

**OKLAHOMA COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH
OFFICE OF JUVENILE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT**

Name of Facility: Beckham County Regional Juvenile Detention Center

Date of Visit: December 6, 2005

Oversight Reviewer: Dana Holden, Oversight Specialist

Subject: 2005 Unannounced Oversight Visit

Date: April 25, 2006

General Information

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted an unannounced visit on December 6, 2005, to the Beckham County Regional Juvenile Detention Center in Elk City, Oklahoma. The purpose of the visit was to assess compliance with established responsibilities and facility policy and procedures. The facility was certified by the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA) for six juveniles. The OJA contracted with the Beckham County Board of Commissioners for regional juvenile detention services. The Western Plains Youth & Family Services contracted for the operation of the facility with the Beckham County Board of Commissioners. On the day of the OJSO visit, the census was six.

Persons Interviewed

- An entry interview and an exit conference with the facility's Assistant Superintendent
- Two direct care staff members
- Three residents

Documentation Reviewed

- Personnel files and training records of two direct care staff members
- Files on three residents
- Most recent inspection reports by the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Oklahoma State Department of Health
- Facility's room confinement/room restriction logs for the past six months
- Incident reports involving the residents who were interviewed

Areas Toured

- Entire facility

Overview

Resident Interviews

The OJSO selected three residents to interview. The interview questions were regarding the residents' perceptions of safety, detention program services, the rights of residents, discipline practices, and other residential care issues. Their responses to the questions revealed that the residents interviewed:

- felt safe at the facility and attributed it to the care staff provided;
- believed they received appropriate care by the staff;
- had access to medical care;
- participated in recreational activities;
- were knowledgeable of their rights;
- rated the food served as good; and
- received enough to eat.

No issues of concern were noted from the resident interviews.

Staff Interviews

The OJSO interviewed two direct care staff members. The two staff:

- reported receiving appropriate training; and
- demonstrated familiarity with the facility's policies and procedures and the detention standards.

No concerns were noted from the staff interviews.

Resident File Reviews

The OJSO reviewed the files on the three residents who were interviewed. The files were well-organized and complete for the items reviewed.

Staff File Reviews

The OJSO reviewed the personnel files of two direct care staff members for compliance with OJA detention standards. The files were well-organized, and the materials were easy to locate. Neither staff had completed first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) at the time of the OJSO visit. The detention center's Director, subsequent to the visit, advised the OJSO that both staff members had completed first aid and CPR training on December 9, 2005.

No other concerns were noted in the personnel file reviews.

Room Confinement

The OJSO reviewed the room confinement logs for July through November 2005. The facility's room confinement practices were reviewed through an interview with the Assistant Superintendent and an examination of incident reports. The review revealed:

- On February 16, 2005, a resident was placed on room confinement for approximately twenty-six hours.
- The room confinement log documented that the resident was placed on room confinement for "instigating a fight."
- The incident report stated that the resident was placed on room confinement for whispering to another resident.

The review also revealed:

- On June 4, 2005, a resident was placed on room confinement for approximately twenty-three hours.
- The room confinement log documented that the resident was placed on confinement for whispering to another resident.
- The incident report stated, "Both residents were placed on room confinement because staff could not hear what was said which is a potential security risk."

Observational Tour

The OJSO conducted a tour of the facility for compliance with standards related to safety, security, and quality of life. On the day of the OJSO visit, the facility was in good condition. The State Fire Marshal office's report, dated March 28, 2005, noted two violations; one of the violations was corrected at that time. The other violation required the Department of Labor's inspection of the hot water heater; the labor department inspected the water heater on April 8, 2005. No concerns were noted during the tour by the OJSO.

Conclusions

On the day of the OJSO visit, the Beckham County detention center appeared to be in compliance with OJA detention certification standards, with the exceptions noted. The staff demonstrated they were conscientious about their jobs and could work together as a team. The residents' attitudes were positive toward the staff, and the residents expressed they felt safe with the staff. The Assistant Superintendent demonstrated that he was attentive to the needs of the staff and residents.

Findings

1. All direct care staff had not received the appropriate training in first aid and CPR within the ninety-day time frame. Office of Juvenile Affairs policy OAC 377:3-13-43, Staff

requirements, (a), General provisions, (8), Staff training, (E) and (F), states, “Within 90 days after employment, all direct-care staff shall have successfully completed first aid training from an instructor certified by the American Red Cross or its equivalent. All direct-care staff shall be certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) within 90 days after employment and recertified annually.”

2. Room confinement was not used for violations of major rules only, nor was it used to ensure safety at the facility. Office of Juvenile Affairs policy OAC 377:3-13-44, Security and control, (c), (14), Room confinement, (A), states, “Room confinement means locking a juvenile in his/her room when the juvenile has been charged with a major rule violation requiring confinement for his/her safety or the safety of others or to ensure the security of the facility. Room confinement is used with detained juveniles:
 - (i) for self protection;
 - (ii) to separate juveniles from fighting;
 - (iii) to restrain juveniles in danger of inflicting harm to themselves or others;
 - (iv) to restrain juveniles who have escaped or who are in the process of escaping;
 - (v) to prevent destruction of property . . . ; and
 - (vi) stop behavior that incites other juveniles which jeopardizes the safety of staff and residents of the facility”

DH:js