

## San Diego County Juvenile Justice Commission

### Pre-Inspection Worksheet

#### Data from Calendar Year 2022

<b>Facility Name:</b> Polinsky Children's Center	
<b>Facility Type:</b> Shelter Care	
<b>Facility Address:</b>  9400 Ruffin Court San Diego, CA 92123-5399	<b>Date of Inspection:</b> May 11, 2023
	<b>JJC Chair:</b> Yvette D. Klepin
	<b>JJC Admin. Officer:</b> Scott Brown <b>JJC Admin. Assistant:</b> Vanessa Ramirez
	<b>CWS Director:</b> Kimberly Giardina
	<b>Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court:</b>  Honorable Ana España
<b>Facility Administrator:</b> Norma Rincon, Deputy Director	<b>Telephone:</b> (858) 874-1054
<b>JJC Inspection Team:</b> Jean Ramirez, William Condit, Maya De La Torre and Darwin Fishman	
<b>Staff and Representatives Interviewed / Met with in Person:</b> Norma Rincon, Deputy Director, Child Welfare Services); Alicia Rogers, Protective Services Program Manager – oversees cottages for children five years old and under); Lerone Jenkins, Protective Services Program Manager – oversees cottages for children six through seventeen years old); Elizabeth Rosas, Protective Services Program Manager – oversees Intake, Emergency Shelter Care Unit, and is the Community Care Licensing Administrator; Vilma Martinez-Vallecilo, Policy Analyst; Sherry Cleland, RN., Nurse Supervisor; Dr. Ivonne De La Rosa, MD; Freddy Recinos, Chef and Kitchen Manager; Sasha Hetman, Dietitian; Sylvia Echeverria, Associate Principal; Maria Ulloa, Residential Care Worker II; Iraq Gul, Mental Health Assistant; Erica Martinez, Residential Care Worker II; Adriana Valdez, Residential Care Worker II; Rebecca Gomes, Mental Health Assistant; Stephanie Bailey, Protective Services Supervisor, and Anne Lambarri, Social Worker Supervisor	
<b>Overview:</b> The Polinsky Children's Center (PCC) opened in 1994. It is the only short-term, emergency shelter for abused and neglected children in the County of San Diego. Although there are 58 counties in the State of California, only 9 counties have similar facilities. PCC is the only such facility with a physician on its campus.  PCC sits on a ten-acre campus and includes the cottages where children live, a medical clinic, a central cafeteria, a library, classrooms, a gym, a "closet" where children can select clothing they may need, playgrounds, and two pools. PCC is currently undergoing extensive renovations funded by the County of San Diego.  PCC can accommodate up to 204 children. It services infants, preschoolers, and K-12 students. The intended, average length of stay is 10 days. At the time of the inspection there were 22	

children living there and the average length of stay was 13 days. PCC has approximately 160 staff members and is staffed to serve an average of 60 children.

**The San Diego County Juvenile Justice Commission is a state-mandated, court-appointed citizens' commission. Its purpose is to inquire into the administration of juvenile court law in San Diego County, to provide leadership for citizen action and to promote an effective juvenile justice system operated in an environment of credibility, dignity, fairness and respect for the youth of San Diego County**

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## COMMISSION COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

In the report for the last inspection, the inspection team noted that in the future the Commission would be requesting data regarding the restraining of children pursuant to Pro-ACT procedure. Since that inspection, PCC has phased out the restraint procedure at issue.

The last inspection team recommended that PCC staff utilize the C-SSRS questionnaire at entry to evaluate whether children are suicidal or severely depressed. Ms. Rincon reports that this recommendation is followed "when it is appropriate" after an initial assessment at intake.

The last inspection team recommended that PCC evaluate the use of in-house mental health clinicians rather than contracted providers to meet the mental health needs of PCC children. The concern was that the contracted provider, New Alternatives, Inc., would not have the same access to relevant records that in-house clinicians would have. At the time, PCC responded that Health and Human Services and not PCC contracted with New Alternatives, Inc., but the latest Pre-Inspection Worksheet indicates that PCC contracts with New Alternatives, Inc. (See Worksheet regarding Counseling and Casework Services).

