

**STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE**

**BUREAU OF MONITORING AND
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

Annual Compliance Report

Eckerd Transition, Circuits 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18

Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc.

**(Contract Provider)
8125 Laurel Hill Drive
Orlando, Florida 32818**

Review Date(s): January 26, 2021



**Promoting Continuous Improvement and Accountability
in Juvenile Justice Programs and Services**



Rating Definitions

Ratings were assigned to each indicator by the review team using the following definitions:

Satisfactory Compliance	No exceptions to the requirements of the indicator; or limited, unintentional, and/or non-systemic exceptions which do not result in reduced or substandard service delivery; or systemic exceptions with corrective action already applied and demonstrated.
Limited Compliance	Systemic exceptions to the requirements of the indicator; exceptions to the requirements of the indicator which result in the interruption of service delivery; and/or typically require oversight by management to address the issues systemically.
Failed Compliance	The absence of a component(s) essential to the requirements of the indicator which typically requires immediate follow-up and response to remediate the issue and ensure service delivery.

Review Team

The Bureau of Monitoring and Quality Improvement wishes to thank the following review team members for their participation in this review, and for promoting continuous improvement and accountability in juvenile justice programs and services in Florida:

Kamille Payne, Office of Accountability and Program Support, Lead Reviewer (Standards 1, 2, and 3)

Marvin Bliss, Office of Accountability and Program Support, Regional Monitor (Standards 2 and 3)

Irma Melendez, DJJ Probation, Circuit 9, Juvenile Probation Officer Supervisor (Standards 2 and 3)

Jesin Miah, Office of Accountability and Program Support, Regional Monitor (Standards 2 and 3)

Program Name: Eckerd Transition, Circuits 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18 MQI Program Code: 1314/1317
Provider Name: Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. Contract Number: 10114
Location: Orange County / Circuit 9 Number of Beds: 164
Review Date(s): January 26, 2021 Lead Reviewer Code: 161

This review was conducted in accordance with FDJJ-2000 (Contract Management and Program Monitoring and Quality Improvement Policy and Procedures), and focused on the areas of (1) Management Accountability, (2) Assessment Services, and (3) Intervention Services, which are included in the Transition Services Standards.

Overall Rating Summary

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All indicators have been rated Satisfactory and no corrective action is needed at this time.

Standard 1: Management Accountability **Transition Services Rating Profile**

Indicator Ratings		
Standard 1 - Management Accountability		
1.01	* Initial Background Screening	Satisfactory
1.02	Five-Year Rescreening	Satisfactory
1.03	Pre-Service and/or In-Service Training	Satisfactory
1.04	Incident Reporting (CCC)*	Satisfactory
1.05	Abuse reporting (DCF)*	Satisfactory
1.06	Administration	Satisfactory
1.07	JJIS and Data Requirements	Satisfactory

* The Department has identified certain key critical indicators. These indicators represent critical areas that require immediate attention if a program operates below Department standards. A program must therefore achieve at least a Satisfactory Compliance rating in each of these indicators. Failure to do so will result in a program alert form being completed and distributed to the appropriate program area (detention, residential, probation).

Standard 2: Assessment Services

Transition Services Rating Profile

Indicator Ratings		
Standard 2 - Assessment and Performance Plan		
2.01	Referral Process	Satisfactory
2.02	Admission and Services Provision Processes	Satisfactory
2.03	Assessments for Services	Satisfactory

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Standard 3: Intervention Services **Transition Services Rating Profile**

Indicator Ratings		
Standard 3 - Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services		
3.01	Individualized Plan of Care	Satisfactory
3.02	Community Referrals	Satisfactory
3.03	Transition Services Case Management	Satisfactory
3.04	Release/Discharge	Satisfactory

