

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

Name and Location of Facility: Muskogee County Regional Juvenile Detention Center
Muskogee, Oklahoma

Date of Visit: April 25, 2008

Oversight Reviewers: Cliff Aldridge, Oversight Specialist, and Kristal
Nicholson, Trainer/Consultant, of the National
Resource Center for Youth Services (NRCYS) of the
University of Oklahoma

Focus of Visit: 2008 Unannounced Visit

Date: September 9, 2008

Introduction

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted an unannounced, routine visit of the Muskogee County Regional Juvenile Detention Center on April 25, 2008. The purpose of the visit was to monitor compliance with established responsibilities. The center was certified for ten juveniles by the Office of Public Integrity (OPI) of the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA). The OJA contracted with the Muskogee County Board of Commissioners for the detention center. The Muskogee County Council of Youth Services (MCCOYS) contracted with the Muskogee County Board of Commissioners for the operation of the facility.

A team of OPI and local OJA staff was onsite conducting a scheduled monitoring visit at the center on the day of the OJSO visit. The OJSO adjusted the activity schedule as much as possible to minimize the disruption of the operation of the facility.

Interviews Conducted

- Brief entry conference and an exit conference with the superintendent and the program coordinator
- Three residents
- Two direct care detention staff members
- Informal interaction with members of the OPI monitoring team

Documents Reviewed

- Case records on two residents
- Personnel files of two detention staff members
- Facility daily population report for April 25, 2008
- Facility policy manual
- Facility incident log for January, February, and March 2008
- Sample of three incident reports involving room confinement, room restriction, or wing restriction
- Resident grievance log for July 1, 2007, through April 25, 2008
- Sample of two informal grievances and resolutions
- Oklahoma State Department of Health Food Inspection report of January 9, 2008
- State of Oklahoma Office of the Fire Marshal inspection report of April 4, 2008
- OJA detention certificate, No. D-51-04

Findings

Interviews

Two male residents and one female resident were interviewed relative to detention services they were receiving and their participation in detention programs. The residents interviewed reported receiving appropriate services, such as education and recreation. No particular themes of concern were identified from the resident interviews.

Two of the detention workers were interviewed. Both of them reported having received and being current on all of the training required for their positions. Each of them appeared to be familiar with facility policies.

File Reviews

Two resident files were reviewed for compliance with detention certification standards for admission procedure and criteria and juvenile records. Both files were complete for each of the items reviewed on the day of the visit. Two personnel files and training records were reviewed for compliance with detention certification standards for staff requirements. On the day of the visit, both files were current for the items reviewed. No concerns were identified from the file reviews.

The facility incident log for the period of January, February, and March 2008 was reviewed. Of the twenty incidents on the log, there was one instance of the use of mechanical restraint and room confinement; one instance of extended wing confinement; and one instance involving wing restriction and room restriction. The reports of the three incidents were reviewed for compliance with detention certification standards, OJA policy OAC 377:3-13-44 Security and control.

The single use of mechanical restraint and the subsequent use of room confinement during the period reviewed appeared to meet the detention certification standards. The restraints were removed after 15 minutes. The total period of room confinement was 18 hours, 45 minutes, including sleep time. Three-hour assessments were documented, and the juvenile was released to the general population when his behavior had stabilized. There were no other instances of use of mechanical restraints or room confinement during the three months reviewed.

The instance of extended wing confinement was well documented and appeared to meet the OJA standards for separation of a detention resident from the general population. In the third incident reviewed, the documentation indicated that the use of wing restriction for one hour, and the subsequent use of room restriction for an additional 30 minutes, met the criteria for separation and room restriction. Facility policy for the use of room confinement, room restriction, and wing restriction provided:

- Room confinement meant locking a juvenile in his or her room for a period of more than one hour. Room confinement was prohibited as a punishment and could only be used for reasons of safety or to prevent escape.
- Room restriction meant putting or locking a juvenile in his or her room as a consequence for a rule violation but was limited to one hour.
- Separation from the general population or wing restriction was less restrictive than room restriction, but it could be extended beyond the initial one hour that was permitted.

The facility had recorded 24 resident grievances on the log for July 1, 2007, through April 25, 2008: 22 of them had been resolved promptly; one had been resolved at the OJA State Office level; and another had been appealed to the OJA State Office, but the outcome was not recorded. A sample of two of the grievances filed during the first quarter of 2008 was reviewed. No concerns were identified from the review of the grievance log or the grievances.

Summary

The facility is commended for its limited use of room confinement and physical or mechanical restraint. The Muskogee County Regional Juvenile Detention Center was operating in compliance with the OJA detention certification standards on the day of the oversight visit. The OJSO appreciated the helpfulness of the detention center administration and staff for arranging the interviews and providing necessary materials for review.

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