The last inspection team also recommended that PCC continue to track and monitor children on medication, including but not limited to psychotropic drugs, to ensure the cross-collaboration of service providers. PCC informed the Commission that the information is shared during multidisciplinary team meetings.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

During the inspection, Ms. Rincon noted that pre-pandemic there were 20+ volunteers who brought their interests, skills and vitality to PCC. These volunteers were important assets. Ms. Rincon specifically noted two retired librarians who were instrumental to organizing PCC's library.

**Recommendation #1:** Make a concerted effort to recruit volunteers and perhaps restore or exceed pre-pandemic levels of participation by volunteers.

During the inspection, the visiting team of Commissioners toured the cottages for children five years old and under. During the tour of these cottages, the team met with Alicia Rogers, the Protective Services Program Manager who oversees these cottages. Ms. Rogers spoke of the limitations of using a portable boom box to deliver music therapy to the children in these cottages.

**Recommendation #2:** Replace the use of a portable boom box with a state of the art, cottage-wide sound system in the infant and toddler cottages for purposes of bringing music therapy to the children.

The PCC Pre-Inspection Worksheet reported staff misconduct involving four staff members and three children, ages 9, 11, and 12, one being a special needs child. The four staff members were terminated from employment at PCC, the victimized children received mental health assistance, and the remaining staff received Pro-ACT retraining. Apparently, the victimized children did not report the child abuse. There are many reasons why child victims might not report abuse, but the Commission seeks to eliminate ignorance regarding child rights and procedures for reporting abuse from being among the reasons.

**Recommendation #3:** The Commission recommends evaluating the 18-page Resident Orientation Handbook, other PCC materials, and the complaint process, to determine if they are developmentally appropriate for PCC's younger children, and if not, to create developmentally appropriate materials and procedures. Doing this in collaboration with teachers from the lower grade levels could be particularly fruitful.

### **COMMENDATIONS:**

We commend PCC managers and staff for the energy, creativity, and dedication they bring to their work. In terms of the specifics and overall, PCC is an exemplary emergency shelter for children. It will only be more impressive when renovations are completed.

We commend PCC for its innovative programs for children on cooking, gardening, and composting.

We commend the hiring of a safety consultant and the adoption of certain recommendations, such as the installation of cameras in the common areas.

We commend PCC staff for being vigilant and interrupting a child's attempted suicide.

### **GENERAL COMMENTS FROM THE INSPECTION TEAM:**

In the future, the Commission may revise the Pre-Inspection Worksheet to request more detailed information regarding the hospitalization of PCC children. For example, PCC's Worksheet indicates there were 833 injuries requiring first aid, medical intervention, or hospitalization and 34 hospitalizations for mental health reasons. How many of the 833 injuries required hospitalization? Why? How did the injuries requiring hospitalization occur? Answers to these questions would help PCC and the Commission to assess whether required hospitalizations are a significant issue, to assess whether certain medical equipment should be available on the PCC campus, and to assess whether there are particular hazards on the campus that can be remedied. In the alternative, the Commission may request to review any relevant Serious Incident Reports.

In the future, the Commission may revise the Pre-Inspection Worksheet to request more detailed information regarding the children who go AWOL. During the current inspection, PCC reported 1327 AWOL's. At first glance, that number suggests a serious problem, but the Worksheet clarifies that the 1327 AWOLs involved 112 children, indicating that some youth are "frequent flyers," repeatedly going AWOL. To better appreciate these AWOL numbers, it would be helpful to know: How many of the AWOL children return to PCC within 24 hours? Of those who return, how many return of their own accord? How many return because law enforcement picks them up? How many report being seriously injured (assault, human trafficking) during their absence from PCC? Moreover, Lerone Jenkins, Protective Services Program Manager for the cottages for children ages six through seventeen, explained that he grants some youth a pass to leave the facility for a set period of time. Are these youths considered AWOL if they do not return on time? What are realistic expectations for an "open facility," a facility where staff cannot use physical force to prevent youth from leaving?

**ADMINISTRATION / MANAGEMENT**

*[Please be prepared to discuss during the inspection.]*

**Admission and Orientation:**

Are minors oriented to rules and procedures?  Yes  No

Are minors given copies of rules and procedures?  Yes  No

Can minors request that rules and procedures be provided in a language other than English?  Yes  No

Can parents request that rules and procedures be provided in a language other than English?  Yes  No

Are minors required to sign a document indicating they understand rules and procedures?  Yes  No

Are rules and procedures posted anywhere in the facility?  Yes  No  
If yes, please indicate the number of postings and the locations.