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Program Overview

The Department contracts with Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc., to provide transition, assistance, and support services to youth re-entering the community from residential programs in Circuits 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 18. The program has sites in Brevard, Orange, Hillsborough, Manatee, Polk, and Pasco Counties and is contracted to provide 164 slots. The program's management team consists of one vice president of operations, one transition director, one administrative coordinator, three program managers, one program supervisor, one regional education supervisor, and one community engagement supervisor. The program is designed to provide supportive services to successfully integrate the youth back into the community and to prevent recidivism. The program provides youth with core services including education, mentoring, vocational, restorative justice, transportation, gender-specific programming, and parenting life skills. Transition services include social and life skills training, mentoring, vocational education, vocational training, résumé development, employment training, job placement, educational services, and personal budgeting. Services are provided based on the Department's referral addressing goals and objectives, which are outlined on the youth's individualized transition plan. Eligible youth who have a legal status with the Department and have been placed on post-commitment probation or conditional release supervision receive education and vocational services from the program. Discharge planning begins during each youth's admission phase and continues in stages until the time of the youth's release. At the time of the annual compliance review, the program had one vacancy for a transition support specialist in Circuit 12.

Strengths and Innovative Approaches

- The program implemented virtual graduation ceremonies to recognize youth for achievements during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In Circuits 6 and 13, the program held quarterly family engagement small group dinner sessions as a way to encourage togetherness and communication. The groups are led by a small group host and are attended by mentors and team members.
- The program launched Project 180 in July 2020 to allow youth who have successfully graduated the program and are making gains toward educational and career goals to enroll in an additional 180 days of support services while earning stipend totaling \$180. To date, Project 180 has issued up to \$4000 in stipends to successfully discharged youth utilizing money raised through fundraising efforts. In Polk County, the program was awarded a grant to support the Project 180 services for youth in Polk County and the money was able to assist youth with stipends, laptop purchases, and items to support educational and vocational success.
- The program held a virtual 5k fundraiser as a means to raise money to support youth education and career goals after their successful discharge from program services. The team successfully raised over \$21,000 towards success funds and Project 180.
- The program partnered with the Department to write Letters of Hope to youth in Department residential programs during the holidays.
- The program utilized virtual platforms to engage youth in events such as a trivia night, talent show, scavenger hunt, voting rights session, family pizza and game nights, financial literacy session, success or failure sessions, multiple restorative justice group sessions, town hall sessions, and cooking nights.
- Youth in Circuits 6, 10, and 13 were given the opportunity to participate in fantasy fishing camps where youth worked with professional fisherman to learn the skill.
- Youth in Polk County were provided an opportunity to complete a two-week course in manufacturing through Polk State College and earned industry recognized certificates in supply logistics.
- The program partnered with a local non-profit to receive \$2,500 worth of new suitcases filled with hygiene products and items for independent living to assist youth exiting foster care, as well as youth in independent living situations.
- The program engaged youth during the holidays by gifting youth with cups filled with treats and encouraging letters, surprising youth in Circuit 10 with supplies to decorate for the holidays and providing supplies to compete in a gingerbread house competition in Circuit 9.
- The program partnered with Well-Built to provide youth with bikes, helmets, locks, and lights. In addition, the business owner provides a tour of the shop and provides youth life skills on how to start and manage a small business and maintain and repair bicycles.

- The program worked closed with youth to identify their dream jobs and partner with community agencies to assist youth in creative job shadowing by matching youth to an employer and allowing the youth to ask questions and experience a day in the life of an employee despite not being able to go on-site due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Standard 1: Management Accountability

1.01 Initial Background Screening (Critical)	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>Background screening is conducted for all Department employees and volunteers and all contracted provider and grant recipient employees, volunteers, mentors, and interns with access to youth and confidential youth records. A contracted provider may provide training and orientation to a potential employee before the screening process is completed. However, these individuals may not have contact with youth or confidential youth records until the screening is completed, the determination is "Eligible," a copy of the criminal history report has been reviewed, and the employee demonstrates he or she exhibits no behaviors warranting the denial of employment. An Annual Affidavit of Compliance with Level 2 Screening Standards is completed annually.</i>	

