



TRAVIS COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

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CORY J. BURGESS
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer

Annual Report, Findings and Action Plan

Reference: 28 CFR 115.388: Data Review for Corrective Action

The Travis County Juvenile Probation Department (Department) has a zero-tolerance policy towards any type of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, to include sexual abuse and sexual harassment. Department efforts to prevent and detect sexual abuse and sexual harassment include but are not limited to staff screening and training, providing adequate supervision and resident education, and detecting early indicators of abuse. Should a family member, member of the public, or other any third-party have reason to suspect sexual abuse or sexual misconduct within one (1) of the Travis County Juvenile Probation Department's residential facilities, please call 1-877- (STOP ANE) 786-7263.

Findings

In calendar year 2023, there were five (5) allegations of staff sexual abuse campus-wide, two (2) in the Gardner-Betts Detention Center, and three (3) in the Jeanne Meurer Intermediate Sanctions Center (ISC). Both allegations of sexual abuse in the detention center were investigated and determined to be **unfounded** (See chart DS-1).

Of the three (3) allegations in the ISC, two (2) allegations were **unfounded** and one (1) allegation of sexual abuse by staff was **substantiated**. The initial focus of the investigation into the substantiated allegation was sexual harassment (see definitions); however, the investigation did find that a residential treatment officer had an inappropriate relationship and contact with a resident. The investigation was initiated after three (3) pages of explicit correspondence (handwritten notes) and one (1) inappropriate drawing were discovered in the room of the resident during a routine room search. During the investigation process, the resident then reported having engaged in inappropriate contact with the staff person. The staff was able to conceal their activities by opening the closet door, which created a blind spot and obstructed the view of the surveillance camera.

Action Plan:

In the past eight (8) years, the Department has experienced one (1) substantiated allegation of staff sexual abuse (see chart RS-1). The data does not suggest a prevalent pattern of staff sexual abuse, but the most recent incident in the ISC did reveal physical barriers that could be exploited to produce blind spots, prompting the removal of all storage closets and a reassessment of the type and placement of surveillance cameras within the units.

The Travis County Juvenile Probation Department has:

1. Removed the storage closets in the day areas from each unit because they obstructed the view of the surveillance cameras in residential services.
2. Replaced and relocated one (1) of the two (2) existing surveillance cameras with a fisheye 360-degree camera that supports audio, which will eliminate the blind spot of the previous camera. In addition, the Department plans to make the same changes at the Gardner-Betts Detention Center.

3. Petitioned the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) to permanently revoke the Juvenile Supervision Officer (JSO) certification of the designated perpetrator in the above-referenced matter. On February 16, 2024, the TJJD Board convened and approved a master default order to permanently revoke the JSO certification of the designated perpetrator.

The Travis County Juvenile Probation Department will:


- I. Continue to ensure that juveniles and visitors are provided information on the Department's zero tolerance policy and methods of reporting alleged abuse by:
 - a) Prominently displaying the third-party reporting posters in public areas and in general programming and housing areas in the facilities that explain how to report allegations directly to TJJD at 1-877-(STOP ANE) 786-7263;
 - b) Providing brochures created by TJJD that detail available reporting methods; and
 - c) Providing detailed information to residents during the intake and orientation process on their right to be free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment, methods of avoiding sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and methods of reporting any allegations.
- II. Comply with the mandated staffing ratios and the staffing plan for the facilities and assess the staffing plan on an annual basis.
- III. Ensure adequate staff coverage to provide appropriate supervision based on the current population's needs.
- IV. Continue to conduct unannounced rounds in the facilities on a regular basis.
- V. Continue to have staff announce their presence when entering the housing units of the opposite gender to enhance the privacy of residents.
- VI. Continue training staff on topics to include, but not limited to:
 - a) The zero-tolerance policy for all forms of abuse, to include sexual abuse and sexual harassment;
 - b) How to fulfill their responsibilities under agency sexual abuse and sexual harassment; prevention, detection, reporting, and response policies and procedures;
 - c) The residents' right to be free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment;
 - d) The right of residents and employees to be free from retaliation for reporting sexual abuse and sexual harassment;
 - e) The dynamics of sexual abuse and sexual harassment in juvenile facilities;
 - f) How to detect and respond to signs of threatened and actual sexual abuse and sexual harassment; and

g) How to comply with mandatory reporting laws.