Number: 8

Locations: Cottages B, C, D, E, G, H and Intake

Are staff trained in LGBTQI+ competency?  Yes  No

Has special LGBTQI+, ally and/or bystander training been implemented?  Yes  No

Do you ask youth their gender identity and preferred pronouns during intake?  Yes  No

How are LGBTQI+ youth identified upon admission to the facility?

LGBTQIA+ youth are asked their identified pronouns upon entry to Polinsky Children's Center. Staff are also made aware so that they use the youth's identified name and pronouns consistent with the youth's gender identity and expression.

How do you work with youth who identify as non-binary, queer, queergender, non-conforming (neither male nor female)?

Staff use identified pronouns and youth are placed in the cottage consistent with their request based on their gender identity. The Special Incident Report (SIR) has been updated to reflect a more expansive continuum of gender identities to include male, female, transgender male, transgender female, non-binary, gender queer and other. New staff receive an all-inclusive LGBTQIA+ training to have knowledge on how to meet the needs of our youth. In addition, LGBTQIA+ youth are encouraged to participate in activities that support their emotional well-being, such as attending Pride events, The San Diego LGBT Community Center/Hillcrest Youth Center in Hillcrest and attending programming and services at LGBTQIA+ affirming organizations.

What safety measures are in place to ensure that LGBTQI+ youth are safe and protected from harmful encounters?

Youth are placed in the cottage consistent with their request based on their gender identity. Cottage staff are vigilant and immediately address any concerns. Staff communicate regularly during shift change meetings to discuss any concerns regarding safety for all children and put a plan in place to keep children safe. All worries and concerns are discussed, and a plan of action is put in place. LGBTQIA+ youth are offered a private bedroom.

What safety measures are in place to help and protect youth transitioning to male or female?

Youth are placed in the cottage consistent with their request based on their gender identity to ensure they feel safe and affirmed. Youth are closely supervised, and staff ensure peer interactions are monitored. Any peer related concerns are addressed immediately. LGBTQIA+ youth are encouraged to openly express their needs and are provided with gender affirming clothing and items such as binders, packers, or any other gender affirming clothing to assist them with social transition and to assist in reducing dysphoria. Youth are supported in seeking and receiving gender affirming medical care.

Are youth made aware of anti-bullying policies and procedures?  Yes  No

What steps are taken to ensure that minors are explained the rules and procedures in a developmentally appropriate manner?

All children over the age of six are explained the rules by a trauma informed intake worker. The child is given the PCC Resident Orientation Handbook which details the general rules at Polinsky Children's Center. Additionally, they are given handouts with the rules and procedures listed. The children read and sign the handouts. This documentation is placed in the child's file. All children are fully orientated to procedures with age, development and appropriate language provided. Children are provided with verbal and written copies of the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing "Personal Rights of Children's Residential Facilities," and with the "Youth Complaint Form" at Intake. Additionally, "Youth Complaint Forms" and a copy of the "Foster Youth Personal Rights" are posted in each cottage and at Intake.

### **Personal Property and Monies:**

Are personal property and monies recorded, stored, and returned upon release?  Yes  No

Describe the types of personal property that may be kept in sleeping rooms:

Children are allowed to keep personal items in their sleeping rooms such as jewelry, clothing, pictures, money, magazines, books, school supplies, toys, stationery and art supplies, as well as some of their hygiene items (perfume/cologne, make-up). Some of the children have their cell phones and personal electronic equipment in their rooms. Others may elect to have them stored in the Polinsky Children's Center storage.

### **Youth Release and Transition:**

Are there established protocols for transitioning youth out of the facility and into the community?  Yes  No

*\*Please attach policy/protocol.*

Are transition concerns regarding youth relayed to assigned staff in the community?  Yes  No

Has the facility received any complaints from parents/guardians regarding the transition process?  Yes  No



*If so, how many? N/A*

Has the facility received any complaints from attorneys regarding the transition process?

Yes  No

*If so, how many? N/A*

**Accommodations for the Disabled:**

Does the facility accept youth with disabilities (Emotional, Physical, Special Needs)?

Yes  No

Is the facility ADA compliant?

Yes  No

Has the facility been found to be non-ADA compliant in the calendar year?

Yes  No

Has the facility received any complaints regarding the placement of Youth with disabilities (Emotional, Physical, Special Needs)?

