

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN



Calendar Year 2014

ANNUAL REPORT – ADVISORY BOARD

**Connecticut Juvenile Training School
&
Pueblo**

Introduction

The Office of the Ombudsman addresses inquiries and complaints related to Department of Children and Families services in order to resolve the identified issues and to help ensure that the rights of individuals involved with the Department are upheld and maintained.

Connecticut Juvenile Training School and Pueblo Unit

During calendar year 2014, the Office handled a total of 173 grievances that were filed by the residents at Connecticut Juvenile Training School and an additional 17 grievances filed by residents at Pueblo.

The Director of the Office of the Ombudsman handles the grievances filed by youth at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS) and the Pueblo Unit.

The process to assess the grievances is as follows:

- 1) The Ombudsman visits each facility typically in unannounced fashion during all shifts including weekends.
- 2) The grievances are received after they are placed by residents into a locked grievance box on each unit.
- 3) The Ombudsman reviews the grievance and then speaks directly to the youth involved to gain a greater perspective of the concern and to understand it in the correct context.
- 4) A copy of the grievance is scanned and sent to the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Clinical Director of either CJTS or Pueblo. It is also sent to the Director of Residential Care and Unit Leader where the youth resides if they are placed at CJTS. Information learned from the initial interview with the resident is included in this notification of the grievance.
- 5) Designated staff in each facility are responsible to review the grievance, talk with the involved staff and youth, as well as to review Conduit for applicable incident reports and notes pertaining to the matter.
- 6) The Ombudsman also reviews Conduit and speaks to other individuals including residents, staff, the youth's Attorney or even the resident's parents and guardians who may have knowledge of the expressed concerns.
- 7) The Assistant Superintendent for each facility provides a response back to the Ombudsman when their assessment is complete.
- 8) The information provided by Administration is then reviewed by the Ombudsman who combines that with his assessment and a finding is established for the grievance.
- 9) The Ombudsman communicates back to CJTS or Pueblo Administration about the grievance finding.
- 10) The Ombudsman again speaks to the youth to confirm the outcome of the grievance and next steps.

During the time the Ombudsman visits each facility, he will also randomly talk with youth, engage them in discussions and partake in unit activities. Youth are interviewed either directly on the unit or in another location according to their preference.

The same conversations, both planned and random, occur with staff across all levels at each facility. These are intended to answer general questions about the role of the Ombudsman, listen to concerns expressed about the facility or an individual youth, and to identify trends within each unit and building.

Data – Connecticut Juvenile Training School

For the calendar year 2014, a total of 173 grievances were filed by residents at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School.

The following is a breakdown of grievances filed and the findings according to unit:

Unit	Total	No Merit	Merit	Partial Merit	Careline Referral	Human Resources
Total	173	141	12	15	3	2

As the chart above indicates, a total of 173 grievances were filed during calendar year 2014. A total of 27 or 16% were found to have either Merit or Partial Merit with 82% having No Merit. A total of 5 grievances or 2% were referred to either the Department of Children and Families Careline or the Human Resources Division for investigation.

A total of 85 unique residents filed grievances. The data shows that 6 residents accounted for 55 or 32% of the total grievances. They each filed at least 5 or more grievances with two residents filing 14 and 15 grievances respectfully.

A total of 59 unique staff were the subject of grievances being filed. The data shows that 8 staff accounted for 58 or 34% of the total grievances. They each had at least 5 or more grievances filed against them with two staff members have 12 and 10 filed against them accordingly.

Data – Pueblo

For the calendar year 2014, a total of 17 grievances were filed by residents Pueblo.

The following is a breakdown of grievances filed and the findings according to unit:

Unit	No Merit	Merit	Partial Merit	Careline Referral	Human Resources	Total
Pueblo	14	0	2	1	0	17

As the chart indicates, a total of 17 grievances were filed during calendar year 2014. A total of 2 or 12% were found to have either Merit or Partial Merit of which 14 or 82% having No Merit. A

total of 1 grievance or 6% was referred to the Department of Children and Families Careline. No referrals were made to the Human Resources Division for investigation.

A total of 7 unique residents filed grievances. The data shows that 2 residents accounted for 13 or 76% of the total grievances. They each filed 9 and 4 grievances respectfully.

A total of 3 unique staff were the subject of grievances being filed. The data shows that one staff accounted for 4 or 24% of the total grievances. A total of 7 or 42% of the grievances were filed on the general conditions of the facility and did not name a particular staff member.

Major Themes for the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and Pueblo

Connecticut Juvenile Training School	Pueblo
Youth Who File Multiple Grievances	Youth Who File Multiple Grievances
Targeted Staff	Targeted Staff
Acknowledge Positive Interactions	Acknowledge Positive Interactions
Seclusion Policies and Procedures	Accessibility of the Director
Staff Boundaries and Language	Resident Space and Stress
Clarification of Resident Activities on the Unit	Equal Treatment Among Residents
Comments Pertaining to Filing of Grievances	Supportive Attorney Relationships
Utilization of Phone Calls	Outreach to the Ombudsman

Next Steps

- 1) The process will begin of sending a copy of the grievances and outcomes to the Office of the Child Advocate and Office of the Public Defender.
- 2) Information in this report will be provided to the Parole Officers and Regional Office staff about the themes at both facilities so they can act as supports to the residents.
- 3) A discussion will occur with all youth in the facility, per unit, about the grievance process including clarification of the grievance versus a Director of Residential Care response.
- 4) A one page information sheet will be developed for residents about the grievance process and the typical issues brought forth and means of resolution.
- 5) The Ombudsman will engage in forums with each level and discipline of staff to discuss the findings of this report and recommendations.