COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION DEPARTMENT

9150 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY – DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90242

(562) 940-2501

JERRY E. POWERS
Chief Probation Officer

July 21, 2014

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Jerry E. Powers J. P.
Chief Probation Officer

SUBJECT: **COUNSELING AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATES (MASADA GROUP HOMES) CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

The Department of Probation, Placement Permanency & Quality Assurance (PPQA), Group Home Monitoring (GHM) Unit conducted a review of Counseling and Research Associates, Inc., DBA Masada Group Homes in December 2013. Masada Group Homes has one site located in the Fifth Supervisorial District and another site located in the First Supervisorial District of Los Angeles County. Masada Group Homes provides services to Los Angeles County Probation children. According to Masada Group Home's program statement, its purpose is to treat boys who have behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. Masada Group Homes consist of two (2) six-bed homes, providing care for boys 7 - 17 years of age. At the time of this review, Masada Group Homes was providing care for 10 Probation children. The placed children's overall average length of stay was three (3) months, and their average age at the time of inspection was 16 years old.

Four (4) children were randomly selected for the interview sample. One (1) child in the sample was on psychotropic medication, and that case was reviewed for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations and to confirm the required documentation of psychiatric monitoring. Additionally, three (3) discharged children's files were reviewed to assess compliance with permanency efforts, and three (3) staff files were reviewed for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and County Contract Requirements.

SUMMARY

During the PPQA/GHM review, the interviewed children reported feeling safe at Masada Group Homes, and that they were provided with good care and appropriate services, were comfortable in their environment and treated with respect and dignity. Masada Group Homes were in compliance with seven (7) of the 10 areas of the Contract Compliance Review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; Discharged Children; and Personnel Records.

However, deficiencies were noted in the areas of Facility and Environment, Maintenance of Required Documentation Service Delivery and Education and Workforce Readiness. Masada Group Homes had minor repair issues and agreed to correct the deficiencies noted at each site. Masada Group Homes also needs to develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) and was instructed to obtain signatures when developing their NSP, complete sections related to child's visitation with his/her parent(s)/family of origin/guardian, accurately check off correct boxes in the NSP and ensure that paragraphs are not missing. Lastly, Masada Group Homes needs to make adjustments to the child's education needs by modifying the child's educational goals when determining that the child's academic or attendance has not improved since his last NSP report.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On December 17, 2013, Probation PPQA Monitor Leng Lim held an Exit Conference with Chief Operations Officer Bernard Smith and Senior Social Worker Shannon Wolfe. Masada Group Home's representative agreed with the review findings and recommendations and was receptive to implementing systemic changes to improve their compliance with regulatory standards, as well as address the noted deficiencies in a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

A copy of this compliance report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller and Community Care Licensing.

Masada Group Homes provided the attached approved CAP addressing the recommendations noted in this compliance report. A follow-up visit was conducted, and all deficiencies cited in CAP were corrected or systems were put in place to avoid future deficiencies. Assessment for continued implementation of recommendations will be conducted during the next monitoring review.

If additional information is needed or any questions or concerns arise, please contact Director Lisa Campbell-Motton, Placement Permanency and Quality Assurance, at (323) 240-2435.

JEP:MEP:REB:
LCM:sy

Attachments (3)

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Brence Culp, Chief Deputy, Chief Executive Office
John Naimo, Acting Auditor-Controller
Phillip L. Browning, Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Latasha Howard, Probation Contracts
Rhonda David-Shirley, Out-of-Home-Care Management, DCFS
Diana Flaggs, DCFS Contracts
Audit Committee
Sybil Brand Commission
Community Care Licensing
Bernard Smith, Administrator, MASADA Group Home
Georgia Mattera, Public Safety, Chief Executive Office
Chief Deputies
Justice Deputies

MASADA GROUP HOMES
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW SUMMARY

Newell House
4740 W. 152nd St.
Lawndale, CA 90260
License # 198201957
Rate Classification Level: 12

Ralston House
2312 Ralston Lane
Redondo Beach, CA 90278
License # 191601785
Rate Classification Level: 12

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	**Findings: December 2013**
I	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (9 Elements) 1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation 2. Transportation Needs Met 3. Vehicle Maintained In Good Repair 4. Timely, Cross-Reported SIRs 5. Disaster Drills Conducted & Logs Maintained 6. Runaway Procedures 7. Comprehensive Monetary and Clothing Allowance Logs Maintained 8. Detailed Sign In/Out Logs for Placed Children 9. CCL Complaints on Safety/Plant Deficiencies	Full Compliance (ALL)
II	**Facility and Environment** (5 Elements) 1. Exterior Well Maintained 2. Common Areas Maintained 3. Children's Bedrooms 4. Sufficient Recreational Equipment/Educational Resources 5. Adequate Perishable and Non-Perishable Foods	1. Improvement Needed 2. Improvement Needed 3. Improvement Needed 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance
III	**Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery** (10 Elements) 1. Child Population Consistent with Capacity and Program Statement 2. County Worker's Authorization to Implement NSPs 3. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Staff 4. Children Progressing Toward Meeting NSP Case Goals 5. Therapeutic Services Received 6. Recommended Assessment/Evaluations Implemented 7. County Workers Monthly Contacts Documented 8. Children Assisted in Maintaining Important Relationships 9. Development of Timely, Comprehensive Initial NSPs with Child's Participation 10. Development of Timely, Comprehensive, Updated NSPs with Child's Participation	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Improvement Needed 10. Improvement Needed

