

2023 Knox County Juvenile Detention Center Inspection Report

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CHIEF OF PERFORMANCE AND INNOVATION

Executive Summary

The Department of Juvenile Justice conducted an annual inspection of Mary Davis Home in Knox County on April 3, 2023, pursuant to 730 ILCS 5/3-15-2(b). While there were some improvements noted from the 2022 Inspection Report, there remain several areas of non-compliance. The sections and specific requirements of the 20 Ill. Adm. Code 2602 County Juvenile Detention Standards (“County Detention Standards”) noted as non-compliant are listed in the table below, while specific observations are noted in the following sections of this report. Each section of the report also includes policy and practice recommendations to either gain compliance or move towards best practice. Those recommendations are combined in a second table at the end of the report.

Areas of Non-Compliance

Section	Requirement
2602.170 Discipline	When the use of force is authorized, only the least force necessary under the circumstances shall be employed. . . The facility shall have written policy and procedures that clearly define the parameters for use of force. Use of force must be used as a last resort after de-escalation and other strategies have failed. Staff must be trained in acceptable methods of physical intervention. . . Use of force must be limited to those situations where a youth's behavior is an immediate threat to themselves or to others. . . Room confinement may be used only as a temporary response to behavior that threatens the safety of the youth or others. . . Room confinement shall not be used for a fixed period of time, but only until the youth is calm enough to rejoin programming without being a risk to the safety of others.
2602.230 Education	Each facility must designate a qualified educational authority responsible for the development and implementation of the educational program. . .Teacher student ratios are at least 1:12 for general education and 1:8 for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Qualified special education staff are assigned to youth with special education status and special education testing is available for youth in custody. There shall be a minimum of five hours of instruction per day.
2602.50 Admissions Procedures	Clothing and other garments shall be of an appropriate size and in a state of good, usable condition.
2602.90 Mental Health Services	All facilities shall employ or contract with qualified mental health professionals to address the needs of youth identified in the mental health screening, as well as needs that arise during the period of confinement. Services shall meet or exceed the community level of care.

Methodology

- Interviews Conducted
 - Superintendent Steck
 - Director Pletz

- Assistant Superintendent Bonis
- Educator
- 5 youth
- Shift Supervisor
- 3 Counselors
- Documents Reviewed
 - Youth Grievance Samples
 - Use of Force Continuum Policy
 - Client Grievance Policy
 - Client Linens and Clothing Policy
 - Daily Programming Schedules
 - Dietary Menus
 - Youth Handbook
 - Food Services Policy
 - Health Department Inspection Results
 - Intake Searches Policy
 - Nursing License
 - Educator License
 - Mental Health Screening Interview Template

Overview

Mary Davis Home is a 39-bed facility in Galesburg, Illinois. The primary programming space is a large common area that is centrally located between the four primary living units (referred to as Upper East, Lower East, Upper West, and Lower West). There is an additional living unit called the “Harvest Wing” in a corridor off the main programming area that has three additional rooms, one of which has a camera. The facility has a gym space just off the primary programming space with a large window separating the two areas. A single classroom is off the main area as well. The classroom is quite large and was decorated in a manner consistent with a community school. The facility has an extensive library with several books available for youth.

The facility has continued offering in-person visitation two nights a week. The visitation area is sizable and has some artwork, including a mural that was recently completed by a local community college. It is commendable that the facility has continued offering in-person visitation and has a welcoming space to host. The facility also has video conferencing capability and has utilized it for court and professional visits. Video conferencing has not yet been offered for family visitation, but administrators reported plans to use video conferencing for family visits in coming months. It should be noted that administrators reported these same plans during the February 2022 inspection, but they have yet to be implemented.

The on-site portion of the review took place on Monday, April 3, 2023. At the time of the audit, the facility had 19 residents.

Admission Policy and Procedures

Mary Davis Home offers 24-hour coverage for admissions. Youth property is collected, inventoried, and laundered according to standards. During the facility walkthrough, auditors observed the property room in which youth personal clothing was organized into bins by youth. Inventory receipts were present in the bins with clothing, as well as youth files. The facility has made changes to their admission policies to come into compliance with County Detention Standards by eliminating the use of strip searches as standard practice during the intake process. Youth at the facility affirmed they were not strip searched upon intake.

An initial orientation is conducted by a counselor during the intake process. The facility has a Youth Orientation Manual that includes a broad overview of programming and rules. Some youth indicated a lack of understanding about expectations after the initial orientation and learned more from their peers in the days following admission. There are opportunities to enhance the youth orientation process to make it less transactional and more robust.

Medical screenings are conducted by the facility nurse, who consults with parents over medical history and medications. The nurse also inspects medications that youth bring into the facility and coordinates with a physician to approve prescriptions.

