

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

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

**Dates of Visit:** November 17, 20, and 24, 2008

**Oversight Reviewer:** Dana S. Holden, Oversight Specialist

**Focus of Visit:** Second Biannual Visit for 2008

**Date:** February 25, 2009

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### **Introduction**

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) initiated an unannounced visit at the Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center (COJC) on November 17, 2008. The OJSO resumed the oversight on November 20 and completed the visit on November 24, 2008. 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). The facility is licensed for 119 residents by the division of Oklahoma Child Care Services (OCCS) of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS). On the first day of the OJSO visit, the census was 100.

The focus of the visit was to assess the facility's procedure for performing caretaker conduct reviews (CCRs) and to review the facility's process for responding to resident grievances. The OJSO assessed the facility's progress in implementing the corrective action plan the facility submitted to the OJSO on June 26, 2008.

### **Interviews Conducted**

- Entry interview and an exit conference with the Institutional Superintendent
- One staff member

### **Documents Reviewed**

- Facility CCR and OKDHS OCA investigations for August 2008 through October 2008
- Grievance log for August 1, 2008, through November 24, 2008

## Findings

### Grievance Log Review

The Advocate Defender stated his responsibility was to retrieve the grievances from the units, maintain the grievance log, and assign a staff member to work the grievances. The Advocate Defender stated that the training officer is responsible for training staff in how to conduct a grievance hearing. The OJSO reviewed the grievance log and the grievances filed for the period of August 1, 2008, through November 24, 2008. From a total of 320 grievances, the OJSO noted:

- The resolutions on nine grievances did not adequately address the issues.
- Three grievances did not document that the residents had accepted the resolutions.
- Two grievances had not been signed by the residents, and six had not been signed by the staff members.
- Fifty-three grievances had not been resolved within the required timeframe.
- The resolutions on thirty-three grievances were not dated.
- The Advocate Defender had assigned the wrong completion date on twenty-three grievances.
- Appeals were not conducted regarding four grievances, although the residents had appealed the grievance decisions.

### CCR Inquiries

The OJSO interviewed the Chief of Security in reference to the CCR process. The Chief of Security stated that his office was responsible for compiling information and assigning an investigator to conduct a CCR investigation. After a CCR had been assigned, the officer had thirty days to complete the investigation. The facility made a record of all interviews in an investigation. The Chief of Security stated staff shortages had caused CCR investigations to be late. After an investigation was completed, the Chief of Security reviewed the report for accuracy.

The OJSO requested the CCR files from August 1, 2008, through October 2008. The OJSO reviewed twenty-three CCR inquiries from this timeframe and six referrals for OCA investigations to determine compliance with OKDHS policy OAC 340:2-3-37, sections (c) through (f). In these twenty-three files, the OJSO noted:

- Four inquiries had findings of "Confirmed".
- Fourteen inquiries had findings of "Did not confirm".
- Fifteen CCR investigations either had not been completed or were completed but had not been turned in to the OCA within the required timeframe.
- In fourteen CCR investigations, staff assigned to conduct the investigations had not documented initiation of the investigations within the twenty-four-hour timeframe.
- In twelve CCR investigations, the investigator had not conducted the interviews in a timely manner.
- In three CCR investigations, the investigator had not adequately addressed the allegations.

## Areas of Concern

1. Forty-one grievances were not filled out completely by staff assigned to process them.
2. The resolutions on nine grievances did not adequately address the residents' issues.
3. In twelve CCR investigations, the investigator had not conducted the interviews in a timely manner.
4. In three CCR investigations, the investigator had not adequately addressed the allegations.
5. Failure to properly fill out grievance paperwork was a concern that had been identified in the OJSO first biannual visit report for 2008. This concern remained an issue at the time of the OJSO second biannual visit.

## Violations

1. The staff assigned to conduct the CCR inquiries had not initiated the CCR investigations within the required twenty-four-hour timeframe. COJC policy, C030400.03, (II), Internal Investigative Process–CCR, (C), states, “The Superintendent/designee shall begin the investigation within 24 hours of the OCA referral.”
2. The staff assigned to conduct the CCR inquiries had not completed the CCR investigations within the required thirty-day timeframe. OKDHS policy, OAC 340:2-3-37, Caretaker conduct review, (f), Time for completion of report, states, “The final written report is submitted to the advocate general within 30 calendar days from the date that OCA intake notified the administrator that an allegation is referred for CCR.”
3. Fifty-three grievances had not been resolved within the required timeframe. OJA policy, OAC 377:3-1-30, Grievance procedures for institutions, group homes, and contract facilities, (b), Institutions, in part, states, “If the grievance is not resolved in three working days, the juvenile may appeal to the supervisor or facility administrator who will have an additional five working days in which to attempt resolution.”
4. The Advocate Defender did not document why he had not forwarded four appeals to the appropriate person for resolution. OJA policy, OAC 377:3-1-30, Grievance procedures for institutions, group homes, and contract facilities, (b), Institutions, in part, states, “If the grievance is not resolved in three working days, the juvenile may appeal to the supervisor or facility administrator who will have an additional five working days in which to attempt resolution. The grievance shall be resolved within seven working days. The advocate defender shall inform the juvenile of the decision regarding his or her grievance and the right to appeal. If the juvenile appeals the grievance decision, the advocate defender shall send the appeal to the appropriate person or Advocate General and document such in the log.”

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