Yes  No

Does the facility offer Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) to Youth with Disabilities?

Yes  No

## SECURITY AND CONTROL

### **Permanent Logs:**

Are there policies and procedures in place that describe the types of incidents and occurrences which must be documented on a daily basis?  Yes  No

Are these logs stored electronically?  N/A  Yes  No

If logs are stored electronically, is there sufficient technical support to ensure that the electronic files that contain these logs are not compromised, corrupted, or deleted?  N/A  Yes  No

### **Security Features:**

Does the facility have security features (cameras, locks, alarms, etc.)?  Yes  No

If yes, please describe security features:

There are 71 cameras throughout the facility which can be reviewed. In addition, there are alarms on the emergency side doors.

Are there staff members on site who have the skills to maintain security features?  Yes  No

### **Security Inspections:**

Does the administrator in charge visually inspect the facility for security-related concerns?  Yes  No

If yes, how often: Weekly visual inspections are conducted on and around the perimeter of the Polinsky Children's Center campus. Visual inspections are also performed randomly and on an as needed basis to investigate all security related concerns. Please note that security guards complete perimeter rounds one time per hour seven days per week and also at various times as needed.

Are random reviews of security tapes conducted?  N/A  Yes  No

If yes, how often: Security footage is reviewed one time per week.

### **Control of Dangerous Materials:**

Are dangerous materials (toxins, biohazards, etc.) stored on site?  Yes  No

*If yes:*

A. What materials are stored?

N/A

B. Where are materials stored?

N/A

C. Do youth have access to the dangerous materials?  Yes  No

If yes, what protocols are in place to ensure Youth safety?

N/A

### **Non-Hazardous Furnishings:**

Are mattresses and bedding fire-resistant and non-toxic?  Yes  No

### **Control of Contraband:**

Are there written policies that describe contraband?  Yes  No

Are there written policies that describe the disposition of contraband?  Yes  No

Has a weapon been found in the facility during the calendar year?  Yes  No  
*If yes, where?*

Weapons located in the bushes surrounding the back perimeter of campus.

Has a Youth been found in possession of any illegal controlled substance (i.e. alcohol, tobacco, or drugs) during the calendar year?  Yes  No

A. How many incidents during the calendar year? 151

B. Please describe the type of contraband:

Most items including marijuana, cocaine, tobacco cigars & cigarettes as well as vaping devices were confiscated upon intake and before entry onto campus during a routine search of the child's personal belongings. Please note that Polinsky staff are not able to search any interior clothing/undergarments due to personal rights and per Community Care Licensing (CCL). As a result, youth have hidden contraband on their person and brought it on to campus. Staff consistently monitor unauthorized items on campus and are able to remove contraband from the campus when items have been located and identified.

### **Resident Searches:**

Do staff search sleep areas/rooms?  Yes  No

If staff search sleep areas/rooms, do staff search in the presence of the youth?  Yes  No

If staff search sleep areas/rooms, is clean bedding or clothes mixed with soiled bedding or clothes during this process?  Yes  No

### **Accountability and Supervision:**

Describe measures taken to ensure that youth are supervised in a manner that provides for youth and staff safety. *[Please be prepared to discuss during the inspection.]*

Staff to child ratio is 1:4 for children over the age of six and 1: 3 for children under the age of six. In addition, children may be staffed 1: 1 if needed. Staff conduct physical counts of all children in their care throughout each shift and as requested by the Duty Officer. Mandatory counts occur several times throughout the day including mealtimes, bath time, return to/from school, before, during, and after community outings, and at bedtime with random bed checks every 15 minutes during the overnight shift. Children under the age of 12 have been prevented from leaving campus via manual restraint when written into their Individual Needs and Services Plan for their safety and well-being.

### **Use of Force:**

Does the facility utilize "use-of-force" techniques?  Yes  No

If yes, does the facility have written policies regarding use of force?  N/A  Yes  No

*Please highlight if the policy includes the following:*

- A. Staff Development
  - a. Including "staff-to-staff" intervention strategies
  - b. Training (Evidenced based/Culturally Competent)
- B. Documentation Process
- C. Reporting Process
- D. Use of Force Review Process

If not, how do you ensure staff development, documentation, reporting, and review processes occur?

N/A as use-of-force is not utilized at Polinsky.

