
Section 8

Detention Conditions Assessment Team



INTRODUCTION

The following information outlines Multnomah County's commitment to improving the conditions for youth being held in the secure Detention facility. This was begun through a partnership with the Youth Law Center, which provided yearly assessments for stakeholders. Currently, Multnomah County has organized and implemented a volunteer assessment team to perform this yearly site review.

GOALS

- To recognize the need for accepting responsibility for inadequate conditions of confinement.
- To identify the benefits of creating optimal conditions of confinement in Multnomah County.
- To recognize the benefits of improved physical space, staffing, programs, and physical and mental health services in the Multnomah County multi-service facility.
- To recognize the impact of the new Multnomah County facility on Detention population, violent incidents within the facility, and use of isolation.
- To discuss the need for a detention conditions assessment team.

KEY ELEMENTS

1. Lawsuit brought in 1991-92
 - ✓ Did not settle for bare minimum to resolve lawsuit – looked at optimal conditions
 - ✓ Looked at Best Practices
 - ✓ State Standards- American Corrections Association
2. Detention Reform coincided with New Facility – joint effort
3. Top-down agreement by management and County-wide decision-makers working with Detention Reform Goals:
 - ✓ Budget
 - ✓ Hiring and training of staff
 - ✓ Best practices in policies (e.g. healthy 1-8 staff ratio)
 - ✓ Consensus/Team Building

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4. Youth Law Center was funded by Casey to provide on-site reviews of:
 - ✓ Youth files
 - ✓ Practices
 - ✓ Youth grievances and staff response
 - ✓ Incident reports
 - ✓ Assaults on youth and assaults on staff
 - ✓ Recreation opportunities
 - ✓ Food
 - ✓ Use of isolation
 - ✓ Use of room lock
 - ✓ Policies and procedures

 5. Multnomah County is committed to the review process; it created its own reviewing system after Casey funds were no longer involved. (Youth Law Center assisted the process by offering to train staff and volunteers conducting the assessment.)
 - A. Multnomah County Detention Conditions Assessment Team
 - Team members: culturally diverse, varied backgrounds and skills
 - Objective perspectives solicited from the team
 - Consists of representatives from:
 - ✓ Oregon Crime Commission
 - ✓ Oregon Youth Authority
 - ✓ Multnomah County Corrections Health
 - ✓ Portland State University School of Social Work
 - ✓ Juvenile Rights Project law firm

 - B. Inspection Instrument
 - Instrument developed by Multnomah County Detention Management and Youth Law Center; team members utilized instrument in their interviews with staff and youth within Detention.

HISTORY

When the Juvenile Detention Reform Initiative was instigated, Multnomah County was under Federal Court Order for operating a secure Detention facility that did not meet constitutional standards. County leaders responded to the lawsuit's filing by hiring consultants to assess whether the plaintiff's case had merit. Finding that it did, Multnomah County moved quickly to settle the suit. This decree (Robyn A. v. McCoy, Civil No. 90-1151-FR) called for many improvements in Detention conditions, including those related to food, heat, programming, health care, supervision, and room confinement. In addition, the consent decree set a facility limit of 92 youths. Multnomah County's response to the lawsuit filed against them was to do the maximum

they could to ensure better conditions in their Detention facility as well as manage their juvenile detention population more effectively. They further decided to not only meet the federal standards but to exceed those outlined by the American Corrections Association (ACA). The Board of County Commissioners took responsibility for the inadequate conditions and committed to raising the public support and funding necessary to build a new facility.

They succeeded, and in 1993 Multnomah County built the brand-new Juvenile Justice Complex which includes a state-of-the-art, 191-bed Detention facility. All of the detained youth were brought to the new facility by October 28, 1993. The Federal Consent Decree was dismissed six months later.

