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December 31, 2009

TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
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Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Patricia S. Ploehn, Director
Department of Children and Family Services

CUNNINGHAM'S GROUP HOME CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

Cunningham's Group Home is located in the 2nd Supervisorial District and provides services to Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) foster youth. According to Cunningham's Group Home's program statement, the stated goal of the Group Home is "to increase children's independent adaptive skills and decrease their maladaptive behaviors in order to gain the skills necessary for successful adult adjustment." Cunningham's Group Home is licensed to serve a capacity of six children, ages 11 through 17.

The Out of Home Care Management Division conducted a review of Cunningham's Group Home in September 2009, at which time they had one six-bed site and five placed DCFS children. All five children were males. For purposes of this review, all five currently placed children were interviewed and their case files were reviewed. The placed children's overall average length of placement was 12 months, and the average age was 17 years old. Four staff files were also reviewed for compliance with Title 22 regulations and the Contract Requirements.

None of the placed children were on psychotropic medication.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Cunningham's Group Home's compliance with the Contract and State regulations. The visit included a review of Cunningham's

Group Home's program statement, administrative internal policies and procedures, all placed children's case files, and a random sampling of personnel files. A site visit was made to the facility to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children. We conducted interviews with the children to assess the care and services they are receiving.

A copy of this report has been sent to the Auditor Controller (A-C) and Community Care Licensing (CCL).

SUMMARY

The children interviewed stated that they are happy and that the staff are genuinely concerned for them. Additionally, the direct care staff stated that they were pleased with the support they receive from the administrative staff.

We noted some documentation deficiencies, but the files were well organized. Cunningham's Group Home was receptive to implementing some systemic changes to improve their compliance with regulations and the Foster Care Agreement. The report was sent to the Executive Director for review and comments. Although the Executive Director provided verbal comments during the Exit Conference, she did not provide written comments in response to the draft report.

NOTABLE FINDINGS

The following are the notable findings of our review:

- One (25%) out of four eligible children was not enrolled in a Youth Development Program (Independent Living Program).

- One out of five children required Special Education Services. The child was participating in a Special Education Program but did not have a current Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) on file.

A detailed report of our findings is attached.

EXIT CONFERENCE

The following are highlights from the Exit Conference held October 6, 2009:

In attendance:

Beatrice Cunningham, Executive Director Cunningham's Group Home and Monitors Lilia Gonzalez CSA I and LaDonna Jones CSA I, Out of Home Care Management Division, DCFS.

Highlights:

The Executive Director was in agreement with our findings and recommendations. During the Exit Conference, Ms. Cunningham, Executive Director stated that the Youth Development Program starts "every so often" but that she had contacted the CSW about this issue. However, no documentation was found in the file indicating that a referral was made or communication regarding this issue with the CSW. In regard to the child who was participating in a Special Education program, but did not have an IEP in his file, the Executive Director stated that she had been recently informed that the child had an IEP.

As agreed, Cunningham's Group Home submitted a timely written Corrective Action Plan (CAP), which addressed each recommendation noted in this compliance report. The approved CAP is attached.

As noted in the monitoring protocol, a follow up visit will be conducted to address the provider's approved CAP and assess for full implementation of recommendations.

PSP:LP:MG:EAH:DC:lg

Attachments

c: William T. Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Jean Chen, Community Care Licensing
Beatrice Cunningham, Executive Director, Cunningham's Group Home

CUNNINGHAM'S GROUP HOME CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW

SITE LOCATION

CUNNINGHAM'S GROUP HOME
5939 CHESLEY AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CA 90043
(323) 299-7357

The following report is based on a "point in time" at the time of the monitoring visit. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the September 2009 monitoring review.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

Based on our review of five children's case files and four staff files, Cunningham's Group Home was in full compliance with eight out of nine sections of our Contract Compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Facility and Environment; Program Services; Recreation and Activities; Children's Health-Related Services (including Psychotropic Medications); Personal Rights; Children's Clothing and Allowance; and Personnel Records (including Staff Qualifications, Staffing Ratios, Criminal Clearances, and Training). The following report details the area found to be out of compliance:

EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Based on our review of five children's case files, Cunningham's Group Home fully complied with two (50%) out of four elements in the areas of Education and Emancipation Services.

Comments:

Cunningham's Group Home provided children with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational training programs. Additionally, copies of all children's report cards or progress reports were maintained in each child's file.

During our review, we noted that a 16-year-old child, who was placed for a total of three months at the time of the review, was not enrolled in a Youth Development Services Program. During the Exit Conference, Mrs. Cunningham, Executive Director stated that the program starts every so often but that she had contacted the CSW about this issue. However, no documentation was found indicating that a referral was made or communicated to the CSW.

During our review, there was one placed child, age 13, who had academic limitations and was enrolled in special education classes. However, Cunningham's Group Home did not maintain a copy of the current Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) in the child's case file and there was no documentation of the Group Home's efforts to obtain a copy. During the Exit Conference, the Executive Director stated that she had recently been informed that the child had an IEP.

Recommendations:

Cunningham's Group Home shall ensure that:

1. All children, 16 years and older are referred to and participate in Youth Development Services.

2. All children who participate in a Special Education Program have a current Individual Educational Plan (IEP) on file.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE AUDITOR CONTROLLER'S REPORT

Objective

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the A-C's prior monitoring review.

Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the Fiscal year 2007-08 monitoring review were implemented. The report was issued on January 29, 2009.

Results

The prior monitoring report contained one recommendation. Cunningham's Group Home management was to clean and re-caulk the bathtub. This recommendation was fully implemented.

Recommendation:

None

Cunningham's Group Home
Po Box 1638
Inglewood Ca 90302
(310) 6739185/Fax (310)3300308

October 28, 2009

Corrective Action Plan

Group Home Contract Compliance Review Plan Exit Summary

Well-Beiing/ Education/ Emancipation

3. Newly placed child's school progress not available. IEP not on file
Corrective Action

Cunningham's Group home will ensure that any child that has an IEP.a copy will be requested from the CSW at the time of placement. If necessary a copy will be requested from the school and any other school records such as report cards etc Effective 9/15/2009. Beatrice cunningham is responsible in seeing that this plan is carried out

2.Ensure that Children 16 years and older are immediately enroll in the county's youth Development Services program or equivalent

Permanency

Corrective Action
Cunningham's Group Home will ensure that children 16 and older are immediately enrolled in the county' youth Development Services or equivalent by working with the

CSW to ensure that the paper worker is submitted in a timely manner and follow-up with phone calls to CSW and youth development program confirming that all the necessary papers have been submitted and child has a start date. Beatrice Cunningham will see to it that these plans are carried out. Effective 9/15/2009

Beatrice Cunningham

Beatrice Cunningham/CEO