The facility has not undergone an official PREA audit. It would be beneficial to hire a PREA Officer to ensure there is an internal mechanism for monitoring facility compliance with PREA standards.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- Recommendation:
 - Hire a PREA Officer to supervise facility compliance with PREA standards.

Personnel, Staffing and Supervision

Maintaining sufficient staffing levels at the facility has been a challenge over the past year. In order to attract applicants, Mary Davis Home requested and was approved for a waiver to the bachelor's degree hiring requirement by the Administrative Office of Illinois Courts (AOIC). The facility now only requires 60 college credit hours or an associate's degree to qualify for employment. Knox County also increased the starting salary for Counselors by 10% to \$44,000/year. At the time of the audit, the facility employed 19 Counselors and five Supervisors (one of whom is a "floating" supervisor that also conducts Risk for Victimization Assessments for new intakes). A typical shift includes five or six staff members (including a supervisor) which is sufficient given the average size of youth population. While the Mary Davis Home has struggled to maintain desired staffing levels, they have been able to maintain a sufficient enough level to maintain normal operations. While there is some misuse of youth confinement noted later in the report, it has not been driven by lack of staffing at the facility.

New employees receive 20-24 hours of training remotely through the AOIC Relias System and the AOIC Detention Basic Training. The facility has two certified Handle with Care trainers on staff who provide de-escalation and use of physical intervention trainings.

Detention Programs, Youth Discipline, and Confinement

Counselors facilitate regular daily Life Skills Groups. The content of the groups is largely determined by the staff facilitating the group, although some of the groups are designated as Social Skills Groups and use the Boys Town Social Skills Training Curriculum. On the day of the inspection, the auditor observed a group facilitated by a Counselor with five youth on the topic “Dealing with Authority Issues.” There is also programming offered by some volunteer groups, including a weekly art class and bi-weekly movement class, both offered through the Civic Art Center of Galesburg. A local church group also offers religious programming once per week on Fridays.

The facility utilizes a point grading system to track youth behavior. Youth are graded on an A through F scale at the end of each shift. Grades are averaged daily and shared with youth at the start of the following day. The averaged grade is associated with certain privileges, such as later bedtime, candy bars, and extra visits. Youth on the highest level are permitted to stay up until midnight one night per week to watch movies.

The use of confinement continues to be prevalent at the facility. On the day of the audit, the auditor went into the residential side of the facility at 9:45am. Upon arrival, one youth was visiting with a probation officer, and another was engaged in a counseling session. All other youth were confined in their rooms for “cleaning time.” This stands in contrast to the daily schedules that were submitted in advance of the audit that indicate room cleaning should have ended by either 8:30 or 9:00am. Youth were released from their rooms at approximately 10:00am. Some youth were brought into the facility classroom for a group conducted by one of the Detention Officers. The rest were given free time.

There were frequent times throughout the day that youth were confined unnecessarily. A white board in the dayroom listed times youth were required to return to their rooms (by grade level) for little apparent reason:

Grade D – 10:50am

Grade C – 11:00am

Grade B – 11:15am

Grade A – 11:30am

Essentially, youth were only out of their rooms for programming between 50-90 minutes before lunchtime. The auditor returned to the area at 12:00pm. Youth were still confined in their rooms and later brought out in small groups to eat lunch, after which they returned to their rooms again. During this timeframe several staff members were observed grouped together in the common area and did not appear to be engaged in any tasks. There did not appear to be any reason for the youth to be confined in the manner they were.

Youth report, staff report, and documentation all indicated that the practice of rotating youth in and out of confinement is common at the facility, particularly on the second shift. Several youth reported spending extended periods of times confined during evening shifts, only coming out of their rooms for

dinner and an hour of recreation time rotated amongst groups of youth. This was confirmed by some documentation, including the shift log that documented the rotating confinement hours from previous shifts. This practice of rotating youth in and out of confinement throughout the day with no behavioral justification is out of compliance with County Detention Standards.