In an effort to meet the needs of the community regarding public safety, restorative justice, and delinquent wellness programs for Multnomah County as well as neighboring counties, it was decided that the County would build a multi-service delivery facility. This facility would allow for expansion into any of the three areas mentioned above, as needed. Flexibility was an essential aspect of the facility's multi-purpose design, so that if at one time the Risk Assessment Instrument determined that 191 high-risk youth needed to be detained, the County had room.

COLLABORATION

The need for a team philosophy is essential if conditions in any detention facility are going to improve and, more importantly, remain at the highest standard. Juvenile departments have a natural staff attrition rate, and in order to preserve these high standards over the course of personnel changes, an outside group can be brought in to provide objective feedback to stakeholders, decision-makers, and line staff.

Through the Casey Foundation, the Youth Law Center of San Francisco was brought on site to review detention conditions in Multnomah County, focusing on the following areas:

- ✓ Youth files
- ✓ Practices
- ✓ Youth grievances and staff response
- ✓ Incident reports
- ✓ Assaults on youth and assaults on staff
- ✓ Recreation opportunities
- ✓ Food
- ✓ Use of isolation
- ✓ Use of room lock

The Youth Law Center conducted annual on-site reviews from 1993 until 1997. Their first visit evaluated the old Multnomah County Detention Facility and helped target areas for improvement, including grievance procedures, outdoor recreation, the use of locked room time programming, and physical conditions. The input they provided from their outside perspective proved so valuable that the Youth Law Center assessment team continued to visit and evaluate the evolving detention program.

In 1998, after Casey Foundation funds were no longer involved, Multnomah County decision-makers demonstrated their ongoing commitment to detention reform by creating their own Detention Conditions Assessment Team. They retained the short-term consulting services of the Youth Law Center to help set up the system and train the new local Detention Conditions Assessment Team.

The Multnomah County Detention Conditions Assessment Team is a group of local volunteers who represent a variety of employment backgrounds, skills, and cultures. Including both men and women, this team consists of members from:

- ✓ Oregon Crime Commission
- ✓ Oregon Youth Authority
- ✓ Multnomah County Corrections Health
- ✓ Portland State University School of Social Work
- ✓ Juvenile Rights Project law firm

This Assessment Team conducted its first review of Detention conditions in March, 1999. The report is currently being transcribed and an executive summary will soon be provided to stakeholders. Initial briefings show that Detention conditions continue to improve.

IMPLEMENTATION

One of the main goals of the Juvenile Detention Reform Initiative was to establish optimal conditions for the youth being held in the Multnomah County secure Detention facility. In order to achieve this objective and *sustain* those optimal conditions, three things had to happen:

1. Creation of Detention Conditions assessment criteria.
2. Performance of yearly assessments of Multnomah County's Detention conditions.
3. Submittal of a yearly written assessment report to County stakeholders.

The original criteria for minimum standards and practices for Multnomah County's Detention conditions assessment were written and provided by the Youth Law Center. These criteria include the following:

- Facilities Management
- Policy and Procedure Manual
- Outdoor Recreation and Gymnasium Usage
- Youth Visitation
- Room Confinement, Isolation, and Disciplinary Policies
- Youth Restraint Procedures
- Youth Grievance Procedures
- Medical Services and Procedures
- Youth Mental Health Services
- Multi-Service Facility Programs
- Youth Allegations of Physical Abuse
- Education
- Detention Intake Procedures
- Food Service
- Youth with Special Needs

OBSTACLES

It is an uncomfortable and sometimes risky proposition to ask a group of outsiders to look into every aspect of a program and write up a thorough evaluation. Having the powerful and qualified Youth Law Center representatives scrutinizing conditions within Multnomah County naturally caused some misgivings among staff. However, the visits provided such useful feedback that the attitude toward them altered. Often, the reports contained information to which the County was able to respond immediately, thus further improving conditions. In some cases, the Youth Law Center's findings provided data helpful in justifying facility improvements to decision-makers.

