

Juvenile Justice Commission County of Santa Clara

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GROUP HOME INSPECTION REPORT CALIFORNIA ANCHOR RESIDENTS, INC., #1 JULY 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) conducted an inspection of California Anchor Residents, Inc., #1 (CAR1) boys group home May and June 2017 in accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code Section 229.5. This home was last inspected on July 24, 2014.

Five Commissioners from the JJC Group Home Inspection Committee conducted an onsite inspection over two days and reviewed documents that detail the operation of the home, policies and procedures and other related documents. Two Commissioners reviewed the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division (CCL) file for the CAR1. Subsequent questions were posed to the Executive Director, Assistant Administrator, Facility Manager and CCL.

While some advancements have been made to the facility since the previous inspection, the JJC found the facility still needs improvements inside and out. The JJC also is concerned the residents are not accessing recreational opportunities and community resources to build life skills and enhance their learning experience. In addition, CAR1 could not produce written documentation that would equip staff to appropriately respond to serious incidents and emergencies. Finally, in discussion with staff, the JJC learned that enforcement of the house rules and policies was inconsistent.

Not all of these deficiencies rise to the level of significant violations of the regulations. However, they do indicate that CAR1 needs to improve the quality of service to the residents. The overarching aim of the group home should be to offer an environment that is supportive, caring, respectful and enriching. Many youths placed in group homes have experienced neglect, abuse or a chaotic home life. One objective of placement is to provide these youth with every opportunity to find safety, security, and consistency, and to obtain the skills to navigate successfully as an adult. After completing this inspection the JJC finds that CAR1 should take steps to improve the physical environment and raise the level of services provided.

The JJC's specific findings are detailed in the report. Recommendations can be found in the last section.

INTRODUCTION

The Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) is a state mandated and court-appointed commission. The broad purpose of the JJC is to inquire into the administration of the juvenile court law in the County. The JJC is dedicated to the promotion of an effective juvenile justice system operated in an environment of credibility, dignity, fairness, and respect for the youth of Santa Clara County.

In fulfillment of these responsibilities, the JJC visits several group homes during the year and, based on the findings, determines which home requires a complete inspection. Two Commissioners from the JJC Group Home Inspection Committee (Committee) completed a site visit at a group home managed by California Anchor Residents, Inc. (CAR) on November 28, 2016. From the results of the visit, the Committee decided to conduct a full inspection of this home pursuant to California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 229.5¹ and the criteria established in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 1, (§80000 *et seq.*) and Chapter 5 (§84000 *et seq.*).

CAR operates two group homes in Santa Clara County, one for boys (CAR1) and one for girls (CAR2). The subject of this report is CAR1, which was licensed on January 21, 2010 as a Rate Classification Level (RCL) 10 for both dependency and juvenile justice placement. The Home is now at RCL 9. The JJC conducted a previous inspection in 2014.²

Two Commissioners inspected CAR1 on May 26, 2017 and three on May 30, 2017. The team interviewed the Assistant Administrator (AA), Facility Manager (FM) and five residents, and reviewed documentation provided to the residents. In addition, two Commissioners reviewed the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing (CCL) file for CAR1. Subsequent questions were posed to the Executive Director, AA, FM and CCL. The findings and observations of the visit, inspection, interviews and document review are detailed in this report.

SITE VISIT: NOVEMBER 28, 2016

The following is a summary of the Commissioners' observations during this visit:

- Most, but not all windows had new screens.
- New gutters had been installed.
- The front and back yards were minimally maintained.
- The large patio area located in the backyard contained no tables, chairs and sports equipment (i.e. basketball hoop).
- A loose electrical wire was protruding from the ground in the backyard.

¹ WIC 229.5 (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a juvenile justice commission may inquire into the operation of any group home that serves wards or dependent children of the juvenile court and is located in the county or region the commission serves. The commission may review the safety and well-being of wards or dependent children placed in the group home and the program and services provided in relation to the home's published program statement.

² A copy of the report can be found in the report archives at http://www.sccscourt.org/court_divisions/juvenile/jjc.

- The garage was cluttered with stored items.
- The kitchen was neat, but the cupboards were in need of repair and deep cleaning.
- The dishwasher was inoperable.
- A large bowl of fruit was placed in the middle of the dining room table.
- The refrigerator contents were sparse, and a closet used for storing extra food was empty.
- Incident reports and law enforcement contacts were stored electronically, and a copy placed in the resident's file.

