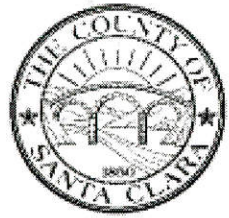


County of Santa Clara

Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County Government Center, East Wing
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, California 95110-1770
(408) 299-5001 FAX 298-8460 TDD 993-8272



Lynn Regadanz
Clerk of the Board

September 11, 2014

FILED
SEP 11 2014

DAVID H. YAMASAKI
Chief Executive Officer/Clerk
Superior Court of CA County of Santa Clara
BY BRITNEY HUELBIG DEPUTY

The Honorable Brian C. Walsh
Presiding Judge
Santa Clara County Superior Court
191 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95113

RE: Grand Jury Report: Is the Receiving Assessment and Intake Center A Safe Place for Children?

Dear Judge Walsh:

At the September 9, 2014 meeting of the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors (Item No. 13), the Board adopted the response from the County Administration to the Final Grand Jury Report and recommendations Regarding the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center.

As directed by the Board of Supervisors and on behalf of the Board President, our office is forwarding to you the enclosed certified copy of the response to the Final Grand Jury Report. This response constitutes the response of the Board of Supervisors, consistent with provisions of California Penal Section 933(c).

If there are any questions concerning this issue, please contact our office at 299-5001 or by email at michele.holscher@cob.sccgov.org.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele Holscher".

Michele Holscher
Deputy Clerk, Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Clara

Enclosures

County of Santa Clara
Social Services Agency



333 West Julian Street
San Jose, California 95110-2335

August 5, 2014

To: Gary Graves, Chief Operating Officer

From: Bruce Wagstaff, Agency Director
Lori Medina, DFCS Director

Handwritten signatures of Bruce Wagstaff and Lori A. Medina are placed over the printed names in the "From:" field.

Subject: **Response to Civil Grand Jury Recommendations Regarding the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC)**

The following is the Social Services Agency, Department of Family and Children's Service's (DFCS) response to the recommendations made in the Civil Grand Jury report dated June 10, 2014. Included in this response are action items being initiated by the Department.

Findings and Recommendations of the Civil Grand Jury with DFCS Responses

Finding 1

The existing security at the Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center (RAIC) is not sufficient to keep the children safe at all times.

Recommendation 1

The County should increase the number of hours a deputy sheriff is onsite at the RAIC to 24/7.

DFCS Response: Disagree. The current contract with the Sheriff includes providing ongoing safety training for staff on all shifts for safety of staff and children. This safety training includes safety drills and education. We are conducting regular drills with staff for emergency preparedness. The DFCS is not aware of any instances where children's safety or staff safety has been compromised by not having 24/7 Sheriff's security available at the facility. There is 24/7 security for the facility through the combination of private security and the Sheriff's Department.

Finding 2

Lighting and visibility in the parking lot is inadequate.

Recommendation 2

The County should increase parking lot lighting.

DFCS Response: Agree. The Grand Jury Report indicates that they had observed that trees had been trimmed during their inspection. Current private onsite security staff views the camera sight lines every day and they report if any sight lines are compromised so the appropriate request can be made to correct this. This will be monitored closely to ensure that vegetation is trimmed prior to obstructing camera sight lines.

The county building manager has indicated that the county electrician reports there are some lights which will require a substantial expense to install and there are some lights that can only be installed temporarily. The DFCS will continue to explore options and follow up on the exterior lighting issue with Fleet and Facilities. The goal will be to have improved the exterior lighting by December 31, 2014.

Finding 3

The existing slats in the playground fence allow items to be passed through and permit people to observe the children.

Recommendation 3

The County should procure and install privacy screens to cover the fencing.

DFCS Response: Agree. The DFCS installed privacy screens on May 16, 2014 to increase privacy and security.

Finding 4

There is no procedure for RAIC staff to inspect the playground prior to allowing children to enter.

Recommendation 4

The County should develop and implement a procedure that requires the RAIC staff to inspect the playground and remove any items/debris before the children enter.

DFCS Response: Agree. While it is important to note that children are always supervised while at the RAIC, and they are not out on the playground alone, DFCS has implemented the practice of having staff inspect the playground area and to remove items/debris prior to children entering the playground. In addition, Security staff are also inspecting inside the playground as part of their regular daily rounds.