**Use of Restraints:**

Does the facility utilize "restraint" techniques?  Yes  No  
If yes, does the facility have written policies regarding "use-of-restraint"?  N/A  Yes  No

*Please highlight if the policy includes the following:*

- A. Staff Development
  - a. Including "staff-to-staff" intervention strategies
  - b. Training (Evidenced based/Culturally Competent)
- B. Documentation Process
- C. Reporting Process
- D. Use-of-Restraint Review Process

If not, how do you ensure staff development, documentation, reporting, and review processes occur?

N/A

**Tool & Equipment Control:**

Is there a written policy to ensure the adequate control of keys?  Yes  No

Is there a written policy to ensure the adequate control of tools?  Yes  No

Is there a written policy to ensure the adequate control of culinary utensils and equipment?  Yes  No

Is there a written policy to ensure the adequate control of medical equipment?  Yes  No

Is there a written policy to ensure the adequate control of supplies?  Yes  No

Is there a written policy to ensure the adequate control of vehicles?  Yes  No

**Weapons Control:**

Are weapons of any types permitted in the facility?  N/A  Yes  No

Is there a weapons locker on site?  N/A  Yes  No

**Discipline:**

Does the facility have written policies that describe the discipline process?  N/A  Yes  No

If yes, Do the policies include Culturally Competent and Evidence Based practices?  N/A  Yes  No

Are measures taken to ensure that due process is preserved?  N/A  Yes  No

What percentage of discipline grievances/appeals are resolved in support of the Youth? N/A%

**Contingency/Emergency Plans:**

Are there written plans in place for the following contingencies/emergencies? Check all that apply.

- Contagious disease outbreak (Tuberculosis, Flu, etc.)
- Earthquake
- Fire
- Power outage/failure
- Unit Disturbance or Riot

- Other: Cottage Disturbance
- Other: N/A

## **HOSPITALIZATION, ASSAULT AND AWOL HISTORY:**

### **Peer-to-Peer Assaults in Calendar Year:**

Total number of Peer-to-Peer Assaults: 138

Total number of Peer-to-Peer Assaults resulting in injury requiring treatment: 51

Total number of Peer-to-Peer Assaults resulting in referral to:

\_\_\_\_\_ Community Based Organization

\_\_\_\_\_ Social Worker

\_\_\_\_\_ Probation

5 Law Enforcement

\_\_\_\_\_ Other:

Total number of Peer-to-Peer Assaults resulting in youth being removed from the facility by:

4 Law Enforcement

\_\_\_\_\_ Probation

\_\_\_\_\_ Social Worker

### **Resident-to-Staff Assaults in Calendar Year:**

Total number of Resident-to-Staff Assaults: 159

Total number of Resident-to-Staff Assaults resulting in injury requiring treatment: 25

Total number of Resident-to-Staff Assaults resulting in referral to:

\_\_\_\_\_ Community Based Organization

\_\_\_\_\_ Social Worker

\_\_\_\_\_ Probation

9 Law Enforcement

\_\_\_\_\_ Other:

Total number of Resident-to-Staff Assaults resulting in youth being removed from the facility by:

3 Law Enforcement

\_\_\_\_\_ Probation

\_\_\_\_\_ Social Worker

***Please be prepared to discuss the following areas with JJC Inspection Team***

### **Serious Incidents During the Calendar Year:**

Number of suicides: 0

Number of attempted suicides: 1

Number of deaths from other causes: 0

*\*Please provide written policies and procedures related to Suicide and Suicide Attempts.*

### **Hospitalizations:**

Number of instances of injury that required: first aid, medical intervention, or hospitalization in Calendar Year: 883

Number of Youth Hospitalized due to Mental Health reasons in Calendar Year: 34

Average length of stay in Hospital: 6 days

Number of Youth that returned to the facility after hospitalizations: 20

*\*Please provide written policies and procedures related to Youth Hospitalization.*

**AWOLS**

Number of Instances: 1327

Number of Youth (non-duplicated): 112

Does the facility have written policy and procedures regarding AWOL?