The program hired twelve new staff and three new volunteers during the annual compliance review period. Each of the twelve staff and three volunteers were found to have a complete and eligible background screening in the Agency for Healthcare Administration's Clearinghouse prior to the date of hire. There was documentation in each of the twelve staff and three volunteer personnel records indicating the hiring authority reviewed the staff or volunteer's criminal background screening, Central Communications Center (CCC) personal involvement report, Staff Verification System (SVS) module, and Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Automated Training Management System (ATMS). Two of the twelve staff and each of the three volunteers were added to the program's roster in the Clearinghouse system. The program provided documentation reflecting a process which ensures staff are added to the roster after receiving a background screening; however, a new staff did not add the remaining ten staff as required. Re-training was provided to the staff, all staff were added to the Clearinghouse roster, and the program put an additional process in place to ensure all staff are added to the Clearinghouse roster as required. Each of the twelve staff were applicable for a pre-employment assessment tool and reviewed documentation found all twelve staff passed the tool prior to hire. The program initiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a sub-contractor to provide mentoring services on December 31, 2020. As part of the MOU, the provider completed level 2 background screenings for six volunteers to provide mentoring services; however, the volunteers were not screened in the Clearinghouse system. The volunteers had not begun to provide services to the youth and the program reported the MOU has been amended and the volunteers will be screened through Clearinghouse prior to providing services to youth. The program submitted an Annual Affidavit of Compliance with Level 2 Screening Standards for all staff and education staff, who are program staff, on January 14, 2020.

1.02 Five-Year Rescreening	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>Background rescreening/resubmission is conducted for all Department employees and volunteers and all contracted provider and grant recipient employees, volunteers, mentors, and interns with access to youth and confidential youth records. Employees and volunteers are rescreened every five years from the initial date of employment. When a current provider staff member transitions into the Clearinghouse, the rescreen/resubmission date starts anew and is calculated by the Clearinghouse. (Note: For the new date, see the Retained Prints Expiration Date on the applicant's personal profile page within the Clearinghouse.</i>	

A review of the program staff and volunteer roster found the program had two staff eligible for a five-year background rescreening during the annual compliance review period. One of the two

staff had a completed and eligible background screening within the required timeframe in the Agency for Healthcare Administration's Clearinghouse system. The remaining staff had a completed and eligible background re-screening nineteen days after the staff's anniversary date; however, the screening was found to be submitted at least ten business days prior to the anniversary date.

1.03 Pre-Service and/or In-Service Training	Satisfactory Compliance
<p><i>All program staff shall successfully complete training requirements as set forth below. The following training shall be completed prior to the delivery of direct services to Department youth and/or as in-service training to program staff:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) - As Applicable</i> ▪ <i>Civil Rights Training - As Applicable</i> ▪ <i>Motivational Interviewing (MI) - Pre-Service</i> ▪ <i>Staff Verification System - As Applicable</i> ▪ <i>Critical Incident Reporting Requirements - Pre and In-Service</i> ▪ <i>Trauma Informed Care - Pre and In-Service</i> ▪ <i>Adolescent Brain Development - Pre-Service</i> ▪ <i>Remaining staff training completed in accordance with the Staff Training Plan, in Exhibit 5 of Project Connect and Project Bridge Contract</i> 	

The program has a training plan for both pre-service and in-service staff which is detailed within the contract with the Department and outlines all required training. Eight staff were eligible for completion of pre-service training during the annual compliance review period and were reviewed for training requirements; the remaining four newly hired staff were recently hired and were in the process of completing the required training prior to contact with youth. Each of the eight applicable staff completed all required training prior to delivery of services.

Nine staff training records were reviewed for in-service training. Each reviewed record included documentation reflecting all required training was completed. All training for pre-service and in-service staff was documented in the Department's Learning Management System (SkillPro) except for one training in each record; however, documentation confirmed the training was completed and was found for each reviewed staff.

1.04 Incident Reporting (CCC) (Critical)	Satisfactory Compliance
<p><i>Whenever a reportable incident occurs, the program notifies the Department's Central Communications Center (CCC) within two hours of the incident, or within two hours of becoming aware of the incident.</i></p>	

The program had fifty-five Central Communications Center (CCC) reports during the annual compliance review period across Circuits 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 18, fifty-two of which were related to COVID-19 testing. The remaining three CCC reports were reviewed. Reviewed documentation reflected each incident was reported within the required timeframe. A review of youth records and incident reports found no incidents which should have been reported to the CCC.

