

**Licensed Child Caring Agency Unannounced Site Visits Report**

**Licensee:** Trillium Family Services- Children’s Farm Home campus

**Executive Director:** Jamie Vandergon

**Date of Unannounced:** 11-16-2023 and 11-29-2023

**Licensing Coordinator:** Aubrey Kelly (Licensing Coordinator Mary Torres also participated in the visit on 11/16/2023) Regulatory Manager Harry Gilmore wrote this report using interview notes from the visits and other available information.

**Other Regulatory or Accrediting Agencies:** Oregon Health Authority, Health Systems Division (OHA Operations & Policy Analyst Carrie Wouda participated in the visit on 11/29/2023)

**Purpose:** Per OAR 419-400-0240 (1)(b) Children’s Care Licensing is required to perform at least one unannounced site visit a year where children in care reside.

| <b>Previous Findings</b><br>September 2023 license renewal review                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Repeat Findings Further Action Needed</b>                                      | <b>Comments</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| 419-400-0100 (2) Licensing Umbrella Rules: Resources Required. (2) A child-caring agency must employ or contract for a sufficient number of competent and qualified employees to perform the functions regulated by these rules and to provide adequate care, safety, protection, and supervision of the children in care and families the child-caring agency serves. | <b>Yes</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Excerpt from September 2023 license renewal report:</b><br/>           During staff interviews and subsequent record review, it was discovered one client was unable to take a shower on two separate occasions in a two-week period due to an insufficient number of staff. There were numerous notes that the client smelled and was not clean. Furthermore, there was an incident in which a staff was in a physical altercation with a client in the backyard of a unit and called for staff support three times. There were not enough staff on campus to respond to the call. It was reported by staff that low staffing is a constant issue. The program shall ensure a sufficient number of staff are on campus to provide adequate care, safety, protection and supervision of the clients in care.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Numerous interviews with children in care, care-giver personnel and supervisory personnel were conducted during unannounced visits on November 16 and November 29. Interviews are summarized below in the Interview Summary section of this report. Interviewees reported a lack of staff to meet every child’s needs and experiencing situations when a child or children are in crisis and there are not enough staff on campus to respond to the crisis, despite requests for assistance and backup from other units. Additionally, staff reported a child who is on “high risk” designation for shower</p> |

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|  | <p>supervision had been denied showers multiple times due to lack of available staff to support the supervision requirement.</p> <p>Interviewees reported inconsistent availability outdoor recreation and off-campus activities and an inability to provide prescribed treatment groups, and this was attributed to not having sufficient personnel to provide these activities while also managing residents' behaviors, managing the milieu in general and providing 1:1 supervision to the youth who require it.</p> <p>On November 10, 2023, a child in Trillium's Sequoia unit engaged in behavior that required accountability and reflection. Sequoia staff on shift that evening were unable to work with the child as needed due to lack of staffing and inexperienced staff. Evening staff passed that task on to day staff, so the child was held accountable in the morning of November 11, 2023. The child became extremely escalated, lodging homicidal threats, kicking doors, windows, and people, and ultimately dysregulating other children in the milieu alongside them. This resulted in the children overtaking the milieu and sequestering staff in an observation booth. Staff called a local law enforcement agency for assistance, but they declined to respond. Staff ultimately called 911 and officers responded, allowing Trillium staff to regain control of the milieu.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Trillium must create a plan and take steps to ensure that the number of trained staff present at all times at the Farm Home is enough to manage youths' behaviors, including having staff available to reliably respond timely to calls for back-up support in a crisis. The program must create a plan and take steps to ensure that treatment groups reliably occur, that youth can reliably have access to outside recreation and the cafeteria, that youth who are approved for off-campus activities have access to these activities, and that all youth can reliably take showers, have scheduled snacks, make phone calls, and use the bathroom without undue delay and have other needs reliably met without undue delay.</p> <p>If there is not an existing method of measuring and tracking the things listed above, a method must be developed to do so with a reasonable amount of specificity and accuracy, including a method of tracking individual calls for back-up support, the response to such calls and the timeliness of the response.</p> <p>The program must include measures of employee morale, satisfaction and retention in the program's on-going quality improvement plan, if these are not already part of the QI plan.</p> |
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| Other previous findings from the license renewal review in September 2023 will be checked during later visits. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
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| New Findings from Site Visit | Comments |
|------------------------------|----------|
| N/A                          |          |

### Interview Summary

Multiple youth in care and multiple Trillium employees were interviewed either in the course of the two separate site visits on 11/16 and 11/28 or via subsequent phone calls.

**Campus Operations Employee:** Staffing on the weekends is difficult. Having 6 staff of swing feels like a solid team.

**Employee at Sequoia:** There aren't enough staff, particularly on swing shift and weekends, and it's stressful. A newer employee who was hired a month ago is quitting.