IV	**Educational and Workforce Readiness** (5 Elements) 1. Children Enrolled in School Within Three School Days 2. GH Ensured Children Attended School and Facilitated in Meeting Their Educational Goals 3. Current Report Cards Maintained 4. Children's Academic or Attendance Increased 5. GH Encouraged Children's Participation in YDS/ Vocational Programs	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Improvement Needed 5. Full Compliance
V	**Health and Medical Needs** (4 Elements) 1. Initial Medical Exams Conducted Timely 2. Follow-Up Medical Exams Conducted Timely 3. Initial Dental Exams Conducted Timely 4. Follow-Up Dental Exams Conducted Timely	Full Compliance (ALL)
VI	**Psychotropic Medication** (2 Elements) 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review	Full Compliance (ALL)
VII	**Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being** (13 Elements) 1. Children Informed of Group Home's Policies and Procedures 2. Children Feel Safe 3. Appropriate Staffing and Supervision 4. GH's efforts to provide Meals and Snacks? 5. Staff Treat Children with Respect and Dignity 6. Appropriate Rewards and Discipline System 7. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls and Correspondence 8. Children Free to Attend or not Attend Religious Services/Activities 9. Reasonable Chores 10. Children Informed About Their Medication and Right to Refuse Medication 11. Children Free to Receive or Reject Voluntary Medical, Dental and Psychiatric Care 12. Children Given Opportunities to Plan Activities in Extra-Curricular, Enrichment and Social Activities (GH, School, Community) 13. Children Given Opportunities to Participate in Extra-Curricular, Enrichment and Social Activities (GH, School, Community)	Full Compliance (ALL)

VIII	**Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being** (7 Elements) 1. $50 Clothing Allowance 2. Adequate Quantity and Quality of Clothing Inventory 3. Children's Involved in Selection of Their Clothing 4. Provision of Clean Towels and Adequate Ethnic Personal Care Items 5. Minimum Monetary Allowances 6. Management of Allowance/Earnings 7. Encouragement and Assistance with Life Book	Full Compliance (ALL)
IX	**Discharged Children** (3 Elements) 1. Children Discharged According to Permanency Plan 2. Children Made Progress Toward NSP Goals 3. Attempts to Stabilize Children's Placement	Full Compliance (ALL)
X	**Personnel Records** (7 Elements) 1. DOJ, FBI, and CACIs Submitted Timely 2. Signed Criminal Background Statement Timely 3. Education/Experience Requirement 4. Employee Health Screening/TB Clearances Timely 5. Valid Driver's License 6. Signed Copies of Group Home Policies and Procedures 7. All Required Training	Full Compliance (ALL)

MASADA GROUP HOMES
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Masada Group Home's compliance with the County contract and State regulations and include a review of the Masada Group Home's program statement, as well as internal administrative policies and procedures. The monitoring review covered the following 10 areas:

- Licensure/Contract Requirements
- Facility and Environment
- Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery
- Educational and Workforce Readiness
- Health and Medical Needs
- Psychotropic Medication
- Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being
- Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being
- Discharged Children
- Personnel Records

For the purpose of this review, four (4) placed Probation children were selected for the sample. Placement Permanency & Quality Assurance (PPQA), Group Home Monitoring (GHM) interviewed each child and reviewed their case files to assess the care and services they receive. One (1) placed child in the sample was prescribed psychotropic medication, and this case file was reviewed to assess for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations (PMAs) and to confirm the required documentation of psychiatric monitoring. Additionally, three (3) discharged Probation children's files were reviewed to assess Masada Group Home's compliance with permanency efforts.

PPQA/GHM reviewed three (3) staff files for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and County contract requirements, and conducted a site visit to assess the provision of quality of care and supervision.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

The following three (3) areas were out of compliance.

Facility and Environment

Both Masada Group Home sites, Ralston and Newell Houses, were in need of repairs or replacements on the interior and/or exterior of both homes, as well as the children's bedrooms. Masada Group Home's representatives agreed with the recommended repairs or replacements and that they would take corrective action to ensure the repairs or replacements were made.

