

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

Name and Location of Facility: Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center
Tecumseh, Oklahoma

Dates of Visit: December 1, 2, and 3, 2009

Oversight Reviewers: Dana S. Holden and Janice K. Sharp, Oversight
Specialists

Focus of Visit: Second Biannual Visit, 2009

Date: February 16, 2010

Introduction

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) initiated an unannounced visit at the Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center (COJC) on December 1, 2009, and returned on December 2 and 3, 2009, to complete the oversight visit. The purpose of the visit was to assess the facility's compliance with established responsibilities and facility policy and procedures and to conduct a complaint investigation. The facility is a medium-secure rehabilitation program for juveniles adjudicated Delinquent or Youthful Offender who are in the custody of the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA). On the first day of the OJSO visit, the census was sixty-nine male residents and twenty-seven female residents.

Title 10A of the Oklahoma Statutes, Section 2-7-611, effective November 1, 2009, authorized the OJA to certify secure juvenile facilities. At the time of the OJSO visit, the facility was awaiting certification by the OJA Office of Public Integrity as a 116-bed secure juvenile facility. The facility had received the proposed rules pertaining to the OJA certification requirements for secure juvenile facilities.

The complaint received by the OJSO alleged that the facility was denying visitation between a resident and the resident's family members and that the resident was being treated unfairly by facility staff. The OJSO found no violations of policies.

Interviews Conducted

- Entry interview with the facility superintendent
- Nine residents, one of the nine residents was interviewed regarding the complaint investigation; two additional residents declined to be interviewed
- Four staff members

- Informal exit conference with the deputy director and the executive secretary on December 3, 2009
- Exit telephone conference with the facility superintendent on January 7, 2010

Documents Reviewed

- Nine resident files
- Four personnel files
- Oklahoma State Department of Health Food Inspection report dated June 8, 2009
- Office of the Oklahoma State Fire Marshal report dated May 18, 2009
- List of residents
- Staff roster

Areas Toured

- Entire facility

Findings

Resident Interviews

The OJSO interviewed eight residents on December 2, 2009, for the oversight part of the visit. The focus of the interview questions was to determine the residents' perceptions of safety, treatment, and overall quality of life at the facility. The OJSO noted:

- All eight interviewees reported that they had received a resident handbook and a written copy of the resident's rights when they were admitted to the facility.
- Seven of the eight interviewees stated that they had received written policies regarding visitation, mail, telephone calls, gifts, discipline policies, religious practices, the education program, and the grievance procedures when they were admitted to the facility; the other interviewee stated that the information was explained when he/she was admitted to the facility.
- All eight interviewees reported having been in other facilities prior to their placement at COJC.
- Six of the eight interviewees reported that they received plenty to eat; one of the other two interviewees stated that the food portions were small, and the other interviewee stated that he/she was hungry sometimes.
- Five of the eight interviewees reported having been taken to the crisis management center; none of these five interviewees reported having received an injury during escort to the crisis management center.
- When asked to give an example of the types of discipline received for a rule infraction, the responses were additional chores, early bedtime, loss of privileges, 250 and 500-word essays, and level drop.

- All eight interviewees reported having an individualized treatment plan, and all eight interviewees reported having participated in the development of their treatment plans.
- All eight interviewees stated that they received individual counseling; four of the interviewees stated that they participated in family counseling; and five interviewees stated they received substance abuse counseling.
- All eight interviewees indicated that they were familiar with the facility grievance procedures. Six interviewees reported that they had filed at least one grievance; three of these six interviewees believed that the grievance process worked.
- Three of the eight interviewees reported that they had been cursed at by staff; six interviewees reported that they had witnessed other residents having been cursed at by staff.
- None of the eight interviewees reported having been assaulted by staff; six interviewees reported having been assaulted by other residents.
- None of the eight interviewees reported having been sexually assaulted at the facility.
- Four of the eight interviewees reported that they had witnessed other residents with contraband. The types of contraband most often named were tobacco and shanks.
- Five of the eight interviewees stated that they felt safe at the facility; two interviewees stated that they “sometimes” felt safe; and the other interviewee stated that he/she did not feel safe.
- All eight interviewees reported having received medical and dental examinations since having been placed at the facility.

No other concerns were identified from the resident interviews

Staff Interviews

The OJSO interviewed four staff members. The OJSO noted:

- All four interviewees reported current certification in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and behavioral management techniques.
- All four interviewees reported that they had restrained residents; three interviewees reported that they had been injured during a restraint; and three interviewees reported that they had witnessed another staff member having been injured during a restraint.
- One of the four interviewees reported having witnessed a resident having been injured in a restraint.
- All four interviewees stated that staff ate the same food as the residents when they dined together and that residents were allowed second helpings.
- All four interviewees stated that they would report suspected abuse and/or neglect of a resident to a supervisor or a manager.
- Three of the four interviewees rated the morale of staff as medium; the other interviewee rated staff morale as low.

- When asked to rate the morale of residents, one interviewee rated it as high, another interviewee rated it as medium-to-high, one interviewee rated it as medium, and the other interviewee rated the morale of residents as low-to-medium.

No concerns were identified from the staff interviews.

Resident File Review

The OJSO reviewed nine resident files. All nine files were complete for the items reviewed and were in good order. No concerns were identified from the resident files reviewed.

Staff File Review

The OJSO reviewed four direct care staff files. All three files were complete for the items reviewed. No concerns were identified from the staff files reviewed.

Observational Tour

The facility superintendent conducted a walk-through tour of the facility with the OJSO. The OJSO noted no concerns from the tour.

Areas of Concern

1. Four of the eight residents interviewed reported that they had witnessed other residents with contraband. The types of contraband most often named were tobacco and shanks.
2. Three of the eight residents interviewed reported they had been cursed at by staff; six interviewees reported they had witnessed other residents having been cursed at by facility staff.
3. At the time of this oversight visit, no licensing or certification standards were in effect that were applicable to this facility.

DSH:JS