**Employee at Sequoia:** Although not the job she was hired for, she's been filling in as a skills trainer due to staff shortages. People are pulled from regular duties to assist with youths' behaviors. The staffing situation is the worst it's been in three years. Management has stated there isn't anything they can do about the staffing shortage. She is concerned for her safety. On two occasions, when she called for support, no-one responded.

**Program Supervisor:** Staff to youth supervision ratio requirements are being met. There is staff turnover. They don't have knowledge of circumstances that had been reported prior to the unannounced visit, including employees not having breaks, no-one responding to employees' requests for back-up to assist with managing youth behaviors, youth not receiving meals and snacks or youth not having access to showers. The pass-along emails, which are a means of summarizing important information and sharing it between shifts, are consistently occurring.

**Employee at Sequoia:** When youth are designated for heightened supervision, other work doesn't get done. There are safety issues when there are not enough personnel. When requesting staff support, it's not always available. Staff have communicated their concerns about staffing levels to management verbally and by email. Scheduled treatment groups don't always happen, and this is due to not having enough staff. When they previously had contracted temporary staff on site, staff could rely on back-up support when needed to manage youths' behaviors, staff were able to reliably take scheduled breaks and treatment groups were reliably occurring.

**Campus Operations Employee:** Feels more staff are needed in the Secure Adolescent Inpatient (SAIP) units. Youth are not always able to take showers. Staff recruitment and retention needs improvement.

**Employee at Sequoia:** Feels there are not enough staff, and swing shift, in particular, has had staffing problems for months. The situation has been exacerbated by the discontinuation of contracting for temporary personnel. Staff are burning out. Staff are able to take scheduled breaks approximately 50% of the time on the shifts he works. Treatment groups are occurring on his shifts. He believes site supervisors understand the staffing concerns and have been trying to address them. "Campus Ops" personnel are in the role that contracted temporary personnel used to occupy.

**Employee at Redwood:** Staffing is a problem. Things work well with 6 staff on duty, but they've been making do with 5. There was an instance of staff responsible to 1:1 supervision of a youth having to leave to assist other staff. Staff are receiving scheduled breaks on the shifts he works. Back-up crisis support isn't reliably available when needed. It often not possible for youth to have time outside the facility due to insufficient staff levels. The situation was better, and things were manageable when contracted temporary personnel were on site. Staff retention is a big problem.

**Employee at Redwood:** Used to enjoy the work, but doesn't anymore due to staffing shortages, so is seeking other employment. Staff are being injured, and a staff suffered a broken leg in a situation in which having additional staff available could have prevented it. The program has taken steps to improve employee morale and retention, but these have been insufficient. High rates of turnover have resulted in employees with less experience occupying roles with greater responsibility when compared to the level of experience that was required for similar roles in the past. Staff are receiving their scheduled breaks. Calls for crisis support are not reliably answered. Staff retention is the biggest problem at the Farm Home.

**Employee at Redwood:** There are not enough staff to supervise the youth. On 2 recent occasions there was a request to end 1:1 supervision requirement for two youth to free up staff, but this was not possible due to the ongoing needs of the youth receiving the heightened supervision. Calls for crisis support are frequently unanswered when staff and youth are being attacked. Staffing levels were sufficient when contracted temporary staff were on site, but this has been discontinued.

**Employee at Sequoia:** Has worked at Farm Home for between 4 and 5 months. Staffing is a problem. She is quitting, and one of her co-workers is quitting. She believes staffing issues contributed to the recent incident in which staff lost control of the program and had to lock themselves in the observation booth while waiting for law enforcement to respond. She feels a staffing-related delay in initiating a consequence for a particular youth's behavior caused an extreme reaction by the youth and the escalation of other youths in care. She feels Trillium's recruitment efforts need improvement and that contracted staff, who were previously brought in to assist, should be brought back. Staff are not getting breaks, and treatment groups aren't happening reliably. Youth are waiting a long time for snacks. Showers for a youth on high-risk aren't happening. Outings have been curtailed. Sometimes no-one comes when there all calls for support. Youth are not getting outside, and staff aren't available to walk with youth to the cafeteria.

**Employee at Redwood:** Feels there are not enough staff to ensure safety of youth in care since contracted temporary staff were discontinued. The employee stated they have been vocal about their concerns about low staffing. Youth are sometimes not getting showers. The previous week a particular youth had requested a shower every day, but it couldn't happen due to insufficient staff. Injuries to employees and youth have happened that could have been prevented with adequate staff levels. On the Sunday preceding the day of the unannounced visit, staffing levels were low on all units. The employee described an incident in which a physical restraint couldn't be controlled due not having enough staff available. They talked about having suffered concussions, and indicated this is not uncommon. Youth are not getting out of the facility due to low staffing. Calls for backup go unanswered, and physical interventions can't be implemented when circumstances warrant. Snacks and beverages are delayed or missed due to low staffing. Feels concerns expressed at "red flag meetings" are not being heard or addressed. The staffing situation is an ongoing problem, and there doesn't appear to be any plan to address it.