- At the Ralston House, there was one (1) cracked light switch cover plate and one (1) cracked electrical reciprocal plate cover in the kitchen. The lattice on the front

exterior screen door was also damaged. The exterior bathroom window screen was torn. One (1) child's mattress in bedroom #2 was worn out and sinks in the middle.

- At the Newell House, there was a damaged closet door molding.

Recommendation

Masada Group Home's management shall ensure that:

1. All deficiencies noted to the Exterior at both sites are repaired or replaced immediately

2. All deficiencies noted to the Common Areas at both sites are repaired or replaced immediately

3. The deficiency noted in the Children's Bedroom at the Ralston site is replaced immediately

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

On January 10, 2012, the Probation Department and Department of Children and Family Service (DCFS) conducted Needs and Services (NSP) training for all Group Home Providers; however, Masada Group Home representatives did not attend. On August 1, 2013, Masada Group Home representatives did attend the NSP follow-up refresher training. PPQA/GHM reviewed NSPs developed after this training.

- It was noted that all NSPs were developed timely. However, one (1) child's initial NSP and three (3) child's Updated NSP reports were not comprehensive, as the Group Home failed to accurately complete the NSP reports. Two (2) children's Updated NSP reports did not contain the child's signatures as required. One (1) child's Updated NSP report was inaccurately checked off as "Initial Plan" instead of "Quarterly Report" and the "Describe child's visitation with his/her parent(s)/family of origin/guardian over the past three months" section in the NSP was incomplete and left blank. One (1) child's Initial NSP contained the incorrect "Date of Admission" and the Initial Dental Exam box was inaccurately checked "no" instead of "yes", and the Holder of Educational Rights section was also inaccurately completed by listing the wrong person for the contact. It was also noted that one (1) child's Updated NSP report was missing the complete comments from the child's Para-Educator, and the "Describe child's visitation with his/her parent(s)/family of origin/guardian over the past three months" section was incorrectly answered. Masada Group Home's representatives agreed that all required elements were not included in the NSPs and that they would take corrective action to ensure the development of comprehensive NSPs.

Recommendation

Masada Group Home's management shall ensure that:

1. Comprehensive Initial and Updated NSPs are developed and include all required elements in accordance with the NSP template and guidelines set by Probation and Department of Children and Family Services.

Educational and Workforce Readiness

- It was noted that one (1) child's Updated NSP report reflected that the child's academic performance at school did not increase or improve since the last Initial NSP report. Although the child has earned 15 school credits since the Initial NSP report, the child has not improved and continued to struggle with following directions in class and not completing class assignments.

Recommendation

Masada Group Home's management shall ensure that:

1. All necessary efforts are made to increase the child's academics and attendance as part of the child's Needs and Services Plan. Group Home shall make adjustments to the child's educational needs when determined that the child's academics or attendance has not improved since the last Updated NSP report by modifying the child's goals or providing comprehensive documentation when the goals are not being met.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE PROBATION PPQA/GHM GROUP HOME CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

PPQA/GHM's last compliance report dated November 5, 2013, identified four (4) recommendations.

Results

Based on the follow-up, Masada Group Homes fully implemented all four (4) previous recommendations for which they were to ensure the following:

- Masada Group Homes currently maintains comprehensive clothing allowances log that reflects the amount the child received, spent, and carried over.

- A complete follow-up walk through inspection of the interior was conducted, and all recommendations have been repaired or replaced. The interior and exterior deficiencies have been corrected. At the Ralston House, new caulking was placed around the entire kitchen sink. The bubbling paint in the bathroom was scraped and repainted. The unused electrical outlet in bedroom #3 was covered with a plate cover. The trash and dirt in the garage were removed. At the Newell House, the broken trim molding in the living room was replaced with a new molding. The damaged wall by the patio door was repaired. The peeling paint behind the fish tank in the dining room was scraped off and repainted. The entire bathroom between bedrooms #1 and #2 was completed remodeled. The electrical reciprocal in the bathroom of bedroom #3 was removed and replaced with a GFIC electrical outlet. The torn exterior bathroom window screen was replaced. The severely damaged exterior stucco received a complete sandblast, re-stucco, and paint.

- Masada Group Home's administrator has met with Senior Social Worker Shannon Wolfe to discuss the noted deficiencies and ensure full compliance with the NSP

guidelines. Masada's Social Worker will now include a narrative of how the child is adjusting in the group home setting. Masada's Social Worker will now actively seek out parent's signatures on the NSP and include documented efforts in attempting to obtain the signatures. Masada's Social Worker will now always include a concurrent case plan for every child's Initial and Updated NSP reports. Masada Group Homes has implemented a telephone log at each group home site to denote and detail every phone call made by the children. Masada's Social Worker will now include the "Outcome Goals" for Permanency Planning and Independent Living Skills. Masada's Social Worker will now also include the Specific Goal, Plan to Achieve Goal, Method to Achieve Goal, and Person Responsible for Achieving Goals for all NSP reports and comprehensively report the child's education progress.