The transition to the local Multnomah County Assessment Team brought its own set of obstacles to overcome. A volunteer team does not necessarily possess the same level of sophistication as a team of juvenile rights lawyers and also lacks the support in creating assessment reports. The instrument used by the Youth Law Center was pared down for the Multnomah County Assessment Team. The County's request for the volunteers to submit a written report in addition to their commitment of a three-day site review was

overwhelming. In the future, Multnomah County has planned for support services to be provided to the Detention Conditions Assessment Team to help complete the writing of the final report and an executive summary.

Multnomah County is working to resolve these issues before the assessment in the year 2000. One of the advantages of an institution's long-term commitment to reform is that changes can be made in response to direct feedback. Thus, data-driven decisions can affect every aspect of the reform process.

THE NEW REFORMED SYSTEM

The improved physical space, human conditions, and positive reinforcement programs are producing a much more participatory atmosphere on the part of the youths in secure Detention. This creates a positive peer culture wherein youth are helping to manage themselves.

On a daily basis, every youth has the opportunity to take a shower, partake of three balanced meals, attend school, and see the on-duty nurse during any of three daily rounds to the units. The accredited school program has an individual classroom and teacher for every unit operated through the Alternative Education Department of the Multnomah County Education Service District.

Each youth participates in a recreation activity two times daily in the secure gymnasium or outdoor recreation areas, as the weather permits. During "free time," youth may use phones to make collect calls, write letters, read, and play games or basketball. Each youth may also be visited by a guardian for half an hour during Detention visiting days. Youth are allowed to participate in visits by demonstrating that they can follow the basic expectations of the unit. Each unit has a schedule and rules and follows a level system, which indicates the extra privileges that each youth can earn, such as a later bedtime. Upon admission to the unit, the expectations of the unit and the Detention facility are verbally explained to each youth by one of the unit staff.

Multnomah County Secure Detention also provides several specialized programs and opportunities during a youth's stay. Besides a small selection of books in every unit, Detention has a library of current titles which youth can check out to read. In addition to a computer for use in school and during free time in every unit, the facility has a six-terminal computer lab. Each unit also has basic art supplies and there is a separate arts and crafts room that can be used for more extensive projects or a special activity. Recently, a video library was established, containing approved educational videos for use by the units. Mono-lingual and bilingual youth clients are assisted in obtaining access to these resources while in secure custody.

Each unit provides daily youth processing groups, where the youth can process their concerns, feelings, and issues with the unit staff. Detention also offers specialized drug and alcohol groups led daily by counselors from the Morrison Center. This is achieved through a contracted relationship with a community-based provider. In addition, several Spanish-speaking Detention staff provide translation services in order for Hispanic youth to be able to participate in all regular daily activities.

The Detention Program also includes contracted chaplain services from the Salvation Army, offering youth the opportunity to speak with the chaplain during one of his three or four weekly visits. The chaplain coordinates a group of volunteers and leads religious services which individual youth may request to attend.

The Multnomah County Detention is a multi-service facility and has several units available for post-adjudicated youth. Within Detention there is a 30-day Assessment, Intervention, and Transition Program (AITP), which is run similarly to the general population units. The Detention facility also has two Oregon Youth Authority Units and a Sex Offender Treatment Program unit. These units have their own schedules, expectations, visiting rules, etc.

Assessment, Intervention, Transition Program

The program is committed to:

- Providing each youth with an assessment of strengths and needs.
- Identifying mental health issues related to youths' behavior.
- Continuing the process towards skill development and treatment needs in addressing violence and aggression.
- Advocating and facilitating the transition of youth to appropriate community resources.

Eligibility:

All adjudicated youth and their families who reside in Multnomah County are eligible.

Referral:

Followed by a Court Order, a Multnomah County Juvenile Court Counselor will make the referral. All youth will be screened prior to acceptance.

Services:

All services are provided by a joint partnership between the Department of Juvenile and Adult Community Justice and Community and Family Services.