While the facility has made some improvements to the approach towards behavioral confinement, the use of confinement continues to be used excessively as a behavioral consequence. On a positive note, the facility ended the practice of assigning “shifts” as outlined in the 2022 inspection report. The facility has also incorporated the use of cognitive-behavioral interventions with the use of confinement. In several instances, youth have been asked to complete thinking reports, engage in 1:1 counseling sessions with staff, and participate in groups with other youth as part of individual plans. The facility also maintains a record of confinements and packets completed by youth. These changes are certainly positive, however further improvements are needed. The use of “shifts” has been eliminated and the facility has implemented the use of “Behavior Holds” as a response to negative behavior. The facility “Detention Level Program Manual” indicates a behavior hold constitutes a youth being placed in their room for a short period of time. It also indicates youth will return to programming once they have “calmed down.” In practice, however, behavioral holds are confinements that last for more than one day. A review of documentation indicated these behavioral holds typically last for at least 24 hours, during which youth complete a thinking report, engage in a required 1:1 meeting, and participate in groups while being confined during most other times. As noted above, the incorporation of cognitive-behavioral interventions is a good thing, however the length of confinement time is unnecessary and does not meet the facility’s stated intention to end a behavior hold as soon as a youth calms down. It is clear that the institutional understanding of these behavior holds is that they last for an entire day. On the day of the inspection, one youth was still on a behavior hold from an event the morning prior. In the logbook, it was documented that the youth had been placed on a behavior hold at 11:00am the day prior. At 12:00pm, there was an entry stating the youth’s father had been called by staff to cancel a visit scheduled with the youth for 3:30pm that day. This is problematic for two reasons. First, it indicated the youth’s behavior hold was assumed to last more than 4.5 hours, and second, the visit was cancelled as part of a consequence. Both violate County Detention Standards.

On the date of the inspection there were two youth housed in the facility “Harvest Wing,” a small hallway of rooms off the main programming area. While they were incorporated into regular programming with the rest of the youth throughout the day, it was apparent youth are still being housed in the Harvest Wing as a consequence. In one instance, a youth had been moved to the Harvest Wing involuntarily through the use of physical intervention after making too much noise in his room at night. Despite the youth being in his room presenting no risk to himself or his peers, staff entered his room and engaged the youth in physical intervention solely for the purpose of moving the youth to the Harvest Wing. An employee was injured during the intervention. The decision-making in this situation is demonstrative of poor practice, as there is no indication the youth was a risk to himself or others while being “noisy” in his room.

The facility policy that governs the use of force does not include any language that stipulates when the use of force is permitted. The policy should be updated to only permit the use of force when a youth’s behavior is an immediate threat to themselves or others. Since the time of the audit, the facility has

made changes to the use of the Harvest Wing and recently drafted a policy prohibiting use of the rooms in the Harvest Wing for youth housing. Facility Administrators have indicated they plan to turn it into an additional programming space.

Since the 2022 Inspection Report, the Mary Davis Home has transitioned to Handle with Care as the primary physical restraint technique used at the facility. The facility has also updated the Use of Force Continuum Policy to strictly prohibit the use of pain compliance and pressure point control with youth. During youth interviews, however, some youth expressed some complaints about the use of physical intervention at the facility, one of which occurred the previous day. The auditor and the facility superintendent reviewed video footage of the incident and there were some items of concern observed, enough to prompt a report to the Department of Children and Family Services. It was further noted that one of the staff members involved in the incident had not received training on Handle with Care, the facility's physical intervention process.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- 2602.170 Discipline states: "When the use of force is authorized, only the least force necessary under the circumstances shall be employed. . . The facility shall have written policy and procedures that clearly define the parameters for use of force. Use of force must be used as a last resort after de-escalation and other strategies have failed. Staff must be trained in acceptable methods of physical intervention. . . Use of force must be limited to those situations where a youth's behavior is an immediate threat to themselves or to others. . . Room confinement may be used only as a temporary response to behavior that threatens the safety of the youth or others. . . Room confinement shall not be used for a fixed period of time, but only until the youth is calm enough to rejoin programming without being a risk to the safety of others."
 - Recommendations:
 - Revise the Use of Force Policy to stipulate the use of force is limited to situations where a youth's behavior is an immediate threat to themselves or others.
 - Ensure all staff are trained on the use of force, de-escalation, and physical restraint techniques.
 - Allow youth to spend the entire programming day outside of their rooms during normal waking hours.
 - Adjust the behavior hold process to limit room confinement to a temporary response to behavior until a youth is calm enough to rejoin programming.

Medical and Health Care

There is one nurse that works at the facility five days per week for four hours each day. The facility has a sick call process by which a youth can request to be added to the sick call list, which is maintained in the control room to be given to the nurse upon her arrival. All youth receive a physical within seven days of admission. A physician is on-site a few times each month as needed and available for consultation.

Mental Health Services

Upon intake, all youth are administered a Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI) by administrative staff. Scores on the MAYSI play a role in determining if youth are checked at a frequency of 10 or 15 minutes.

Last year the facility entered into a contract with Advanced Healthcare Solutions (ACH) to provide 20 hours of mental health services to youth per week. ACH has had difficulty hiring a Mental Health Professional (MHP) specific for the detention center, so they have a social worker from the Peoria County Juvenile Detention Center commute to the Mary Davis Home twice per week to provide services for youth for approximately seven total hours. The MHP reported most of her work at Mary Davis Home consists of seeing any youth who are on a crisis status, checking in on any youth who are on a special behavior plan, or youth who have requested to see her. She reported she attempts to conduct an assessment on all youth intakes but has been unable to do so given the limited number of hours she has at the facility. Treatment plans are not being developed for any youth and she does not carry a formal caseload. In short, the mental health services provide to youth at Mary Davis Home appear to be limited to responding to day-to-day needs rather than an assessment-driven treatment plan.

