

2014 Audit Findings

Women's Residential Correctional Facility Fifth Judicial District, Department of Correctional Services Des Moines, Iowa

Narrative:

The site visit for the PREA audit of the Fifth Judicial District Department of Correctional Services, Women's Residential Correctional Facility, Des Moines, Iowa was conducted on July 21st and 22nd, 2014. During the two days the auditor toured the facility, reviewed documentation and conducted formal staff and resident interviews. Ten random residents from the two housing units were interviewed including one resident who is mentally challenged. Seventeen staff from all shifts was interviewed including District Director Sally Kreamer. Staff were questioned about PREA training, how to report, to whom to report, filing reports, available interventions, conducting interviews, evidence collection, follow up and monitoring retaliation.

An entrance meeting was held with Sally Kreamer, District Director, Michelle Dix, Assistant Director-Residential, Peggy Urtz, Residential Manager and Darin Cox, PREA Coordinator to discuss the audit schedule of activities. Following the entrance meeting I toured the facility from 8:30a.m. To 9:30a.m. In the past twelve months the facility has had one sexual assault/harassment allegation case, which was found, unsubstantiated and the Review Team documentation was reviewed.

Description of Facility Characteristics:

The Women's Residential Correctional Facility is not a lock-up facility with correctional officers, prison bars and fences. The court ordered residents experience a high level of supervision and treatment, centered on finding work, specific treatment and observing rules. The facility has been in operation since 1993. With no correction officers at the center, residents are supervised by residential officers and there are parole officers on staff to address any parole/probation needs residents may have. The center houses four types of individuals; parole work release, Owl continuums, probationers and Bureau of Prison parolees and their length of stay is usually four to six months. The facility also houses women with children under the age of five, to be with them while they do their residential correctional facility time. The resident attends treatment groups weekly, as well as, AA/NA/ACOA or other twelve-step meetings and other one-on-one sessions with her counselor. The programming includes a series of lectures on such topics as job seeking, stress management, AIDS education, nutrition, parenting and domestic violence. The women also journal, watch treatment films, and learn cognitive skills while at the facility.

The center is a 50 bed facility, including the two nursery rooms, with an average population the past twelve months of 49.28 residents. The center is a single story building constructed of bricks and mortar. The residents housing area consists of four person and one person bedrooms. The

center uses three local hospitals for medical and mental health services, including the Polk County Broadlawns Hospital located next door to the facility. The center has five trained investigators for administrative investigations and uses the Des Moines Police Department and the Iowa Department of Corrections Investigative Division for criminal investigations. The center has an excellent relationship with the Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services Program. Ms. Brenda Bash was contacted prior to the audit to discuss any sexual abuse/harassment allegations at the center and stated there is a good relationship with the facility and the facility promotes PREA. The mission statement of the Women's Residential Correctional Facility is to provide a safe and holistic approach to supervision that seeks to educate, support and advocate for all women to transform their lives.

The auditor found the staff and residents to be very aware of PREA. The staff was very knowledgeable about their responsibilities to ensure a safe facility. They were all aware of reporting responsibilities, preservation of evidence, as well as dealing with victims and abusers of sexual assault/harassment. The staff has had extensive training on how to identify signs of sexual assault/harassment and how to deal and treat victims of sexual assault and or harassment.

Summary of Audit Findings:

An exit meeting was held July 22, 2014 with Sally Kreamer, District Director, Michelle Dix, Assistant Director-Residential, Peggy Urtz, Residential Manager, Darin Cox, Executive Officer/PREA Coordinator and Angels Karaidos, Probation/Parole Supervisor.

Number of standards exceeded: 0

Number of standards met: 39

Number of standards not met: 0

Audit and Report completed by Stephen Huffman, Certified Auditor, the Nakamoto Group, Inc., July 25, 2014.