

# Review Highlights



Highlights of Legislative Auditor report on the Review of Governmental and Private Facilities for Children, April 2012 issued on April 17, 2012. Report # LA12-16.

## 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, 2011, we had identified 52 governmental and private facilities that meet the requirements of NRS 218G: 19 governmental and 33 private facilities. In addition, 150 Nevada children were placed in 22 facilities in 11 different states as of June 30, 2011.

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, 2011, through December 31, 2011, we received 541 complaints from 24 facilities in Nevada. Thirty-five 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. The report includes the results of our reviews of 5 children's facilities, unannounced site visits to 7 children's facilities, and a survey of 56 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 include an examination of policies, procedures, processes, and complaints filed since July 1, 2010. In addition, we discussed related issues and observed related processes during our visits.

# Review of Governmental and Private Facilities for Children April 2012

## Summary

Based on the procedures performed and except as otherwise noted, the policies, procedures, and processes in place at the five facilities reviewed provide reasonable assurance that they adequately protect the health, safety, and welfare of the youths at the facilities, and they respect the civil and other rights of youths in their care. In addition, during the seven unannounced visits conducted, we did not note anything that caused us to question the health, safety, welfare, or protection of rights of the children in the facilities.

## Facility Observations

All five facilities reviewed need to develop or update policies and procedures. The types of policies and procedures that were missing, unclear, or outdated range from a timeframe to complete a youth's initial treatment plan, including when the plan should be reviewed and revised, to the control and security of keys, tools, and kitchen utensils.

Medication administration processes and procedures need improvement at all five facilities. The medication administration process should include documentation of medications administered to youths, controls over prescribed medications, and the process used to ensure the accuracy of medication files and records. Youth medical files did not always contain complete or clear documentation of dispensed, prescribed medication at four of five facilities reviewed. Some youths' files were missing evidence of physicians' orders at three of five facilities. At one facility, some youths' files were missing up to 5 months of medication administration records. In addition, medication files and records did not always contain evidence of independent review at three of the five facilities.

Two of five facilities needed to develop or update their over-the-counter standing order forms. A standing order form identifies over-the-counter medications a facility may administer to youths. This form helps ensure youths take only medications approved or recommended by the Federal Food and Drug Administration.

## Facilities' Implementation of New Medication Policy

### Requirements

During the 2011 Legislative Session, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 246. This bill, effective January 1, 2012, requires children's facilities to adopt policies to:

- Document the orders of the treating physician of a child;
- Administer medication to a child;
- Store, handle, and dispose of medication;
- Document the administration of medication and any errors in the administration of medication;
- Minimize errors in the administration of medication;
- Address errors in the administration of medication;
- Ensure each employee who administers medication receives a copy of and understands the policies.

In order to assess the facilities' progress with implementing the requirements in Senate Bill 246, we requested each facility subject to a review by the Legislative Auditor submit information on the facility's implementation of the requirements contained in the bill. This request was made to the 52 facilities identified as of June 30, 2011, and an additional 10 facilities identified since June 30, 2011. However, six facilities had either closed or no longer met the definition of a governmental or private facility pursuant to NRS 218G.515 through 218G.535. Therefore, a total of 56 facilities were surveyed regarding their implementation of the bill's requirements.

As of March 15, 2012, we had received responses from 52 facilities. We will assess each facility's compliance with the requirements contained in the bill as we conduct future reviews and unannounced visits.