

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

---

**Name and Location of Facility:** Southwest Oklahoma Juvenile Center  
Manitou, Oklahoma

**Dates of Visit:** June 17, 18, and 23, 2009

**Oversight Reviewer:** Harold Jergenson, Oversight Specialist

**Focus of Visit:** First Biannual Visit, 2009

**Date:** August 27, 2009

---

### **Introduction**

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted an unannounced visit on June 17, 18, and 23, 2009, at the Southwest Oklahoma Juvenile Center (SWOJC), located in Manitou. The purpose of the visit was to assess compliance with established responsibilities. SWOJC was licensed as a Secure Care Facility by the division of Oklahoma Child Care Services (OCCS) of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS). The facility was licensed for a total of seventy-nine male residents, adjudicated Delinquent or Youthful Offenders in the custody of the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA). SWOJC was accredited by the American Correctional Association. On the date of the OJSO visit, the census was sixty-one.

### **Interviews Conducted**

- Entry interview and exit conference with the superintendent and deputy superintendent
- Four employees
- Eight residents

### **Documents Reviewed**

- Census for the facility, including review of the residents' birth dates and admission dates
- OKDHS OCCS Residential Child Care Facility Inspection report dated April 29, 2009
- Office of the Oklahoma State Fire Marshal report dated February 25, 2009
- Oklahoma State Department of Health Food Inspection report dated November 1, 2008
- Grievance logs from January 2009 through May 2009
- Office of Client Advocacy (OCA) call log from January 2009 through May 2009
- Twelve resident files
- Ten personnel files
- Ten personnel training records

## **Findings**

### Resident Interviews

The OJSO interviewed eight residents. All of the residents were fourteen years of age or older. The interview questions pertained to the residents' perceptions regarding safety, program services, resident rights, discipline practices, and other residential program issues. The OJSO noted:

- Five residents reported staff members used curse words when addressing them. The same number reported witnessing staff members curse at other residents.
- Five residents reported seeing residents in possession of dangerous contraband. Contraband items juveniles reported to the OJSO were tobacco, pills, razors, homemade alcohol, and store bought alcohol.

### Staff Interviews

Four staff members were interviewed. The interview questions pertained to the staff members' perceptions regarding resident rights, discipline policies, and other residential program issues. No concerns were noted from the interviews.

### Resident File Review

Twelve resident files were reviewed. No concerns were noted.

### Personnel File Review

Ten personnel files were reviewed. No concerns were noted.

### Personnel Training Record Review

Ten personnel training records were reviewed. No concerns were noted.

### Grievances

The OJSO reviewed grievance logs from January 2009 through May 2009. Appealed grievances were assigned to the superintendent or the deputy superintendent as the supervisor. The OJSO noted:

#### January 2009

- A total of 124 grievances had been filed.
- Twenty of the 124 grievances did not meet the three-day time frame for resolution.
- Twenty-two grievances had been appealed to the superintendent.
- Seven of the twenty-two appealed grievances failed to meet the five-day time frame for resolution.

#### February 2009

- A total of 126 grievances had been filed.
- Twenty-six of the 126 grievances did not meet the three-day time frame for resolution.
- Thirty-three grievances had been appealed to the superintendent.
- Eight of the thirty-three appealed grievances failed to meet the five-day time frame for resolution.

#### March 2009

- A total of eighty-two grievances had been filed.
- Fourteen of the eighty-two grievances did not meet the three-day time frame for resolution.
- Sixteen grievances had been appealed to the superintendent.
- One of the sixteen appealed grievances failed to meet the five-day time frame for resolution.

#### April 2009

- A total of 109 grievances had been filed.
- Thirty-one of the 109 grievances did not meet the three-day time frame for resolution.
- Twenty-five grievances had been appealed to the superintendent.
- Seven of the twenty-five appealed grievances failed to meet the five-day time frame for resolution.

#### May 2009

- A total of 111 grievances had been filed.
- Twenty-three of the 111 grievances did not meet the three-day time frame for resolution.
- Eighteen grievances had been appealed to the superintendent.
- One of the eighteen appealed grievances failed to meet the five-day time frame for resolution.

#### OCA Call Log

The OJSO reviewed the OCA call log from January 2009 through May 2009. The OJSO noted:

- A total of ninety-one referrals had been called into OCA during this time.
- Sixty-seven were returned to the facility as caretaker conduct reviews (CCRs).
- Twenty-three were accepted as OCA investigations.
- One was returned with “no action”.
- Thirteen referrals were called into OCA six or more days after the incident occurred, with no documented reason for the delays.

#### **Areas of Concern**

1. Five of the eight residents interviewed reported being cursed at by staff members. The same number reported witnessing other residents being cursed at by staff members. During the OJSO oversight that occurred in December of 2008, eleven of fifteen residents interviewed reported staff members cursed at them. The same number reported witnessing other residents being cursed at by staff members.
2. Five of the eight residents interviewed reported seeing residents in possession of dangerous contraband. Items juveniles reported to the OJSO were tobacco, pills, homemade alcohol, and store bought alcohol.

3. Grievances that exceeded the three-day time frame for resolution were noted in each of the five months reviewed. OJA policy, OAC 377:3-1-28, General Grievance Procedure, (a), Informal grievances, (5), states, "If the grievance is not resolved within (3) three working days, the juvenile may appeal to the supervisor."
4. Thirteen of the ninety-one referrals called in to OCA during the time period reviewed were called into OCA six or more days after the initial incident, with no documented reason for the delays.

### **Violation**

1. In each of the five months reviewed, grievances that exceeded the five-day time frame for resolution were noted by the OJSO. Appealed grievances were assigned to the superintendent as the supervisor. OJA policy, OAC 377:3-1-28, General Grievance Procedure, (a), Informal grievances, (6), states, "The supervisor shall have (5) five days from receipt of the grievance to resolve the grievance."