1.05 Abuse Reporting (DCF) (Critical)	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, as defined by Florida Statute, or a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care, reports such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Abuse Hotline.</i>	

The program has a written policy and procedures providing for an abuse-free environment for youth and the responsibility of staff to ensure youth are provided unimpeded access to report abuse. A tour of the program office in Circuit 9 found postings for the Florida Abuse Hotline and Central Communications Center (CCC). The staff adhere to a code of conduct which prohibits staff abuse, profanity, threats, and intimidation. A review of twelve staff personnel records found each staff received and signed an acknowledgement of the code of conduct upon hire. A review of CCC reports, incident reports, and youth records found no instances of allegations of abuse against staff during the annual compliance review period.

1.06 Administration	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>The program shall provide a safe and appropriate treatment environment, including administrative and operational oversight.</i>	

The program administration provides oversight to all services provided and maintains statistical data on all required topics as outlined in the contract with the Department. Documentation supported all required monthly reports were submitted to the Department during the annual compliance review period. A review of the program's census found the youth, admission dates, and discharge dates matched information found in the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS).

1.07 JJIS and Data Requirements	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>The program and subcontracted service providers shall utilize the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) for data entry and shall monitor accuracy at all times.</i>	

The program utilizes the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) to track, accept, and place youth through the Youth Placement-Facility module. A review of nine closed youth records, two records from each Circuit 6, 9, and 10, and one record from each Circuit 12, 13, and 18, found each youth was accepted to the program or placed on a wait list by the program within seventy-two hours of referral. JJIS was found to be updated with the youth's discharge dates within twenty-four hours of actual discharge date, as documented in the youth's record. Reviewed documentation indicated the program updated the Staff Verification System (SVS) in JJIS, as required.

Standard 2: Assessment Services

2.01 Referral Process	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>The program shall review each referred youth's referral by e-mail and JJIS to assess the youth's service needs and shall accept or reject all Department youth referred for transition services within seventy-two hours of referral from the Department (excluding weekend and holiday hours).</i>	

A review of sixteen youth records, three records each from Circuits 6, 9, 10, and 13 and two records each from Circuits 12 and 18, found each youth was accepted into the program or onto a waitlist within seventy-two hours of referral from the juvenile probation officer (JPO). An e-mail was sent to each assigned JPOs notifying them of the youth's acceptance into the program, as required. The program reported all youth in a residential program pending discharge or youth in the community on post-commitment probation (PCP) or conditional release (CR) will be accepted into the program or placed on a waitlist for services; no youth are rejected, which was reflected in the review of youth records. If a youth is placed on a waitlist they will be assigned a pre-service coordinator who will conduct weekly check-ins with the youth until services are able to be initiated.

2.02 Admission and Services Provision Processes	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>A referral and/or pre-service activities shall begin while the youth is in a residential commitment program; however, placement does not begin until a youth physically returns back to the community.</i>	

Sixteen youth records were reviewed, three records each from Circuits 6, 9, 10, and 13 and two records each from Circuits 12 and 18, and each included a signed Consent and Authorization for Use and Disclosure, Inspection, and Release of Information form and a signed Consent for Service Planning form. Ten of the sixteen reviewed youth were referred to the program while in a residential commitment facility. There was documentation in seven of the ten applicable youth records indicating the program made contact with the youth's parent/guardian, attended the youth's Community Re-entry Team (CRT) meeting, and contacted the youth's juvenile probation officer (JPO) to discuss transition upon receipt of the referral. One youth record reflected the program attended the CRT meeting and contacted the JPO; however, the staff did not contact the parent/guardian, as required. The remaining two youth were referred to the program less than thirty days prior to the youth's release and after the CRT meeting occurred; however, parent/guardian contact was made for one youth and attempted for the other prior to the youth's discharge from the residential program. All ten youth who were referred while in a residential program were admitted and oriented to the program or added to the waitlist within four days of release. Six youth were referred after release from the residential program, and each was oriented and admitted to the program or added to the waitlist within seven days of referral.

2.03 Assessments for Services	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>The program shall conduct a Service Needs Assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to further define each youth's specific service needs as related to the core services.</i>	

Sixteen youth records were reviewed, three records each from Circuits 6, 9, 10, and 13 and two records each from Circuits 12 and 18, and each included a comprehensive service needs assessment conducted within forty-eight hours of initial contact with youth to verify service

needs. Each of the sixteen records included documentation the program reviewed the youth's Community Assessment Tool (CAT) and Youth Empowered Success (YES) Plan to determine the youth's protective and risk factors. In addition, ten of the sixteen youth records were applicable for and had documentation of a review of the Residential Assessment of Youth (RAY) with the youth's residential program during the transition, exit, and community Re-Entry Team (CRT) meetings. The remaining six youth were referred to the program after discharge from residential programs.