Yes  No

*\*Please provide a copy*

## **FACILITY BACKGROUND**

*[Please be prepared to discuss during the inspection.]*  
*[To be completed by JJC Inspection Team.]*

### **Other Inspections** (please list most recent inspections and dates):

Community Care Licensing: 12/30/2022

Fire Marshal: 11/10/2022 & 2/7/2023

Department of Environmental Health: Food Inspection: 11/9/2022

Other: Pool Inspection: 8/18/2022

Other: N/A

Date of Last Fire Drill: 3/7/2023

Date of Last Lock Down Drill: N/A

### **Resident/Staff Composition and Communication:**

Ratios: Under age 6, staff to child ratio - 1:3 (24 hours per day). Over age 6, staff to child ratio - 1:4 (24 hours per day). Staff will recognize and respond to the inherent uniqueness of each child's situation, personality and needs while engaging each and every child. In addition, there is a Resident Handbook that children receive when they go through the intake process and are fully oriented to procedures with careful attention to the age and developmental ability of every child. Intake staff also sit with each child and fill out the "All About Me" worksheet in order for Cottage Staff to learn more about each child, in their own voice. Child friendly bulletin boards with Youth Rights are posted in all cottages and Youth Complaint & Engagement boxes are easily accessible to every youth.

### **General Facility Condition:**

The campus includes six residential home-like cottages, an infant nursery, medical clinic, school, library, cafeteria, gymnasium, two swimming pools, three playgrounds, and an athletic field. Polinsky Children's Center also boasts an expansive intake and interactive visitation area as well as a standalone laundry room. Polinsky Children's Center also houses an administrative building, serving as the operational headquarters for the campus. Adjacent to the Administration building is the Ronald McDonald Children's Charities Prevention Pavilion which provides meetings rooms for training.

### **Housing/Sleeping Accommodations:**

Polinsky Children's Center holds six residential cottages as well as an infant nursery. Five of the six cottages (D-H) are utilized for older children and are situated in the center of the campus. Cottages D-H have a total of 13 bedrooms and the Infant and Toddler Cottage have a total of 10 bedrooms. Each cottage has separate bedrooms, a day room, dining room, kitchen, and an outdoor patio area. Children are separated by age group. Common areas include a kitchen, phone room and living room.

### **Storage:**

Polinsky Children's Center has multiple storage areas at its disposal. These include an upstairs closet storage area in each of the cottages as well as a personal dresser in each room for a child's personal belongings. The Polinsky warehouse provides storage for many supplies and donations that assist with daily operations such as hygiene items and toys. Polinsky also has emergency storage container(s) throughout the campus and a storage area in the kitchen used for dry goods, pantry items as well as emergency supplies.



**Facility Capacity:**

Polinsky Children's Center is licensed for 204 children.

**Average Length of Stay:**

The Average length of stay for calendar year 2022 was 25 days

**TRAINING, PERSONNEL, AND MANAGEMENT**  
*[Please be prepared to discuss during the inspection.]*

**Child Supervision and Staffing Levels:**

Staff to child ratio is 1:3 for children under the age of six and 1:4 for children over the age of six. Additional staff are available to provide 1:1 enhancement supervision for children with special needs and behavioral concerns.

**Training:** *[Specify types, frequency and what roles are required to attend]*

Polinsky Children's Center staff are required to complete 76 hours of initial training that includes New Staff Orientation, Children in Transition, Mandated Child Abuse Reporting, Special Incident Report Writing, Trauma Informed Practice, Workplace Violence, Nurtured Heart Approach, Pro- ACT, Food Safety, Water Safety, CPR/AED and First Aid, and Universal Safety Precautions. Staff working with children under the age of six are also required to take 48 hours of additional training to include, but not limited to the following topics: abuse, neglect and development, bonding and attachment, cultural competency, trauma and brain damage, preventative health practices, and limit setting. Refresher courses are available to staff every 1-3 years, depending on the class.

**Staff Background and Reference Checks:**

- Do staff members have an initial background before they are hired?  Yes  No
- Do staff members have reference checks before they are hired?  Yes  No
- Do staff members meet with a psychologist before they are hired?  Yes  No
- Do staff members undergo drug testing before they are hired?  Yes  No
- Do staff members undergo periodic criminal history checks after they are employed?  Yes  No

If yes, date of last periodic background check: N/A

If no, what safeguards are in place to capture staff criminal conduct?

Polinsky Children's Center receives ongoing status notifications of any criminal history or new arrests.