INSPECTION

I. Population

CAR1 is licensed residential group home for a maximum of 6 boys. As of the inspection, the age range of the six boys residing in the home was 15 to 19. One boy was from Santa Clara County, 3 from Alameda County and 2 from Contra Costa County. All residents were dependents in the child welfare system. Two residents were absent without leave (AWOL) at the start of the inspection on May 26, 2017; and one returned during the inspection. No residents were AWOL during the May 30, 2017 inspection.

II. Facility and Grounds

The one-story house is located in a residential neighborhood on the Eastside of San Jose.

a. Grounds

- i. The front yard was minimally maintained. The lawn was brown and the plants sparse. However, the shrubs and vines were not as overgrown as they were at the last inspection three years ago. The backyard lawn also appears to receive limited attention (Fig 1).
- ii. CCL (4/27/17) cited CAR for missing boards in the fence. The repair made to the fence is inadequate (Fig 2), and is in need of additional work or replacement.
- iii. The loose electrical wire had not been removed from the ground. Staff indicated that if it were to be removed, the landlord would hold CAR financially liable for its removal.
- iv. The large patio area located in the backyard, did not contain any outside furniture or sports equipment for use by the residents.

b. Facility

- i. The home has 4 bedrooms. Residents use three of the bedrooms, and the fourth is used as the office. Two residents share each bedroom.
- ii. At the time of the inspection, a nineteen-year old was sharing a bedroom with a minor. Staff reported the social worker approved the co-location of the two, but CAR1 did not receive prior authorization from CCL. As of June 16, 2016, the exception request still was pending CCL approval. The nineteen-year old was in the process of transferring to Independent Living.
- iii. The furniture is adequate for the bedrooms. The mattresses are on the floor. The FM stated that, while bed frames are stored in the garage, the residents preferred the current arrangement.

- iv. The bedrooms have several patched areas on the walls, which have not been smoothed and painted (Figs. 3, 4, and 5).
- v. The residents use one of two bathrooms. The other is located in the office, and, even though it is considered the staff bathroom, residents are allowed to use it.
- vi. Staff stated that the residents' bathroom was painted and a new floor and mirror were installed. However, near the bathtub the wallboard was separating from the wall and the floor was discolored, which suggested water damage (Fig 6).
- vii. The heating system currently is inoperable and CAR1 used space heaters last winter. The AA indicated that CAR1 is in the process of replacing the heater.
- viii. CAR1 was cited by CCL for having the water too hot (the latest citation was 5/5/17). The Commissioners confirmed that the water temperature was within acceptable range. The FM reported that staff have been trained on setting the water temperature.
- ix. The FM stated that SJFD recently checked the fire extinguishers, smoke and CO2 detectors.
- x. A new water heater was installed. A Commissioner noted that the drainage hose on the water heater was located at the top rather than at the bottom of the tank.
- xi. Screens were missing for all but two windows in the house. Keeping insects out of the house will be difficult without screens.
- xii. The office appeared neat and devoid of the clutter found in the last inspection.

c. Food Services

- i. The refrigerator and freezer were well stocked with food.
- ii. Snacks were located in a locked closet. The selection of snacks was limited to prepackaged individual servings of cookies, crackers, chips, and cups of soup (Figs. 7, 8 and 9).
- iii. The kitchen was clean and neat, but the cupboard doors and ceiling were dirty and should receive a deep cleaning. (Fig. 10).
- iv. The dishwasher was inoperable.
- v. The number of dishes, bowls and glasses were not sufficient.

III. Administration

a. Administrative Functions

- i. The Plan of Operation in the CCL file states that the Emergency Intervention Plan (EIP) has six elements, one of which is manual restraints.
- ii. In reading several documents including the Policies and Procedures Manual, the details of the EIP were not apparent. The Executive Director provided a list of strategies to be used by staff to de-escalate an incident, but did not

- provide the whole written procedures the staff should follow during an emergency incident as requested.
- iii. The intake process is in writing, and orientation is provided. One resident interviewed said he did not recall receiving an orientation at intake.
 - iv. Staffing ratio per child complies with regulations.
 - v. CAR1 has developed a staff-training plan in response to a CCL citation noting a deficiency in the training requirements for two staff. A list of upcoming trainings was posted on the office wall.