Standard 3: Intervention Services

3.01 Individualized Plan of Care

Satisfactory Compliance

The program shall provide service planning for each youth with a youth-centered approach, taking into consideration all the youth's service needs. The Individualized Service Plan (ISP) shall indicate goals to facilitate successful reentry to the community.

Sixteen youth records were reviewed, three records each from Circuits 6, 9, 10, and 13 and two records each from Circuits 12 and 18, and each included an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) which was individualized to each youth's needs based on the needs assessment. An ISP conference was held for each of the sixteen youth within seven days of completion of the ISP. The ISP conferences included all required parties for fifteen of the sixteen youth. One youth's ISP conference did not include the juvenile probation officer (JPO), career services coordinator, or education representative. The program reported the youth's work schedule made it difficult to contact the youth; therefore, the ISP conference was held at the last minute and a follow-up e-mail was sent to the rest of the required parties after the conference. For each of the sixteen reviewed youth records, the ISP conferences resulted in complete and individualized plans. Twelve closed youth records were reviewed, two records from each reviewed circuit, of which nine were applicable for completion of a survey assessing the youth's satisfaction with the services provided and the outcome of their time with the program. Each applicable record reflected the survey was completed, as required. The remaining three closed youth records reflected the records were closed as unsuccessful due to the program not being able to locate and contact the youth; therefore, the surveys were unable to be conducted.

3.02 Community Referrals

Satisfactory Compliance

The program shall have established links with other local community organizations to ensure the supportive service needs of the youth can be met in accordance with their Individualized Service Plan.

Sixteen youth records were reviewed, three records each from Circuits 6, 9, 10, and 13 and two records each from Circuits 12 and 18, and each documented referrals were made for the youth which included the type of referral, referral date, follow-up, outcome, and referral end date. All referrals were made for services which were provided by the program, including mentoring, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) instruction, and career coordination; therefore, the community provider and acquisition date in the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) were not applicable. The program reported all services are provided in-house and if the youth needs to be referred for services by a community provider, such as mental health and substance abuse treatment, it is completed by the assigned juvenile probation officer (JPO). Each of the sixteen youth records documented the transition coordinator notified the youth's JPO of any referrals and followed-up with each of the in-house service providers to ensure services were provided.

3.03 Transition Services Case Management

Satisfactory Compliance

The program shall provide one or more core transition services, specifically vocational services and/or education services, including mentoring and transportation, with related support services.

Sixteen youth records were reviewed, three records each from Circuits 6, 9, 10, and 13 and two records each from Circuits 12 and 18, and each documented the transition coordinator ensured all services were provided to the youth within fourteen days of the referral and followed-up, as required. In addition, the transition coordinator documented the follow-up and youth's progress with each service in the monthly progress report. Fifteen of the sixteen youth were assigned a mentor as part of the program services; the remaining youth refused to be matched with a mentor. Fourteen of the fifteen applicable youth received at least four hours of mentoring services a month. One youth did not have any documented mentoring hours for three months and did not have the full four hours of mentoring for two months; however, the program documented efforts of the mentor to contact the youth. The program's contract with the Department no longer requires the Home Builder's Institute (HBI) Inc. mentoring curriculum.

3.04 Release/Discharge	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>Prior to the release or discharge of a youth from services (prior to completion of the intervention), the program must coordinate discharge planning with the youth's JPO.</i>	

Twelve youth closed records were reviewed, two records from each reviewed circuit, and eleven had documentation the transition coordinator began coordinating the youth's discharge from the program with the juvenile probation officer (JPO) at least thirty days prior to discharge. One youth was unable to be contacted prior to beginning the transition process which led to the youth's unsuccessful discharge. Each of the twelve closed youth records had documentation indicating a Discharge Summary was uploaded in the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) and the JPO was notified upon the youth's discharge. Nine of the youth were successfully discharged and three were unsuccessfully discharged due to lack of compliance and the program not being able to locate the youth.