VII. Continue to conduct criminal history and background checks on employees, volunteers, interns, and contractors.

VIII. Continue to report and investigate all allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, to include sexual abuse or sexual harassment by:

- a) Referring all allegations of a criminal nature to the appropriate law enforcement agency;
- b) Referring all allegations to TJJD and/or any applicable local, state, or national oversight agency; and
- c) Ensure that an administrative and/or criminal investigation are completed for all allegations.

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Cory J. Burgess, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer

4/17/2024
Date

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Kris Johnson, PREA Coordinator

4/17/2024
Date

JANUARY 1, 2023 – DECEMBER 31, 2023

(Chart DS-1)

Allegations of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment Gardner-Betts Juvenile Justice Center (Detention)

Substantiated / Founded Allegations								
Allegation Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Youth on Youth Consensual Sexual Behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsubstantiated / Inconclusive Allegations								
Allegation Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Youth on Youth Consensual Sexual Behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Harassment	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Sexual Abuse	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unfounded Allegations								
Allegation Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Youth on Youth Consensual Sexual Behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Abuse	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
Staff Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	2
Staff Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

JANUARY 1, 2023 – DECEMBER 31, 2023

(Chart RS-1)

Allegations of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment Jeanne Meurer Intermediate Sanctions Center (ISC)

Substantiated / Founded Allegations								
Allegation Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Youth on Youth Consensual Sexual Behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Abuse	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Harassment	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Staff Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Unsubstantiated / Inconclusive Allegations								
Allegation Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Youth on Youth Consensual Sexual Behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unfounded Allegations								
Allegation Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Youth on Youth Consensual Sexual Behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Abuse	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Youth on Youth Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Sexual Abuse	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	2
Staff Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

Definitions

Calendar Year: January 1st to December 31st

1. **Substantiated / Founded Allegations:** The administrative investigation had sufficient evidence to prove the allegation(s) using the preponderance of evidence standard.
2. **Unsubstantiated / Inconclusive Allegations:** The investigation revealed insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation(s).
3. **Unfounded:** The investigation had sufficient evidence to prove the allegations were false or not factual.
4. **Youth Sexual Conduct:** Conduct between two or more juveniles, regardless of age, that is conduct described as in paragraphs (5) and (7) of this section, regardless of whether the juveniles consented to the conduct.
5. **Youth on Youth Consensual Sexual Behavior/Youth Sexual Conduct:** Sexual contact between youth, prohibited by facility rules, that investigation has determined to be consensual between the two juvenile parties.
6. **Youth on Youth Sexual Abuse:** Any sexual contact or act of a sexual nature directed toward a youth by another youth. Sexual acts include intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks with intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire.
7. **Youth on Youth Sexual Harassment/Youth Sexual Conduct:** Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature by one youth directed toward another.
8. **Staff Sexual Abuse:** Any behavior or act of a sexual nature directed toward a youth by an employee, volunteer, contractor, official visitor, or other agency representative (excluding family, friends, or other visitors). Sexual relationships of a romantic nature between staff and youth are included in this definition. Consensual or nonconsensual sexual acts include intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks that is unrelated to official duties or with intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire; or completed, attempted, threatened, or requested sexual acts; or occurrences of indecent exposure, invasion of privacy, or staff voyeurism for reasons unrelated to official duties or for sexual gratification.
9. **Staff Sexual Harassment/Sexual Abuse Non-Contact:** Repeated verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to a youth by an employee, volunteer, contractor, official visitor, or other agency representative (excludes family, friends, or other visitors). Include demeaning references to gender; or sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing; or repeated profane or obscene language or gestures.