b. Program and Services

- i. Each resident has a general service plan when he enters CAR1 and the plan should be updated and individualized within 30 days and every 90 days. On May 5, 2017, CCL cited CAR1 for the absence of an updated service plan for one resident. CAR1 has since updated the plan.
- ii. The one resident from Santa Clara County receives WRAP mental health services from Uplift twice a week.
- iii. Mental health caseworkers from Alameda and Contra Costa counties visit residents from their counties.
- iv. A list of planned activities for May was posted. The list included at least three visits to the HUB and the YMCA a week. However, the FM informed the Commissioners the residents refuse to go to the HUB and the YMCA. Rather they preferred “hanging out” with friends or using their cell phone. Some go to the teen center, which is located next to James Lick High School to play sports, in particular basketball. It should be noted, the HUB provides a wide range of resources and opportunities for youth to connect with others. The YMCA also enables youth to participate in a varied range of sports and social interactions. Efforts should be made to incentivize residents to take advantage of these resources.
- v. The majority of the scheduled activities center on watching movies. No enrichment events were listed (for example, field trips, arts, music and exercise).
- vi. Only one resident has a phone/internet service provider. The rest go to locations where a free Wi-Fi connection is available.
- vii. One resident has a job, which was not approved by the social worker. The FM indicated that all the rest were searching for summer jobs.
- viii. According to the FM, none of the boys were interested in attending church services.

c. Discipline

- i. The Policy and Procedures and the Intake packet contain the discipline process. The intake packet has a signature line acknowledging agreement from both the resident and the social worker.
- ii. CAR1 uses a letter system from A – D. Points and allowance are earned throughout the day and are attached to behaviors and actions. The number

of points per behavior and action is posted. Any infraction will result in points taken away and a portion of the allowance decreased.

- iii. Incentives and consequences were posted along with the chores.
- iv. The Policies and Procedures document lists what is expected. Among the list is the prohibition of sagging pants, either in public or at the home and the requirement to log in and out when leaving the home unsupervised. At the time of the inspection on May 30, one of the residents' pants were sagging. The FM stated that the residents rarely sign in and out.
- v. The FM noted that several of the residents do not comply with the weekend 10 pm curfew, resulting in AWOLs. The FM did not offer the consequences for being late.
- vi. If a resident does not go to school, points will be taken away and TV not allowed until after school.
- vii. The FM stated that rarely were the residents fined for property destruction. The Policy and Procedures allow for reimbursement or community service if property is destroyed.

d. Complaints/Incident Reports

- i. The complaint process is in writing and part of the intake packet. A signature from the resident and the authorized/family representative is required to acknowledge understanding of the process.
- ii. The FM indicated that in her six years of employment, only four complaints were filed. The FM said if issues of concern were raised, she met with youth to discuss them and the majority was resolved before they rose to the level of a complaint. If ever an issue was not resolved, the complaint goes to the Executive Director.
- iii. The FM stated the resolution of an incident report or complaint is not documented.
- iv. Both incident reports and complaints are stored electronically and placed in the resident's file.

e. Personal Rights (other than what has been described in other sections)

- i. While relatives who are not on the no-contact list are allowed to visit, only one uncle visits and plays soccer with his nephew. Rarely do the families take the youth on an outing.
- ii. Friends also are allowed to visit.
- iii. All visitors are permitted only in the common areas of the house or in the front and back yards.
- iv. All visitors over 18 years should sign in and out.
- v. Residents have access to the house phone to make confidential calls to their social worker, attorney, CASA, CCL and parents/guardians not on the no-contact list.
- vi. Even though the residents are permitted to bring personal items to the home, most come with little or no personal items. If they do, the items are

inventoried and marked. CAR1 will buy clothing when needed. No gang affiliated clothing is allowed.

f. Education

- i. All attend school, even the non-dependent minor (nineteen-year old):
 - Two attend James Lick High School
 - One - Hispanic language school
 - One - Independence High School
 - One - Mt. Pleasant High School
 - One - high school in Union City with transportation provided by the school district
- ii. None of the residents plans to attend summer school
- iii. One resident played football for the high school this school year, but he was the only one who participated in extracurricular school activities.
- iv. The dining room table is used to complete homework assignments. A makeshift table also is available in the office for homework.
- v. The office computer is available to complete homework assignments. However, the printer was out of ink when the Commissioners inspected the facility.
- vi. Staff monitor computer usage.
- vii. The AA reported that another computer would be added in the future.

g. Medical/Mental Health

- i. Two residents' files were selected at random and reviewed during the inspection. One of the files did not contain a list of medications. The resident entered the home approximately 15 days before the inspection. It was not clear if the resident was not receiving medications or the form was missing. The JJC recommends that even if the resident is not on medications, a medication form should be placed in the file with a note stating so.
- ii. All medications were properly stored.
- iii. Several first aid kits were stored haphazardly on a shelf in the same locked cabinet in the office as the cleaning supplies (Fig. 11). The Commissioners were unable to determine whether all of the necessary supplies were available.

IV. Feedback from Youth

A total of five residents were interviewed during the two-day inspection (four on the 5/26/17, including one youth who returned from AWOL, and one on 5/30/17). All residents interviewed on 5/26/17 reported satisfied with the home. All reported that they liked the staff and got along with the other residents. None expressed complaints about the facility. One volunteered that this home showed him more respect than the last one.

