

Appendix 2



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
AUSTIN A. ANDERSEN
INTERIM INSPECTOR GENERAL

INSPECTIONS AND EVALUATIONS DIVISION
MANAGEMENT ALERT REPORT

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
YOUTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
OAK HILL YOUTH CENTER**

**ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES AT OAK HILL YOUTH
CENTER**

MAR 03 – I - 011
JANUARY 7, 2004

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Inspector General

Inspector General



January 7, 2004

Yvonne D. Gilchrist
Director
Department of Human Services
2700 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE
801 East Building
Washington, DC 20032

Marceline D. Alexander
Acting Administrator
Youth Services Administration
8300 Riverton Court
Laurel, MD 20724

Dear Ms. Gilchrist and Ms. Alexander:

This is a Management Alert Report (MAR 03-I-011) to inform you of a significant issue that has come to our attention as a result of our inspection of the Department of Human Services (DHS), Youth Services Administration (YSA). The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) provides these reports when we believe a serious matter requires the immediate attention of District of Columbia government officials. The inspection team (team) has received information indicating that illegal substances, such as marijuana and phencyclidine (PCP), are smuggled into the Oak Hill Youth Center (OHYC) in Laurel, Maryland on a continual basis.

Background

According to YSA officials, nearly 100% of OHYC detained youths (residents) suffer from substance abuse problems. The Jerry M. Consent Decree requires YSA to provide treatment programs to assist residents in recovering from these problems. Treatment cannot be meaningful or effective, however, if residents continue to have access to illegal substances.

Observation

A number of OHYC employees interviewed by the team stated that the presence of illegal substances has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. The team reviewed a random sample of drug test results, and found that numerous residents who tested negative for drug use

upon arrival at OHYC tested positive for marijuana and PCP after being confined. Employees believe that Youth Correctional Officers (YCOs) are the primary source of the illegal substances used by youths in OHYC, and that the lack of proper security checks at the entrance has allowed them, and presumably others, to carry in contraband past the security guards.

The availability of illegal substances such as marijuana and PCP in OHYC hinders treatment and recovery of residents with pre-existing substance abuse problems, and creates addiction and other health problems for others.

Recommendations

YSA has taken measures to upgrade the OHYC security force, and that action should improve the detection of contraband such as illegal drugs at OHYC entrances. However, OIG recommends that the YSA Administrator initiate the following actions:

1. Request that the DHS Office of Internal Compliance investigate allegations by staff members that YCOs are transporting illegal substances into OHYC. The Director of DHS should report the results of that investigation to the Inspector General, and to other government entities as may be required by District, Maryland, or federal law; and
2. Explore the feasibility of implementing a canine detection program for illegal substances at OHYC.

Please provide your comments on this MAR by January 20, 2003. Your response should include actions taken or planned, dates for completion of planned actions, and reasons for any disagreement with the concerns and recommendations presented. Please distribute this Management Alert Report only to those personnel who will be directly involved in preparing your response. Should you have questions or desire a conference prior to preparing your response, please contact Lawrence Perry, Director of Planning and Inspections, at 202-727-8490.

Sincerely,



Austin A. Andersen
Interim Inspector General

AAA/lp

cc: Robert C. Bobb, City Administrator
Carolyn Graham, Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders
James Parks, Deputy Director for Administration, DHS
Councilmember Kathleen Patterson, Chairperson, Committee on the Judiciary