

State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Charlie Crist
Governor

George H. Sheldon
Interim Secretary

DATE: September 23, 2008

TO: George H. Sheldon
Interim Secretary

FROM: Sheryl G. Steckler *SS*
Inspector General

SUBJECT: Six-Month Status Report for OPPAGA Report No. 08-10

In accordance with Section 20.055(5)(g), Florida Statutes, enclosed is our six-month status report on OPPAGA Report No. 08-10, *"The Delays in Screening Sexually Violent Predators Increase Costs; Treatment Facility Security Enhanced."* The report shows OPPAGA's original recommendations and the Department's status and comments, taken from representations made by management.

If I may be of further assistance, please let me know.

Enclosure

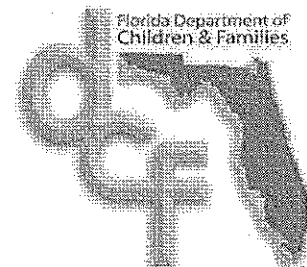
cc: Terry Shoffstall, Staff Director, Joint Legislative Auditing Committee ✓

1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

**SIX-MONTH STATUS REPORT:
OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS &
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY
REPORT #08-10**

*“The Delays in Screening Sexually Violent
Predators Increase Costs; Treatment
Facility Security Enhanced”*



Sheryl G. Steckler, Inspector General
Jerry Chesnutt, Director of Auditing

Enhancing Public Trust in Government

Report #E-07-0708-025

September 23, 2008

PURPOSE

This report provides a written response to the Secretary on the status of corrective actions taken six months after the Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability published Report #08-10, *“The Delays in Screening Sexually Violent Predators Increase Costs; Treatment Facility Security Enhanced.”*

**REPORT FINDINGS, COMMENTS &
STATUS**

Presented below are the up-to-date corrective action comments and status for the four recommendations (2, 4, 5 and 6) directed to the department, taken from representations made by the Mental Health Program office (PDMH) staff.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2: *We also recommend that the Department of Children and Families refine its process for working with DOC to request law enforcement records from other states in a timely manner.*

Status (per Mental Health staff): Partially Completed

DCF is currently working with the Department of Corrections (DOC) to facilitate the Sexually Violent Predator Program's (SVPP) requests for out-of-state information when agencies will only send information to another law enforcement agency. Quarterly meetings have been scheduled between DCF and DOC to address this and other issues (such as improving the documentation sent to SVPP by DOC). The last meeting was held June 9, 2008. The next meeting was scheduled for September 15, 2008.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 4: *To ensure that all persons committed to the Florida Civil Commitment Center [FCCC] for Sexually Violent Predators can participate in treatment, we recommend that DCF ensure that GEO's plans to provide specialized treatment for developmentally disabled residents occurs by January 31, 2008.*

Status (per Mental Health staff): Completed

All persons civilly committed to the FCCC are afforded an equal opportunity to engage in treatment. Currently, there are three specialized tracks: (1) *traditional* - for the

majority of our clientele, (2) *specialized* - for clients with entrenched antisocial values and attitudes, and (3) *special needs* - for developmentally disabled residents who have intellectual and other cognitive challenges. The latter track includes specialized training provided by two clinicians internationally-recognized for their expertise in the provision of treatment services to "special needs" clients. This track, temporary suspended due to loss of team facilitator, was reinstated in July 2007. The program is now fully functional.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 5: *To improve the treatment program and enhance public safety, we recommend that DCF provide suggested statutory language to the Legislature to create a community-based treatment re-entry component for individuals committed under the Jimmy Ryce Act and an estimate of associated costs. These provisions should specify which entity would provide monitoring, treatment, and supervision of individuals released from civil commitment and criteria for the length of such treatment and supervision.*

Status (per Mental Health staff): Completed

SVPP has proposed revision to, and creation of, several sections of Chapter 394, Part V, F.S., the Sexually Violent Predator Act. Proposed changes include provisions for creating a community-based treatment re-entry component and associated costs to the Department.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 6 *To improve program monitoring, we recommend that DCF revise its performance measures to report more distinct categories such as use of force, assaults on staff, resident injuries, escapes, crimes, and the introduction or detection of contraband.*

Status (per Mental Health staff): Anticipated Completion 10/1/08

The contract required reports have been revised to better monitor the specific areas recommended (including the use of force, assaults on staff, resident injuries, escapes, crimes, and the introduction of contraband). The revised sections will be amended into the contract which will go into effect October 1, 2008. Until then, GEO has agreed to implement revisions to the contract voluntarily.

This follow-up audit was conducted as required by 20.055(3)(g), Florida Statutes and section 2500.A1 of the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing as published by the Institute of Internal Auditors. Elton Jones compiled this follow-up audit from representations provided by program management. Please address inquiries regarding this report to Jerry Chesnutt, Director of Auditing, at (850) 488-8722.

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