

**STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS**

**IN RE: PARADISE ALF 2017 LLC,**

DOEA Case No.

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**EMERGENCY PETITION FOR TEMPORARY WAIVER OF/ VARIANCE FROM OF RULE 58A-5.036**

PARADISE ALF 2017 LLC (hereinafter “Petitioner” or “Paradise”) by and through its undersigned representative, hereby petitions the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) for a **Temporary Emergency Waiver/Variance** of *Rule 58A-5.036, F.A.C.*, pursuant to *Section 120.542, Florida Statutes, Rule 28-10.004, Florida Administrative Code; and Rule 58A-5.036, F.A.C.*

**BACKGROUND**

1. Petitioner operates a fifty (50) bed assisted living facility licensed under Chapter 429, Part II, Florida Statutes located at 2277 SE LENNARD RD, PORT ST. LUCIE, FL 34952. Facility license number is 8585.
2. The Agency/Department affected by this petition is the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, 4040 Esplanade Way, Tallahassee, Florida 32399.
3. Paradise has cared for one of Florida’s most vulnerable populations as an Assisted Living Facility for over ten (10) years.
4. Paradise provides an affordable home with assisted living services allowing older adults to live in a safe, caring and supportive environment while maintaining their dignity, independence, and purpose.
5. The residents at Paradise suffer from various conditions, illnesses and diseases, but all are ambulatory. A critical component of meeting the needs of those residents is the hiring and training of qualified staff; and the monitoring of resident admissions to the facilities. Paradise does not provide housing to persons that are bedbound or require tremendous amounts of assistance with daily living. Paradise is seeking a temporary Waiver/Variance of Rule 58A-5.036
6. The Florida Department Elder Affairs adopted Rule 58A-5.036 on March 26, 2018 which requires full compliance not later than January 1, 2019 unless a variance or waiver is granted.

7. Based on the estimates and time lines Paradise received from its Electrical Contractor, the need for a variance is essential. The outcome for Paradise if the variance is not granted will result in fines, sanctions, possible closure and the removal of residents that have been entrusted to our care. The impending deadline created by the Rule creates a hardship.

8. Paradise believes that this is not an emergency or an instance of its own making, but one that is based on various factors that hinder compliance such as the acquisition of the generator, time lines for installation, and local permitting processes.

9. Paradise submits that it has attempted to comply with the Rule since implementation.

10. Paradise requests a variance from Rule 58A-5.036, F.A.C. The rule was adopted by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs to implement §429.41 and 429.19, F.S., and it provides in pertinent part:

*§429.28(1), F.S.*

...(1) No resident of a facility shall be deprived of any civil or legal rights, benefits, or privileges guaranteed by law, the Constitution of the State of Florida, or the Constitution of the United States as a resident of a facility. Every resident of a facility shall have the right to:

(a) Live in a safe and decent living environment, free from abuse and neglect.

*§429.41(1), F.S.*

...The agency, in consultation with the department, may adopt rules to administer the requirements of part II of chapter 408, F.S. In order to provide safe and sanitary facilities and the highest quality of resident care accommodating the needs and preferences of residents, the department, in consultation with the agency, the Department of Children and Family Services, and the Department of Health, shall adopt rules, policies, and procedures to administer this part, which must include reasonable and fair minimum standards in relation to:

(a) The requirements for and maintenance of facilities, not in conflict with chapter 553, relating to plumbing, heating, cooling, lighting, ventilation, living space, and other housing conditions, which will ensure the health, safety, and comfort of residents suitable to the size of the structure.



16. Energized submitted its plans to the City of Port St. Lucie and was told that Fire Department approval will be necessary in this case. Not all instances of generator installations require Fire Department approvals.

17. Energized has submitted its plans for Fire Department approval and is awaiting such approval which typically takes 4-6 weeks.

18. Paradise submits that the literal application of the Rule will thus create a substantial hardship.

**THE UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF SECTIONS 429.19 and 429.41, FLORIDA STATUTES WILL BE ACHIEVED**

20. The Department's authority and law implemented as noted in Rule 58A-5.036, F.A.C. include Sections 429.19, F.S. and 429.41, F.S.

21. Section 429.19 provides that in addition to the requirements of Part II of chapter 408, the Agency shall impose an administrative fine in the manner provided in chapter 120 for the violation of any provision of this part, part II of chapter 408, and applicable rules by an Assisted Living Facility, for the actions of any person subject to level 2 background screening under s. 408.809, for the actions of any facility employee, or for an intentional or negligent act seriously affecting the health, safety, or welfare of a resident of the facility.

