

# Review Highlights



Highlights of Legislative Auditor report on the Review of Governmental and Private Facilities for Children issued in 2019.  
Report # LA20-02.

## Background

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 218G.570 through 218G.595 authorize the Legislative Auditor to conduct reviews, audits, and unannounced site visits of governmental and private facilities for children.

As of June 30, 2018, we had identified 60 governmental and private facilities that met the requirements of NRS 218G: 20 governmental and 40 private facilities. In addition, 77 Nevada children were placed in 16 facilities in eight different states as of June 30, 2018.

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, 2017, through June 30, 2018, we received 1,531 complaints from 33 facilities in Nevada. Twenty-seven 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.595. This report includes the results of our reviews of 2 children's facilities, unannounced site visits to 8 children's facilities, and a survey of 60 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, 2016. In addition, we discussed related issues and observed related processes during our visits.

# Review of Governmental and Private Facilities for Children

December 2018

## Summary

Based on the procedures performed and except as otherwise noted, the policies, procedures, and processes in place at the two 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. However, we identified several areas for improvement at both facilities.

We also conducted unannounced site visits to eight children's facilities. At one facility, Northwest Academy, we observed several issues that prompted us to question whether the facility adequately protected the health, safety, and welfare of the youths at the facility. As a result, we contacted Northwest Academy's licensing agency, the Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance, to express our concerns (see page 35).

## Review Conclusions

Statutes do not require most health facilities licensed by the state's Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance (HCQC) to ensure employees who have direct contact with children are trained in certain areas specific to children. This includes private psychiatric hospitals that provide 24-hour care to children, facilities for the treatment of abuse of alcohol or drugs that provide residential services to children, and psychiatric residential treatment facilities. In contrast, training is required by law for employees at state-operated psychiatric hospitals (NRS 433B.175), governmental and private child care facilities and institutions (NRS 432A.177), group foster homes (NRS 424.0365), and correction and detention facilities (NRS 63.190 and NRS 62B.250) which includes:

- Controlling the behavior of children;
- Using force and restraint on children;
- Suicide awareness and prevention;
- Rights of children in the facility;
- Other matters affecting the health, welfare, safety, and civil and other rights of children in the facility; and
- Working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning children.

The Legislature may wish to consider enacting legislation to require psychiatric hospitals that provide 24-hour care, psychiatric residential treatment facilities, and facilities for the treatment of abuse of alcohol or drugs and that provide residential treatment to children who have been placed in a facility pursuant to an order of a court to require staff who have direct contact with children be trained in areas specific to children. (page 5)

### Clark County's Juvenile Detention Center – Detention Facility (page 9)

Health	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆	Oversight of medical contractor and contractor policies needed. Neither the contractor's nor the Center's policies and procedures addressed psychotropic medication administration processes and procedures. In addition, our review of three youths' medication files found several errors: missing physicians' orders, missing documentation of verification of medication at intake, blank spaces on medication administration records, evidence of missed medication for up to 11 days, and missing documentation of the contractor's staff's medication training.
Safety	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆	Additional procedures for completing incident reports are needed.
Welfare	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	No issues noted.
Rights	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆	Update of youth's handbook is needed, including the grievance process.

### Willow Springs Center – Psychiatric Hospital (page 17)

Health	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆	Policies and procedures need to be established for consent to administer psychotropic medication, medication release at discharge, documentation of prescriptions, and admittance with an addiction disorder.
Safety	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆	Background check policy needs to be updated, abuse reporting policy needs to be followed, and the face sheet policy needs to be updated.
Welfare	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	No issues noted.
Rights	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆	Policies need to be updated to address the grievance process, patients' rights, and contraband.