The RAIC Policy and Procedures manual is also in the process of being updated to reflect this information as well, as part of a complete revision. The new manual has an anticipated completion date of December 1, 2014.

Finding 5

There is not an updated comprehensive Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) evacuation plan.

Recommendation 5a

The County should develop a comprehensive ADA evacuation plan for the RAIC

Recommendation 5b

The County should train the RAIC staff in the implementation of the ADA evacuation plan.

DFCS Response: Partially Agree. The DFCS has an ADA evacuation plan and staff have been trained. The primary evacuation point is outside the building at the base of the outside stairs. This is in accordance with ADA recommendations of the fire marshal. The back-up evacuation plan is to wait in the fire resistant hallway. This is strictly a back-up plan, and while not ideal, it is based on the instructions/direction required by the fire marshal. It is also important to note that Station 8 of San Jose Fire Department is less than one block away and they know that we are housed in this facility. The DFCS has implemented a practice where the RAIC staff will notify the fire station if we have a child with disabilities in the facility.

The DFCS is currently in the process of updating the Emergency Response document for the RAIC. This is updating key personnel information, notifying Station 8 when a child with disabilities is at the RAIC, etc. Anticipated completion date is September 1, 2014.

The RAIC Policy and Procedures manual is also in the process of being updated to reflect this information as well, as part of a complete revision. The new manual has an anticipated completion date of December 1, 2014.

Finding 6

RAIC Counselors are not certified in CPR/First Aid/AED every two years.

Recommendation 6

The County should ensure that RAIC Counselors are certified in CPR/First Aid/AED every two years.

DFCS Response: Disagree. The DFCS has always required that all RAIC Counselors (dating back to the Children's Shelter) be certified in CPR/First Aid and that they be recertified when

their certifications expire (every two years). The CPR/First Aid classes are provided by the County free of charge to the employee. The DFCS RAIC Manager and the RAIC Children's Counselors Supervisor track this compliance and maintain a copy of the current certifications. In addition, two RAIC staff are Emergency Response Team (ERT) trained – one counselor and one social worker, each working different shifts. This is a voluntary training and responsibility. ERT Trained staff help to lead and coordinate emergency responses including evacuations, use of fire extinguishers, use of AED, etc.

Finding 7

Non-counselor RAIC staff members are not trained in First Aid and fire extinguisher use.

Recommendation 7

The County should provide First Aid and fire extinguisher use training to all Non-counselor RAIC staff

DFCS Response: Partially Agree. Steve Palmadessa, the SSA Safety Coordinator, has advised that only ERT's receive Fire Extinguisher training but all fire extinguishers have extensive and detailed instructions. RAIC non-counseling staff are not required to be CPR trained but they are encouraged to do so, and the training is provided free of charge.

Finding 8

SSA does not regularly report RAIC safety and security issues during the Stakeholder Group meetings.

Recommendation 8

The County should require that RAIC safety and security issues be reported during the Stakeholder Group meetings.

DFCS Response: Partially Agree. The DFCS has been reporting safety and security issues during Stakeholder Meetings when such issues arise. The DFCS does not agree with the categorization of certain situations as security issues. For example, a 17 year old child running away from the RAIC is a safety issue for the specific child, but is not necessarily a security issue. The fact that the child is 17 and has the self-determination and decision making ability to choose to leave is a concern, but is not something that DFCS staff can ultimately prevent, as the RAIC is not a locked facility and the children being served are victims, not perpetrators and cannot be held against their will.

Finding 9

SSA does not document discussions regarding RAIC safety and security issues in the minutes of the Stakeholder Group meetings.

Recommendation 9

The County should require that RAIC safety and security issues be included in the minutes of the Stakeholder Group meetings.

DFCS Response: Partially Agree. The DFCS already reports on safety and security issues to the RAIC Stakeholders Group as appropriate. The DFCS already has a process for taking minutes and making them available. Any safety or security issues that are discussed in the meeting will be part of the minutes.

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original.

ATTEST: Lynn Regadanz

Clerk of the Board

By: 

Deputy Clerk

Date: 9/11/14