**Program Supervisor:** There is a divide between staff and leadership. Staffing levels in the facility meet the state requirements in terms of the ratio of employees to youth in care, but level is insufficient to meet resident's needs. Youth are not able to leave the facility for walks or other outings. Scheduled treatment groups don't happen consistently. Staff are not reliably getting breaks. Several days per week there is a crisis related to finding enough staff to work a given shift. Supervisors are being asked to work all the time and are being pulled out of their assigned units to provide campus-wide coverage. Supervisors' access to the staff scheduling system has been restricted. Supervisors are seeking other employment. Staff morale is low, and they perceive a disconnect between their feelings and leadership.

**Employee at Sequoia:** Since contracted temporary personnel were discontinued, there are never enough staff. They've been in crisis mode for 3 months. It's unsafe. Leadership/ management are in chaos, and there is infighting. None of the programs on campus are fully staffed. Leadership makes empty promises.

**Program Supervisor:** More shifts are understaffed than not. Major changes are needed but not happening. Treatment groups aren't reliably occurring. Staff who normally occupy the observation booth are regularly pulled. Had to help with a physical hold while restricted to light duty. Staff have been told by a VP to "stop talking about their feelings". Looking for other employment.

**Youth in Care at Sequoia:** Upset about the departure of a preferred staff person. She has usually been able to take showers, but sometimes not. Treatment groups aren't occurring due to staffing issues. She doesn't always get a snack. She doesn't always feel safe and would like there to be cameras in bedrooms. She had a mark on her head which she attributed to head-banging.

**Youth in Care at Sequoia:** She's been at the Farm Home since August. She was recently able to access laundry detergent and ingest it. She feels the program is short-staffed. There were 3 times when she was not able to take a shower due to staffing. Treatment groups are not happening reliably. Recreational activities and access to the outdoors have been curtailed. When this youth was interviewed again on 11/28, she reported she had been able to shower when she wanted. She feels safe at the program.

**Youth in Care at Sequoia:** She has been at the Farm Home for 5 months in 2 different campus facilities. She characterized the program as "pretty good", but more staff are needed. Snacks and bathroom access have been delayed due to staffing. Treatment groups don't always happen due to staff being occupied managing youths' behaviors. She likes her peers and staff and feels safe.

**Youth in Care at Sequoia:** He has been at Farm Home for almost 1 year. He feels the program is fine but needs more staff. Treatment groups don't happen as often as they should. He described a particular swing shift employee as mean and disrespectful towards him. He said his jacket had been taken from him and he is cold. His phone calls are via speakerphone. He feels the "restorative services" youth are treated differently. Outings were discontinued 4 months ago. His wireless earbuds were taken away and his shoes and his diamond ring have been lost.

**Youth in Care at Sequoia:** She has been at the program for almost 2 months and was at the Farm home Previously. She is on "medium risk" and believes it's unwarranted. She recently became aware that youths were going into each other's rooms, and she reported it. Sometimes she needs to wait for her needs to be met. She feels safe at the program.

**Campus Operations Employee:** Feels the program is understaffed and management has been dismissive when concerns about staffing are voiced. Frequently works double shifts. There were 3 or 4 occasions when calls for support were not answered. On one occasion she called for support 4 times with no answer. Management must be consulted before law enforcement is called.

**Youth in Care at Sequoia:** She has been at program for 2 months. Feels the program is OK, but she wishes she could do more. She gets along with staff and peers. There are times when she can't go outside, and phone calls are sometimes delayed or don't happen due to staffing issues. Treatment groups have been happening.

**Youth in Care at Sequoia:** He's been there a couple weeks. The food is OK. He feels safe. He doesn't get to take walks due to staffing issues. Would like to be able to go off campus.

**Youth in Care at Sequoia:** She's been at Farm Home for 7 months. She reported an employee touched her sexually. (CCLP confirmed this had been reported to the hotline by Trillium). Youth are expected to wait patiently for needs to be met and for snacks. Her favorite staff are Chris and Alli.

### **Corrective Actions and Timeframes:**

Please submit the following to verify compliance.

Within 45 days of receipt of this report **Trillium Family Services** must submit a letter of verification indicating the agency is in compliance with the specific rules cited above and describing how compliance will be maintained going forward. Along with the letter of verification, the agency must submit any and all specific documentation requested in the body of this report. The letter of verification and any additional requested documents can be emailed directly to **Ed Wyller** by email at **Edward.Wyller@odhsoha.oregon.gov**.

Signature 

ODHS Regulatory Mngr. 2  
Title

12-21-2023  
Date