The youth interviewed on 5/30/17 stated that he was bored and did not participate in house activities. He indicated that he was not told about the HUB and the YMCA. He said that

he does not know the area and was not interested in exploring it. He likes to play basketball. He wanted to get a job, but did not seem to be seeking one.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings during the November 2016 visit and the two inspections in May 2017, the Juvenile Justice Commission makes the following recommendations.

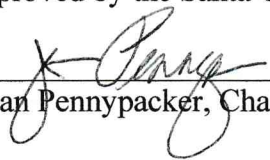
- Provide enrichment activities that expand learning - field trips, arts, music and exercise. The Santa Clara Valley offers many diverse low or no cost events.
- Implement strategies to interest residents in participating in services and programs at the HUB and the YMCA.
- Review, modify and enforce consequences for violations of policies and procedures, for example, complying with curfew and logging in and out when leaving the premises.
- Equip the staff with detailed written procedures in the handling of emergency incidents.
- Obtain approval from CCL prior to placing an adult in the same bedroom as a minor.
- Improve maintenance of the house and yard. The report documents repairs and improvements that are needed in the house and yard. Keeping the home in good repair shows interest in offering a supportive environment.
- Provide outdoor furniture and sports equipment in the back yard. This gives the residents an opportunity other than just "hanging around."
- Improve documentation when handling complaints and incident reports including detailing in writing the resolution of the complaint and incident.

SUMMARY

The JJC has completed its 2017 annual group home inspection of CAR1. The JJC finds CAR1 needs to improve the quality of service to its residents.

While the deficiencies noted do not rise to significant violations of the state regulations, CAR1 should take the appropriate actions to implement the recommendations to ensure that the placement is supportive, caring, respectful and enriching. Efforts in making repairs to the house and yard and offering better recreational options, access to community resources and enrichment activities would better serve the residents. Enforcing house rules, and preparing staff to meet and overcome residents' resistance and to manage serious incidents and emergencies are necessary to keep youth safe and secure.

Approved by the Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission on August 1, 2017.



Jean Pennypacker, Chairperson & Inspection Chair



Date

Att: [Documents Reviewed and Photographs]

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Title 22 California Code of Regulations Division 6, Chapters 1 and 5

CCL File on California Anchor Residents #2 up to May 23, 2017

- Citations – 2017
- Plan of Operation

Residents' Files (2) randomly selected

Intake Packet

- Admissions Agreement
- Pre-Placement Appraisal Information
- Appraisal /Needs and Service Plan
- Physician's Report for Community Care Facilities
- Identification and Emergency Contact Information
- Discharge-Removal Policy
- Personal Rights
- Consent to Medical Exam
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
- Release of Client Medical Information
- Discipline Policies and Procedures
- Do Not Contact List
- Children's Complaint/Family Complaint Form

Handouts and Postings

- House Menu – 5/22/17 – 5/28/17
- Kitchen Schedule
- Chore Outline
- Water Heater Temperature Log
- Sunday Staff Task Log
- Cal Anchor Resident Level System
- Staff Training Schedule
- Weekly activities/Outing Calendar
- Flyers
 - TeenForce
 - Hub Announcements – Ready, Set, Work
 - Independent Living
 - College funding/College and Career Scholarship Announcements
 - Project HYPE (Honoring Youth Personal Expression

APPENDIX - PHOTOS

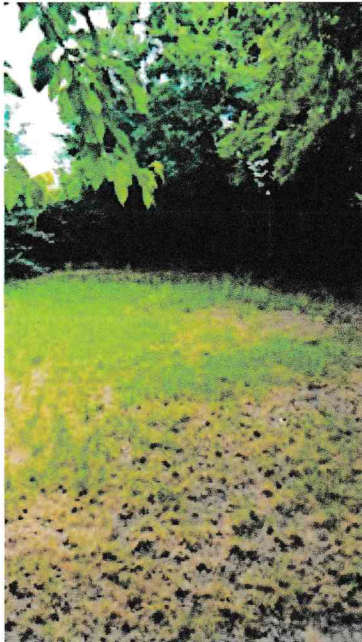


Fig. 1 - Backyard



Fig. 2 - Fence



Fig. 3 - Bedroom (wall patch)



Fig. 4 – Bedroom (wall patch)



Fig. 5 – Bedroom (wall patch)



Fig. 6 - Bathtub wallboard



Fig. 7 - Snacks



Fig. 8 - Snacks



Fig. 9 - Snacks



Fig. 10 - Kitchen cabinets



Fig. 11 - First Aid & Cleaning Supplies