## GRIEVANCES, REPORTING INCIDENTS AND STAFF MISCONDUCT

### **Problems/Complaints Affecting Facility During the Calendar Year:**

- Court Orders Affecting Facility (please have available, if applicable):  Yes  No
- Pending Litigation:  Yes  No
- Does the facility have a formal grievance policy?  Yes  No

### **Grievances:**

Number of Written Complaints / Grievances Involving:

- Residents (youth): 7
- Attorneys: 0
- Family Members: 0
- Medical: 0
- Other: N/A

- Are written grievances reviewed daily?  Yes  No
- Are grievances tracked in some manner that would permit facility leaders to observe trends in grievance reports?  Yes  No
- Is there a method for youth to be able to express concerns about the facility to a staff member who is not assigned to their cottage?  Yes  No
- Are youth made aware on a routine basis that they can express concerns about their placement to their case worker, social worker and/or attorneys?  Yes  No

### **Reporting of Incidents:** *[Please be prepared to discuss with JJC Inspection Team.]*

Youth Complaint & Appeal Forms are placed in every cottage. Complaints are collected daily, logged and forwarded to management for their review. Youth are able to appeal their grievance, which can be elevated to the director of the facility.

### **Staff Misconduct:**

- Are there written policies for addressing staff misconduct?  Yes  No
- Have there been any allegations in the calendar year of a staff member physically assaulting a youth?  Yes  No
- Have there been any allegations in the calendar year of staff member sexually assaulting a youth?  Yes  No
- Have there been any allegations in the calendar year of a staff member verbally threatening a youth?  Yes  No
- Have there been any allegations in the calendar year of a staff member touching a youth in any inappropriate way?  Yes  No
- Have there been any allegations in the calendar year of a staff member commenting on the physical appearance of a youth in a manner that is outside

the scope of the staff member's job duties?  Yes  No

Have there been any allegations in the calendar year of a staff member entering a youth's sleeping room for any reason that was outside the scope of the staff member's job duties?  Yes  No

If the answer is yes to any of the inquiries related to allegations, is there written documentation of the incident, follow-up, and responsive action?  Yes  No

Please describe the circumstances related to any of the allegations noted above:

There were 18 investigations conducted by Community Care Licensing during the 2022 calendar year alleging staff misconduct which included personal rights violations. The allegations include facility staff member(s) inappropriately caring for children including handling minors in a rough manner, inappropriately engaging with youth in care as well as inappropriate contact with a minor in care. Four complaints were substantiated, ten complaints were unsubstantiated, and four complaints were unfounded. Staff that were involved in any substantiated complaints are no longer employed at Polinsky Children's Center.

#### **CLASSIFICATION**

*[Please be prepared to discuss during the inspection.]*

Describe how youth are identified and appropriately placed within the facility:

*\*Please provide written policies and procedures*

Youth at Polinsky Children's Center are housed based on their ages. Children under the age of six are placed in Cottage B (babies) and C (toddlers). Children between the ages of 6 and 12 are housed in gender neutral cottages. Youth over the age of 12 are housed in separate cottages.

#### **COUNSELING AND CASEWORK SERVICES**

*[Please be prepared to discuss during the inspection.]*

Polinsky Children's Center contracts with New Alternatives, Incorporated (NAI) to provide mental health services on-site. Services are trauma informed and include crisis intervention and mental health support. A team of mental health professionals ensure that children who suffer from serious psychiatric and psychological disturbances are identified and provided appropriate mental health care at Polinsky Children's Center. When requested, NAI staff meet to assess children who may be experiencing common reactions, such as sadness and anxiety, to their new environment. Staff provide an array of mental health services including crisis intervention, psychosocial behavior health assessments, psychiatric assessments, medication support or management, individual or group therapy, case management and intensive care coordination. In addition, children receive services pursuant to their case plan as directed by their County social worker.

## **PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

*[Please be prepared to discuss with JJC Inspection Team.]*

### **School Program:**

The San Diego Unified School District operates a school on site for children pre-kindergarten through high school. Children attend this school if they are unable to attend their school of origin. Bilingual assistance and special education are provided. Polinsky Children's Center and the San Diego School District coordinate the transportation of children to and from their schools of origin. In calendar year 2022, there were 37 youth enrolled at the PCC school as many school age children are transported to their school of origin.

### **Parenting Classes:**

Parenting classes for youth at Polinsky Children's Center are not offered; however, youth can be transported to classes in the community. We also provide expecting teen moms reading materials such as, "What to Expect When You Are Expecting," and "Guide to a Healthy Pregnancy."