The contract with ACH is an improvement over the state of mental health services from the 2022 Inspection Report, however the services provided for youth are still inadequate and out of compliance with County Detention Standards. It should be noted that since the time of the inspection, a mental health practitioner has started at the facility and is providing 20 hours of services each week. The MHP started in late June of 2023.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- 2602.90 Mental Health Services states: “All facilities shall employ or contract with qualified mental health professionals to address the needs of youth identified in the mental health screening, as well as needs that arise during the period of confinement. Services shall meet or exceed the community level of care.”
 - Recommendations
 - Provide a mental health assessment for all youth.
 - Develop and implement service plans for all youth with mental health needs.

Clothing, Personal Hygiene, Grooming

The facility issues clothing to youth. Clothing and undergarments are scheduled to be laundered every day, a task that is managed by the overnight shift. The overnight shift is also responsible for discarding any clothing items that are damaged or stained.

The quality and cleanliness of clothing was a consistent complaint from residents and the auditor observed poor quality as well. One youth was observed wearing pants with a large hole in it, and several youth were wearing sweatshirts with bleach stains. The poor quality of clothing is a repeat finding from the 2022 inspection.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- 2602.50 Admission Procedures states: “Clothing and other garments shall be of an appropriate size and in a state of good, usable condition.”
 - Recommendations:
 - Ensure youth are provided clothing in a good state and free of holes and/or stains.

Food Services

Mary Davis Home has a kitchen on-site and employs one full-time cook. The facility offers three meals per day and a snack to youth seven days per week. The facility maintains a record of menus and any alterations. A list of youth with special diets was posted in the kitchen. The facility had protein options present for youth on vegetarian diets, however there were complaints by some youth that these options have not been present throughout their stay. The facility does utilize one resident as a youth worker in the kitchen to assist with clean-up.

Education

The facility has one full-time teacher on-site from the Galesburg school district. Upon a youth’s admission, the facility Assistant Superintendent reaches out to a youth’s home school to obtain educational records and communicate to ensure youth get credit for educational services provided at the facility. The classroom itself is well-equipped and a welcoming space. Youth at the facility were very complimentary of the teacher, stating he is engaging and enjoyable to learn from. The daily education schedule provides five hours of educational services each day.

The County Detention Standards stipulate that the teacher-student ratio for general education needs to be 1:12 and 1:8 for special education students. Given the youth population size (19 on the day of the audit), the facility does not meet the required ratios. The facility reports they cap the number of youth in the classroom at 12 at any given time and provide educational packets to remaining youth, however this is not the strategy to employ in order to meet the standard. To meet the standard, a sufficient number of general education and special education teachers need to be available at the facility to provide quality education to the entire population of youth. Furthermore, while the youth at the facility are very complimentary of the one teacher that does work at the facility, that teacher is not properly licensed to teach high school. The teacher is only licensed to teach K-9. There is no special education teacher at the facility.

Facility administrators report they have made attempts to obtain additional educator resources through the Galesburg school district but have been denied.

Areas of Non-Compliance and Recommendations

- 2602.230 Education states: “Each facility must designate a qualified educational authority responsible for the development and implementation of the educational program. . .Teacher student ratios are at least 1:12 for general education and 1:8 for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Qualified special education staff are assigned to youth with special

education status and special education testing is available for youth in custody. There shall be a minimum of five hours of instruction per day.”

- Recommendations:
 - Hire a sufficient number of teachers, including special education teachers, to ensure the required ratios for general and special education are met.
 - Identify a process to have a substitute teacher in the event of a teacher absence.
 - Ensure all teachers are properly licensed.

Recommendations

Section	Recommendations
Admissions Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hire a PREA Officer to supervise facility compliance with PREA standards. ● Ensure youth are provided clothing in a good state and free of holes and/or stains.
Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revise the Use of Force Policy to stipulate the use of force is limited to situations where a youth’s behavior is an immediate threat to themselves or others. ● Ensure all staff are trained on the use of force, de-escalation, and physical restraint techniques. ● Allow youth to spend the entire programming day outside of their rooms during normal waking hours. ● Adjust the behavior hold process to limit room confinement to a temporary response to behavior until a youth is calm enough to rejoin programming.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hire a sufficient number of teachers, including special education teachers, to ensure the required ratios for general and special education are met. ● Identify a process to have a substitute teacher in the event of a teacher absence. ● Ensure all teachers are properly licensed.
Mental Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a mental health assessment for all youth. ● Develop and implement service plans for all youth with mental health needs.