?

POC:

Director will keep a copy of who can and cannot be photographed in each child's classroom to ensure that at no time will a child's picture or video be taken against the request of parents. Additionally the facility will develop a new policy regarding children and any type of social media, this includes Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, or any other social platform. Once this policy is developed, a copy will be given to the licensing official to upload into Lars and a copy kept in a file at the facility.

Person Responsible:

Mrs. Sanders

Time for Completion:

10-6-22

Sheela Sanders

Center Director/ Designee/Individual

Mary Hampton

Child Care Representative

Subchapter and Rule:

Subchapter 25: HEARINGS, EMERGENCY SUSPENSIONS, LEGAL ACTIONS AND PENALTIES
Rule 1.25.1 Emergency Suspension of License; Rule 1.25.2 Denial, Revocation, or Suspension of License: The licensing agency may deny, refuse to renew, suspend, revoke, or restrict a license of any child care facility upon one more of the following grounds: 4. Any conduct or failure to act, which is determined by the licensing agency to threaten the health or safety of a child.

Findings:

Investigators arrived at the facility and were welcomed in by the Director. Investigators spoke to the director and provided a copy of the emergency suspension of the license letter. The facility director understands that they may not be in operation until this investigation is completed and she has been contacted by the State Department of Health stating she may resume operation. At no time can any children be present at this facility, this includes school-age children. Parents were called upon investigator's stating to the director that children needed to go home. All children left the premises while the investigators were present. The elementary school was called to inform them not to drop off any after-school children. Parents were called as well to ensure that no one was dropped off. Investigator did recommend that the owner might want to be at the facility during drop off time just to ensure that no one was dropped off. If for some reason children do arrive at the facility, their parents must be called immediately.

Substantiated Unsubstantiated Follow-up Required?

POC:

The facility was cooperative with state officials and all children went home in a timely manner. The director understands that they may not return to the facility until after the completion of all investigations and a member of the State Department of Health (investigator, licensing official, or upper management) contacts the facility and informs them that they can resume operations.

Person Responsible:

Mrs. Sanders

Time for Completion:

10-6-22

Sheila Sanders
Center Director/ Designee/Individual

Mary Hampton
Child Care Representative

Subchapter and Rule:

Subchapter 14: DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE
Rule 1.14.1 Prohibited Behavior: The following behaviors are prohibited by anyone (i.e., parent, caregiver, or child) in all child care settings:
3. Abusive or profane language to include but not limited to yelling at, and/or using harsh tones toward the children or in close proximity (hearing distance) to children.

Findings:

Investigator observed on the video footage that was provided, that staff were yelling and screaming at the children. It was also observed that the staff was making a loud noise to scare them as well. The caregiver was in close proximity to the children while she was using a loud voice. Investigator observed the children crying and trying to get away from Caregiver #1 .

Substantiated Unsubstantiated Follow-up Required?

POC:

The facility will go over Subchapter 14 with all caregivers and ensure that they understand that at no time should any caregiver be yelling at the children or scaring children by using loud noises. All staff will go through intense training on appropriate discipline and guidance techniques.

If the facility is permitted to return to operations at a later date, a training on Subchapter 14 will be scheduled and a sign in and out sheet and an agenda will be submitted at that time. This will be an ongoing investigation and a follow up will be required.

Person Responsible:

Mrs. Sanders

Time for Completion:

10-6-22

Shawna Sanders
Center Director/ Designee/Individual

Mary Hampton
Child Care Representative