These services include:

- ✓ Mental health assessment
- ✓ Pro-social skill development
- ✓ Cognitive restructuring
- ✓ Transition and placement facilitation
- ✓ Family meetings
- ✓ Family strengths support groups
- ✓ Anger resolution
- ✓ Violence elimination groups
- ✓ Education services (Multnomah County ESD)
- ✓ Behavioral management
- ✓ Alcohol/drug screening and referral (Multnomah County subcontract)
- ✓ Medical services (Multnomah County Corrections Health)
- ✓ Psychiatric assessment
- ✓ Psychological consultation
- ✓ Individual therapy
- ✓ Case consultation
- ✓ Group intervention review
- ✓ Medication
- ✓ Physician medication management
- ✓ Physician therapy
- ✓ AITP after-care youth group

Consultation includes case screening, staffing, review, cognitive restructuring/problem-solving processes, treatment planning with case manager, family, or other individuals relevant to the case, and other client-specific activities not defined elsewhere, such as service coordination, resource development, networking activities, and gaining access to services that require mental health and treatment expertise.

Sex Offenders Unit – Secure Residential Treatment Program

The Secure Residential Treatment Program is a 15-bed, highly-structured assessment/treatment program for males, designed expressly to reduce the rate of commitments to Youth Correctional Facilities. This program also serves as a transition resource for Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) youth who have made treatment progress at MacLaren/Hillcrest and are considered safe to return to the community. Specialized services for high-need youth and their families are the trademark of this program. Youth may be involved in the program for up to six months before transition to other community-based services. Nationally, there are fewer than 6 program models of this type in operation.

There are three target populations. The "front-end" population consists of those youth who are just out of the adjudication process and are either in significant denial and therefore ineligible for community-based treatment or are in need of a more thorough assessment before they can be referred to treatment. The "booster" population consists of youth who are enrolled in community-based treatment programs but are in crisis due to serious probation/parole violations or serious conduct that interferes with treatment and/or safe management in the community. The "back-end" population consists of adolescents referred by the State Close Custody system who have completed or have made strong treatment progress and require a carefully integrated transition plan to return to the community.

Since opening this program in July, 1996 as a collaboration between Multnomah County and the Morrison Center, over 80 young men have successfully completed the program. The Secure Residential Treatment Program employs a cognitive-behavioral treatment model. Residents receive intensive individual, group, and family therapy as well as a range of skill development services. Residents may enter the Secure Residential Treatment Program more than once.

The Sex Offender Treatment Team includes Juvenile Court Counselors (JCCs) and two Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) Parole/Probation Officers. The team co-manages the assessment, adjudication, placement, planning, treatment, and community supervision of approximately 142 juvenile sex offenders on probation. The average caseload size is 28 probationers. The Circuit Court orders stringent probation conditions for this client population and often places clients under Juvenile Community Justice Department supervision past their 18th birthdays. All sex offender clients are classified for a "High" level of probation supervision.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

Multnomah County is constantly examining its detention trends and reconfiguring the use of space and resources. This review of detention utilization trends resulted in the recent closure of one of the 16-bed units in the secure Detention facility in order to sub-contract the space for a much-needed wellness program. Multnomah County is currently reviewing the need for a secure drug and alcohol treatment program.

Additionally, a new data collection system is being created to provide decision-makers with an automated daily Detention Population Report, which will show which youth are in Detention and their lengths of stay. This report will support Multnomah County's Capacity Management System which allows for the release of low-risk youth when needed to manage the Detention population.

County-driven key results and detention management policies will also be reflected in Multnomah County's new Juvenile Information Network (JIN), and regular reports will be provided to measure the following:

- ✓ Staff Training
- ✓ Incident Reports
- ✓ Facility Utilization Trends
- ✓ Facility Safety Issues
- ✓ Transfer of Information
- ✓ Youth Services Documentation