

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Human Services

Mission and Governance Statement

Office of Juvenile Affairs

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT:

The Office of Juvenile Affairs and its community partners provide prevention, educational and treatment services as well as secure facilities for at-risk youth throughout Oklahoma; their combined work promotes a statewide system that supports and encourages young people to achieve their full potential.

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR:

Steven L. Buck, Executive Director, (405) 530-2806

GOVERNANCE:

The Board of Juvenile Affairs was created February 1, 1995, which shall consist of seven (7) members who shall be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. One member shall be appointed from each congressional district and any remaining members shall be appointed from the state at large. All members shall be appointed for terms of four (4) years. Current membership is as follows:

Board Members

Scott Williams – Board Chair
Kristin Jarmin – Vice Chair
Stephen Grissom
Donnie Nero
Tony Caldwell
Karen Youngblood*
At- Large

Term Expires

July 1, 2017
March 15, 2017
March 15, 2017
March 2017
July 1, 2017
July 1, 2018
Pending Appointment

**pending confirmation*

Education & Programs Committee

Karen Youngblood
Stephen Grissom
Scott Williams

Rules Committee

Scott Williams
Kristin Jarmin
Donnie Nero

Rates & Standards Committee

Tony Caldwell
Karen Youngblood

Finance Committee

Tony Caldwell
Karen Youngblood

GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY:

The minutes from the Office of Juvenile Affairs Board of Directors meetings from 2016 can be found on the [agency website](#). The Board of Directors shall hold meetings as necessary and a majority of members serving on the Board shall constitute a quorum of the Board.

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Human Services

MODERNIZATION EFFORTS:

What steps has the agency taken to cut costs and/or eliminate waste?

In 2015, OJA launched the Oklahoma Youth Academy – a charter school specifically designed for OJA youth. The education program is customized to fit the needs of our institution population. Through our charter school program, we are able to incorporate technology; innovative courses and hired teaching staff to fit the needs of the youth we serve. The charter school serves youth at Southwest Oklahoma Juvenile Center (SWOJC) and Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center (COJC). In other OJA sites and contracted facilities, the Education Program is provided by local school districts.

OJA is continuing to develop an agency specific, computer-based training (CBT) program. All OJA employees have extensive training requirements ranging from 16 to 160 hours per year. OJA's CBT program helps reduce employee travel, improve delivery consistency, provide needed flexibility for 24-hour facilities and will match essential curriculum to individual training needs.

OJA implemented a Payroll Conversion to process payroll from monthly to biweekly, which has reduced the number of payrolls processed, eliminated overpayments and underpayments. This conversion was implemented to achieve a goal of OMES to convert state agencies to biweekly payroll, and to be more competitive with the private sector in the labor market.

OJA continues to update two forms of surveillance systems within the secure facilities:

First, the current security surveillance systems at both OJA secure institutions consist of outdated equipment, which have blind spots and bad coverage areas. The security equipment will enhance the safety of both staff and residents. Second, the Digital Video Recording devices (DVR's), which provides storage, enhanced quality, and establishes a hardware standard for OJA Institutions. These systems will also include capabilities for wireless cameras, access control and motion detection, installation of additional cameras across the campus at both secure institutions to provide better coverage, established electronic access controls where appropriate, install motion detection devices in areas where cameras are not allowed to detect movement of residents, replace stationary cameras with PTZ (pan-tilt-zoom) where necessary to increase coverage and utilize officer-worn video cameras in conjunction with stationary cameras for additional coverage and documentation when incidents occur.

OJA has implemented the use of network scanning for all locations statewide, as well as the use of electronic signatures, which allows for faster communication by increasing the flow of information within the agency and reduced paper usage. OJA is in the process of installing a VOIP phone system to provide assistance in staff functionality and reduce overall agency long distance costs.

CORE MISSION:

There are no services that are required for OJA to provide which are outside of our core mission. There are no services OJA provides that are duplicated or replicated by another agency. There are no services which are core to our mission which OJA is unable to perform because of requirements to perform non-core services elsewhere.

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Human Services

Mission and Governance Statement

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

In 2015, the Oklahoma Youth Academy Charter School (OYACS) opened its doors on the Southwest Oklahoma Juvenile Center (SWOJC) and Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center (COJC) campuses; the OJA Board of Directors serve as the governing board for the charter school. To date, 39 students earned have earned their diploma through the Oklahoma Youth Academy Charter School.

In September 2016, one of the original founders of the LA CRIPS visited Oklahoma to speak with youth about the dangers of gang involvement; the visit was made possible through a partnership with the United States Attorney's Office, Western District.

Through a partnership with Mabel Bassett Female Correctional Center, the young women at the Oklahoma Juvenile Center for Girls now have a therapy dog program. The young women are able to interact and care for the "Buddy" and "Molly" while learning coping skills, socialization, relaxation and other life skills.

In December 2016, the Santa Claus Commission which is managed by the Office of Juvenile Affairs, purchased and delivered holiday gifts for youth placed in contracted group homes and medium secure facilities. Close to 400 young people received personal hygiene items, a duffle bag, stationary and gift cards.

To increase transparency and communication; OJA launched it social media presence in April 2016. The agency is working to educate the public on juvenile justice and increase its visibility through coordinated editorial board meetings, strategic media pitches and OJA 101 sessions for media outlets.

PRIVATE SECTOR ALTERNATIVES:

Are any of the services which are performed by the agency also performed in the private sector in Oklahoma? In other states?

OJA contracts for several juvenile justice functions. The largest of these functions, which consist of approximately 48% of OJA's budget, include: all Level D & E residential group homes, regional detention beds, and emergency shelter beds. In addition to emergency shelter beds, Community-based Youth Services agencies provide prevention, intervention, and counseling services.

The largest of these services are:

Residential Level D & E Group homes,
Regional Detention Centers,
Community-based Youth Services Shelters,
Community-based Prevention Services,
Community At-Risk Services, and

Has the agency been approached by any foundation, for-profit or not-for-profit corporation with efforts to privatize some of the functions of the agency?

No