### **Recreation and Exercise:**

Polinsky Children's Center offers structured exercise activities through a contract with Healthy Adventures. Polinsky Children's Center also offers a running club, swimming at an on-site pool, healthy eating cooking classes, and a community garden. These activities are monitored and coordinated by the Polinsky Recreational Therapist. Our Recreational Therapist also organizes and strategizes events and outings, working with outside vendors and partners, that provide enrichment activities for our youth.

### **Religious Program:**

Religious services are voluntary. Polinsky Children's Center has the ability to coordinate and provide transportation for youth to go off campus to the religious program/affiliation of their choice and provides bibles upon request. Religious food restrictions are also adhered to.

### **Work Program/Vocational Training:**

Per their request, teens are able to have a part-time job and/or attend vocational training. Polinsky Children's Center also provides appropriate interview clothing and any uniform supplies after hire, such as non-slip work shoes and uniforms.

### **Visiting:**

Polinsky Children's Center offers supervised and unsupervised visits in an identified family visitation area on campus. This area provides games, books and interactive toys for our visitors to enjoy as well as an outside patio area with tables.

### **Correspondence:**

At Polinsky Children's Center, children have the ability to receive and write letters, as well as make and receive phone calls.

### **Access to Legal Services:**

Each child is assigned an attorney through Children's Legal Services who has access to the child for visits/interviews at Polinsky Children's Center. Each child is provided a private space to speak to their attorney.

**HEALTH SERVICES**

*[Please be prepared to discuss with JJC Inspection Team.]*

**MEAL SERVICE**

Are kitchen staff members trained regarding sanitation and food handling procedures?  Yes  No

Have kitchen staff members received any training in the calendar year other than training given to newly hired employees?  Yes  No

If yes, describe what the training included:

- January: Customer Service
- February: Facility Standards
- March: Overview of Food Borne Microorganisms
- April: Controlling Food Costs
- May: Personal Hygiene
- June: Preparation, Cooking and Serving
- July: Cleaning and Sanitation
- August: COVID-19 Precautions Food Delivery/ Handling
- September: COVID-19 Precautions Storage
- October: Maintaining Food Safety
- November: Civil Rights
- December: Dish Machine Operation/Safe Chemical Use

Do youth work in the kitchen?  Yes  No

If yes above, have they been trained?  Yes  No

Describe the types of work youth perform: Enter text.

Are meals served cafeteria style?  Yes  No

Are youth permitted 20 minutes or more to eat?  Yes  No

Who/what agency maintains the kitchen area? Enter text.

**Adequate and Varied Meals:**

Is there a weekly menu posted?  Yes  No

Does a nutritionist, dietitian, or other health professional participate in the creation of the menu?  Yes  No

How many calories per day does a youth who eats all of the standard meals provided consume? Calories vary for different age groups and needs.

What approximate percent of calories are from the following:

Protein: 30 %

Carbohydrate: 40 %

Fat: 30 %

Are weaker youths protected from having food taken from them?  Yes  No

**Special Diets:**

Can special diets be accommodated when medically necessary?  Yes  No

Was the facility unable to accommodate a special diet based on medical reasons during the calendar year?  Yes  No

If yes:

A. What accommodations was the facility unable to meet?  
N/A

B. What modifications to accommodate the youth?  
N/A

Can special diets be accommodated when based on a youth's religious practices or beliefs?  Yes  No

Was the facility unable to accommodate a special diet based on a youth's religious practices or beliefs in the calendar year?  Yes  No

If yes:

A. What accommodations was the facility unable to meet?  
N/A

B. What modifications to accommodate the youth?  
N/A

**SANITATION**

*[Please be prepared to discuss with JJC Inspection Team.]*

**Clothing and Personal Hygiene:**

Are youth provided with personal hygiene products upon entry to the facility?  Yes  No

If yes, what policies are in place to ensure Culturally sensitive products are provided accordingly? Polinsky Children's Center offers textured hair care products for African American children. Staff are trained for specific hair care and youth are taken to specialized salons for their hair care needs.

If no, are youth provided a stipend to purchase their own products?  N/A  Yes  No

**Bedding and Linens:**

How often are clean linens provided to youth? Clean linens are always available in cottages.

How often are clean blankets provided to youth? Clean blankets are always available in cottages.