

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

Name of Facility and Location: Northwest Oklahoma Juvenile Detention Center
Woodward, Oklahoma

Date of Visit: November 22, 2005

Oversight Person: Dana S. Holden, Oversight Specialist

Focus of Visit: Unannounced Visit

Date: December 30, 2005

Introduction

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted a routine, unannounced visit on November 22, 2005, to the Northwest Oklahoma Juvenile Detention Center in Woodward, Oklahoma. The purpose of the visit was to assess compliance with established responsibilities, including facility policy and procedures. The facility was certified by the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA) for ten juveniles. The OJA contracted with the Board of Commissioners of Woodward County to manage the detention center. The County Commissioners subcontracted with Eastern Oklahoma Youth Services for the day-to-day operation of the facility. The detention center provides regional services to other counties. On the day of the OJSO visit, the census was ten.

Persons Interviewed

- Entry interview with the shift Supervisor
- Exit conference with the Superintendent
- Two direct care staff members
- Three residents

Documents Reviewed

- Personnel files and training records of the two direct care staff who were interviewed
- Files on three residents
- Most recent inspection reports by the Office of the Oklahoma State Fire Marshal, the Oklahoma State Department of Health, and the OJA
- Room confinement/restriction logs

Areas Toured

- Dormitories on the east wing and west wing
- Kitchen
- Intake/reception area
- Administrative area

Overview

Interviews with Residents

The interview questions were generally regarding the three residents' perceptions of safety, detention program services, the rights of residents, discipline practices, and other residential care issues. The residents interviewed described feeling safe, receiving educational services, having appropriate consequences for rule violations, participating in recreational services, having access to medical care, being knowledgeable of their rights, and receiving reasonable treatment by staff. The residents interviewed stated they received enough food, and all rated the food as good. The OJSO had no concerns from the interviews with residents.

Resident File Reviews

The three files reviewed were complete, well-organized, and contained all of the required information.

Interviews with Direct Care Staff

The two staff members interviewed reported receiving appropriate training. Both were knowledgeable of the policy and procedures.

Personnel File Reviews

The personnel files and training records of two staff members were reviewed for compliance with detention certification standards. The files were well-organized, and the materials were easy to locate. Both staff members had received the required hours of training or were scheduled to attend required training.

Review of Room Confinement/Restriction Logs

The room confinement logs for January through November 2005 were reviewed. The OJSO noted one incident in which a resident was placed on room confinement for staring at another resident. The incident report stated that the resident was counseled about the incident, because the other resident stated that it made him feel uncomfortable. According to the incident report, the resident was then placed on room confinement.

Observational Tour

A tour of the facility was conducted by the OJSO. The facility appeared well-maintained and clean. There were no concerns noted during the tour.

Inspection Report by the OJA

The OJSO reviewed the OJA's most recent inspection report, dated September 18, 2005, regarding the facility. The report noted eight deficiencies that required corrective action. The OJSO received a copy of the facility's written plan of compliance, which adequately addressed the issues.

Summary

On the day of the OJSO visit, the facility's Superintendent and staff demonstrated an attentive attitude to the needs of the juveniles. The juveniles appeared comfortable in the program and adequately engaged in the programs and services of the detention center.

During the exit conference, the OJSO and the facility's Superintendent discussed the use of room confinement. The OJSO suggested additional training in the reduction of the use of room restriction/confinement.

Finding

1. Room confinement should not be used to correct minor behavioral problems, policy guidelines regarding room confinement should be met, and the use of room confinement should be properly documented by staff in a timely manner. Office of Juvenile Affairs policy OAC 377:3-13-44, (c), (14), (A), states that room confinement may be used for self protection, to protect others, and to prevent escape or destruction of property. Office of Juvenile Affairs policy OAC 377:3-13-44, (c), (8), Physical force, (B), states, "The least amount of force is used."

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