22. Each violation of this Part and Adopted Rules shall be classified according to the nature of the violation and the gravity of its probable effect on facility residents. The agency shall indicate the classification on the written notice of the violation as follows:

a. Class "I" violations are defined in s. 408.813. The agency shall impose an administrative fine for a cited class I violation in an amount not less than \$5,000 and not exceeding \$10,000 for each violation.

b. Class "II" violations are defined in s. 408.813. The agency shall impose an administrative fine for a cited class II violation in an amount not less than \$1,000 and not exceeding \$5,000 for each violation.

c. Class "III" violations are defined in s. 408.813. The agency shall impose an administrative fine for a cited class III violation in an amount not less than \$500 and not exceeding \$1,000 for each violation.

d. Class “IV” violations are defined in s. 408.813. The agency shall impose an administrative fine for a cited class IV violation in an amount not less than \$100 and not exceeding \$200 for each violation.

e. Regardless of the class of violation cited, instead of the fine amounts listed in paragraphs (a)-(d), the agency shall impose an administrative fine of \$500 if a facility is found not to follow the background screening requirements as provided in s. 408.809.

23. Section 429.19, F.S. provides for the sanctioning of assisted living facilities. More specifically, it provides the following:

For purposes of this section, in determining if a penalty is to be imposed and in fixing the amount of the fine, the agency shall consider the following factors:

(a) The gravity of the violation, including the probability that death or serious physical or emotional harm to a resident will result or has resulted, the severity of the action or potential harm, and the extent to which the provisions of the applicable laws or rules were violated.

(b) Actions taken by the owner or administrator to correct violations.

(c) Any previous violations.

(d) The financial benefit to the facility of committing or continuing the violation.

(e) The licensed capacity of the facility.

24. *Section 429.41, F.S.* was enacted to provide safe and sanitary facilities and the highest quality of resident care accommodating the needs and preferences of residents. *See, Section 429.41(1), F.S.* Furthermore, it can be also derived that the Florida Legislature also desired rules that would address cooling, lighting, ventilation, living space, and other housing conditions, which will ensure the health, safety, and comfort of residents suitable to the size of the structure. *See, Section 429.41(1), F.S.*

25. *Section 429.41, F.S.* further provides that a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan must be submitted for review and approval to the local emergency management agency. The statute also provides for standards must be included in the rules adopted by the department after consultation with the Division of Emergency Management. At a minimum, the rules must provide for plan components that address emergency evacuation transportation; adequate sheltering arrangements; post-disaster activities, including provision of emergency power, food, and water; post-disaster transportation;

supplies; staffing; emergency equipment; individual identification of residents and transfer of records; communication with families; and responses to family inquiries. The comprehensive emergency management plan is subject to review and approval by the local emergency management agency. During its review, the local emergency management agency shall ensure that the following agencies, at a minimum, are given the opportunity to review the plan: The Department of Elderly Affairs, the Department of Health, the Agency for Health Care Administration, and the Division of Emergency Management. Also, appropriate volunteer organizations must be given the opportunity to review the plan. The local emergency management agency shall complete its review within 60 days and either approve the plan or advise the facility of necessary revisions. See Section 429.41(1) (b), F.S.

26. *Section 429.28, F.S.* was enacted to ensure that residents had rights that should be afforded to all residents. Among those the right of residents of assisted living facilities to have a safe and decent living environment, free from abuse and neglect. *See, Section 429.28(1), F.S.*

27. A variance/waiver of the Rule will not impair the purpose of the statute, which is to provide for the safety of residents before, during, and after an emergency.

29. Paradise has been providing care and services to residents through several storms, to include hurricanes. They have continued to make care and services to its residents a priority.

30. **F.S. 119.071(3)(a)2.b.**  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

31. Paradise will continue to follow the legislative requirements for the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and adhere to the local emergency management officials as it pertains to added safety requirements.

32. It must be noted that Paradise is not seeking a variance or waiver from providing exceptional care and services to its residents, but rather from the technological, legal and governmental hardships it is facing based on the attempts to comply with the Rule by January 1<sup>st</sup>.

33. Paradise submits the following exhibits to its petition that provides evidence of ongoing attempted compliance:

- (a) Executed proposal from Electrical Contractor for the installation of the generator and accompanying fuel tank.

- (b) Cancelled checks used to pay Electrical Contractor for installation.
- (c) Contractor letter setting forth installation timeline and reasons for delay.
- (d) Documentation submitted to AHCA for initial extension
- (e) AHCA-granted extension

**TYPE OF WAIVER/VARIANCE SOUGHT**

34. Paradise seeks a Temporary Emergency Waiver from/Variance of *Rule 58A-5.036, F.A.C* until May 15, 2019.

**DEPARTMENT ACTION REQUESTED**

For the foregoing reasons, Petitioner requests that the Department of Elder Affairs grant its Petition for a Temporary Waiver of /Variance From of Emergency Rule 58A5.036, F.A.C. until May 15, 2019 to obtain permitting, final plans, delivery, and installation of the generator. The Undersigned has requested both a Waiver from Rule 58A-5.036, F.A.C. and a Variance from Rule 58A-5.036, F.A.C. for the purpose of seeking additional time in order to comply fully with the Department's Rule. If the Department deems that the amount of time requested is not acceptable, we would request a time the Department believes to be reasonable under the circumstances. Should this request not be granted, Paradise faces fines, sanctions, possible closure and the removal of residents that have been entrusted in our care.

Respectfully Submitted this 31st day of December 2018.

Meir cosiol

Manager

Paradise ALF 2017, LLC

AHCA License #8585