

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

Name and Location of Facility: Thunderbird Youth Academy
Alpha Company
Pryor, Oklahoma

Dates of Visit: February 8 and 9, 2007

Oversight Reviewer: Cliff A. Aldridge, Oversight Specialist

Subject: First Unannounced Oversight Visit for 2007

Date: May 17, 2007

Introduction

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted an unannounced visit to Alpha Company of the Thunderbird Youth Academy (TYA) on February 8 and 9, 2007. Alpha Company is operated by the Oklahoma Military Department (OMD). The program accepts private placement of youths, who are at least sixteen years of age and have dropped out of high school. On the day of the visit, the census was eighty-nine. The visit was conducted in conjunction with a visit to the OMD's Bravo Company. The facility is located at the OMD's Whitaker Education and Training Center (WETC) in Pryor, Oklahoma.

Interviews Conducted

- Entry and exit conferences with the Deputy Director
- Four platoon sergeants (direct care staff)
- Eight cadets

Documents Reviewed

- Medical records on six residents
- Tuberculin test records of four platoon sergeants
- Cadet roster, by platoon
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual

Areas Toured

- Dining room during a noon meal
- Three residential units
- Kitchen

Findings

Interviews

Eight residents, representing all four platoons, were interviewed relative to their participation in program services, relationships with the staff, and quality of life. Overall, the responses were favorable about the program, the staff, and their living conditions.

The four staff members interviewed reported receiving appropriate training and demonstrated familiarity with facility policies. All four appeared to believe that their work was beneficial to the cadets. One staff member interviewed had graduated from the Alpha Company a number of years ago. No concerns were identified from the resident or staff interviews.

Documentation Review

The tuberculin testing records for the four staff members interviewed were current. The medical records on the six cadets interviewed were complete for immunizations, tuberculin testing, and pre-participation physical evaluations. No issues were identified from the documentation reviews.

The dining facility was operated by a private contractor that provided food service to Alpha Company and other OMD programs and personnel on the post. The Fire Marshal's inspection report noted only that the range hood in the kitchen needed to be serviced annually. The health department's inspection report identified four issues to be corrected.

Observational Tour

All three residential units toured were clean but were furnished sparsely, in accordance with the military-style format of the program. A toilet in the female cadet quarters was damaged. The OJSO reviewer was told that a work order had been submitted. No other issues of concern were identified in the female quarters or in the two male quarters toured.

The dining facility was toured during a noon meal. The kitchen was also toured, near the completion of preparations for the evening meal. Garbage cans were covered at the request of the OJSO. Cartons of cantaloupes and oranges were on the floor in the cold storage compartment. The cartons were promptly stored on a shelf off of the floor, as required, after it was pointed out to kitchen personnel. The items noted in the health department's report had been corrected or equipment was on order.

Summary

The Alpha Company appeared to be in compliance with the Standard Operating Procedures Manual on the day of the visit. The director had separated from Alpha Company to take other employment, and a new director had been named but had not yet assumed the position on the day of the visit.

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