- Masada Group Homes has paid back all currently placed children with their initial clothing allowances that were never distributed and has also agreed to settle on an amount to be determined by the Probation Department for repayment of initial clothing allowances that were never distributed to the children dating back four (4) years to DCFS Fiscal/Budget Unit.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

The Auditor Controller conducted a fiscal review of Masada Group Home for calendar year 2010. The fiscal report, dated November 30, 2011, identified $2,587 in questioned/disallowed costs and $76,042 in unsupported/inadequately supported costs. Masada Group Home submitted a timely fiscal CAP, which is being monitored by the DCFS Fiscal Monitoring Section.

MASADA HOMES
... building a foundation
A Division of Counseling & Research Associates

January 14, 2014

Leng Lim, DPO II
Los Angeles County Probation Department
Group Home Monitoring Unit
11701 S. Alameda Street
Lynwood, CA 90262

RE: Masada Homes Corrective Action Plan for Group Home Deficiency Report 2013-14

Dear Mr. Lim,

Based upon your findings, the following Corrective Action Plan has been instituted:

Regarding the findings for Item I : Facility and Environment:

The recommendations mentioned were corrected by our maintenance staff. In order to address the problems noted in Item I, on an on-going basis, the group home staff will be responsible for inspecting the home on a daily basis to ensure compliance with Title XXII. Masada Homes' Day Supervisor will thoroughly inspect the two (2) group homes for compliance with Title XXII regulations and contractual obligations, on a weekly basis.

Ralston House:

1. Kitchen: One cracked light switch cover plate.
   CAP: new light switch cover plated was installed on (1/7/14).

2. Kitchen: One cracked electrical reciprocal plate cover.
   CAP: new electrical reciprocal plate cover was installed on (1/7/14).

3. Bedroom # 2: One youth's mattress is worn out and sinks in the middle.
   CAP: purchased new mattress and replaced old mattress on (1/7/14).

4. Exterior: Lattice on the front exterior screen door is damaged.
   CAP: purchased new front door screen and installed on (1/7/14).

5. Exterior: Torn bathroom window screen.
   CAP: new window was installed to replace torn bathroom window screen on (1/7/14).

Newell House:

6. Bedroom # 2: Lower part of closet door molding is damaged.
   CAP: bottom portion of closet door molding was replaced with new molding on (1/10/14).

Regarding the findings for Item II: Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery:

Chief Operations Officer, (Bernard Smith) met with agency social worker/case manager (Shannon Wolfe, MFT) to discuss the noted deficiencies for Item II to ensure that Masada Homes' will be in compliance with all Department of Children and Family Services/Los Angeles County Probation Department contractual requirements.

1. Two (2) Quarterly NSP Reports reviewed did not have the child's signature as required.
   CAP: agency social worker/case manager will obtain the child's signature during consultation meetings with the child or during the child's monthly meeting with the probation officer.

2. One (1) child's Quarterly NSP Report "Initial Plan" box was checked instead of the "Quarterly Report" box and the "Describe child's visitation with his/her parent (s)/family of origin/guardian over the past three months" was not completed and left blank.
   CAP: agency social worker/case manager will proofread all documents/reports to ensure that all sections/areas of the Quarterly NSPs are comprehensively completed/checked or marked.

3. One (1) child's Initial NSP reviewed contained the incorrect Date of Admission, Initial Dental Exam box was checked "no" instead of "yes", and Holder of Educational Rights was listed as the wrong person.
   CAP: agency social worker/case manager will proofread all documents/reports to ensure that all sections/areas of the Quarterly NSPs are comprehensively completed/checked or marked.

4. One (1) child's Quarterly NSP report reviewed under the "Report progress of child's educational goals over the past three months" para educator's comments was Incomplete and the "Describe child's visitation with his/her parent(s)/family of origin/guardian over the past three months" section was incorrectly answered.

4. CAP: agency social worker/case manager will proofread all documents/reports to ensure that all sections/areas of the Quarterly NSPs are comprehensively completed/checked or marked.

Regarding the finding for Item III : Educational and Workforce Readiness:

1. One (1) child's Quarterly NSP Report reviewed that the child's academic performance at school did not increase or improved since his last Initial NSP Report.
   CAP: agency social worker/case manager shall make all necessary efforts to Increase the child's academics and attendance as part of the child's Needs and Services Plan. Adjustments will be made to the child's educational needs when determined that the child's academics or attendance has not improved since the last Quarterly report by modifying the child's goals.

We hope that this Corrective Action Plan meets with your approval. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (310) 715 – 2020.

Sincerely,

Bernard Smith

Bernard Smith, MSW
Chief Operations Officer
Masada Homes