

Review Highlights



Highlights of Legislative Auditor report on the Review of Governmental and Private Facilities for Children issued on May 2, 2018. Report # LA18-20.

Background

Nevada Revised Statutes 218G.570 through 218G.585 authorize the Legislative Auditor to conduct reviews, audits, and unannounced site visits of governmental and private facilities for children.

As of June 30, 2017, we had identified 55 governmental and private facilities that met the requirements of NRS 218G: 20 governmental and 35 private facilities. In addition, 119 Nevada children were placed in 26 facilities in 11 different states as of June 30, 2017.

NRS 218G requires facilities to forward to the Legislative Auditor copies of any complaint filed by a child under their custody or by any other person on behalf of such a child concerning the health, safety, welfare, and civil and other rights of the child. During the period from July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017, we received 1,457 complaints from 29 facilities in Nevada. Twenty-six facilities reported that no complaints were filed during this time.

Purpose of Reviews

Reviews were conducted pursuant to the provisions of NRS 218G.570 through 218G.585. This report includes the results of our reviews of 4 children's facilities, unannounced site visits to 4 children's facilities, and a survey of 55 children's facilities. As reviews and not audits, they were not conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards, as outlined in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, or in accordance with the *Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services* issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

The purpose of our reviews was to determine if the facilities adequately protect the health, safety, and welfare of the children in the facilities, and whether the facilities respect the civil and other rights of the children in their care.

These reviews included an examination of policies, procedures, processes, and complaints filed since July 1, 2015. In addition, we discussed related issues and observed related processes during our visits. Our work was conducted from December 2016 through March 2018.

Review of Governmental and Private Facilities for Children

April 2018

Summary

Based on the procedures performed and except as otherwise noted, the policies, procedures, and processes in place at two of the four facilities reviewed provide reasonable assurance that they adequately protect the health, safety, and welfare of youths at the facilities, and they respect the civil and other rights of youths in their care. The policies, procedures, and processes at two of the four facilities reviewed only provided minimal assurance that they protect the health, safety, and welfare of the youths at the facility and they respect the civil and other rights of the youths in their care.

We reported our observations at the two facilities to their licensing agencies pursuant to Section 8.5 of Senate Bill 189 of the 2017 Legislative Session. SB 189 requires the Legislative Auditor to provide a report to the licensing entity of a facility found to have deficiencies in policies, procedures, or processes that could be detrimental to the children in the care of the facility.

We also conducted unannounced site visits to four children's facilities and did not note anything that caused us to question the health, safety, welfare, or protection of the rights of the children in those facilities.

Facility Observations

Many of the facilities had common weaknesses. Improvements to medication administration processes and procedures were needed at all four facilities reviewed. This included three facilities that did not have comprehensive policies and procedures for the administration of medication or the policies and procedures did not have sufficient detail. In addition, three facilities were either missing documentation of some consents from the persons legally responsible for the psychiatric care of the youths for the administration of psychotropic medications, or the consent forms were incomplete. (page 6)

Statutes do not require facilities that provide treatment to children for abuse of alcohol or drugs to have specific policies and procedures for the administration of medication. Other types of children's facilities are required to have specific policies and procedures for the administration of medication. The Legislature may wish to consider enacting legislation to require facilities for the treatment of abuse of alcohol or drugs and that provide residential treatment to children who have been placed in the facility pursuant to an order of a court to adopt policies similar to those adopted for other children's facilities. (page 6)

Summit View Youth Center (reasonable assurance) – Summit View Youth Center provides reasonable assurance that it adequately protects the youths in its care. However, Summit View could improve its medication administration and documentation, ensure timely preparation of mental health documentation, improve suicide prevention documentation, and better ensure safety issues are addressed. (page 11)

Desert Willow Treatment Center (reasonable assurance) – Desert Willow Treatment Center provides reasonable assurance that it adequately protects the youths in its care. However, Desert Willow could improve some policies and procedures, including medication administration. (page 19)

Nevada Homes for Youth (minimal assurance) – The policies and procedures at Nevada Homes for Youth were outdated, incomplete, and did not contain a table of contents, making it difficult for staff to locate key policies and procedures when needed. Medication policies do not establish adequate controls over prescription medication or provide assurance that youths receive their medications. In addition, policies related to treatment plans, safety, and youths' rights are not sufficient to ensure youths receive the services they need. (page 26)

Genesis (minimal assurance) – Genesis's policies, procedures, and processes do not ensure that all youths receive their medication as prescribed or that the administration of the medication is properly recorded. Policies and procedures regarding client rights, including the right to file a grievance, are not complete, are not consistent, and are not being followed. In addition, policies and procedures related to treatment plans, maintaining complete records of required employee training, and safety issues are not complete. Furthermore, the foster care agency's computer does not have a password to protect sensitive information. (page 37)