

Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

LOB #188:

SHELTER CARE

Purpose

Shelter Care II (SCII) is a community-based, non-secure, temporary care, co-ed facility. The program is designed to provide court ordered youth with a safe and stable environment while awaiting court hearings to address adjudication and disposition. Stabilization is the primary focus for a youth in placement at Shelter Care. For most residents, placement in this facility stems from their early involvement with the JDRDC. The placement is also used as a least restrictive secure detention alternative when placement in secure detention is viewed as possibly having a negative impact on the resident and his or her situation. Residents are provided with counseling, education, recreation, medical services and emergency health crisis services. The facility operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Description

The CSU opened its first shelter in January 1980. The shelter moved into a separate wing of the newly expanded Juvenile Detention Center in 1982. A new shelter was approved through bond referendum in the fall of 2004 by the voters of Fairfax County. This new shelter, Shelter Care II, opened in 2010. SCII is a 12-bed program where the court may place juveniles charged with status (CHINS) and/or minor delinquency offenses. Residents are categorized in three groups:

- Youth awaiting adjudication and/or final disposition of their cases
- Youth awaiting placement in another residential facility or for other services to be arranged
- Alleged CHINS offenders who need overnight or weekend shelter after being apprehended by the police under the authority of a Shelter Care Order.

The program is designed to:

- Provide crisis intervention and stabilization
- Provide education through the Fairfax County Public Schools
- Gather and share information in order to assist with case planning and judicial decisions
- Identify service needs for the youth and family
- Prepare youth for transition either to home or other placement
- Address immediate mental and physical health needs
- Provide 24 hour supervision and care for the residents in placement

Youth Placements

Residents are placed in SCII by a Court Order, Shelter Care Order, or Capias. Youth can arrive via police after arrest and processing through Juvenile Court Intake or directly from a court hearing. Reports are provided to the court to assist the judicial process with information gathered during a resident's placement. The average length of stay in FY 2015 was 10.8 days.

Counseling

Residents are oriented to the program, school, and milieu and are given daily assignments. These assignments are designed to assist them with developing insight into their situation, address behavioral concerns, and support the short and long-term management of the case. Each resident is assigned a counselor that works one-on-one with the resident and family to begin the stabilization and needs assessment processes.

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Mental Health Screening

Upon entry, residents are also given the Massachusetts Youth Survey Instrument (MAYSI-2) a self-report screening tool to determine if they are in need of mental health services. If needs are identified, a mental health referral is made so that residents can be assessed for risk by a Community Services Board (CSB) mental health clinician. In addition to conducting risk assessments, the mental health clinicians are available for consultation with staff and ongoing supportive counseling with residents presenting with various mental health needs. If appropriate, the CSB psychiatrist will conduct a medication evaluation and prescribe psychiatric medications as needed, with parental consent.

Education

During their stay at the facility, youth interact with 2 teachers that are part of the alternative school program through FCPS. Youth receive an evaluation on academic status and then receive instruction and support from the teachers to maintain good standing and earn credit with the school district.

Benefits

Alternative to Detention

The Shelter Care II provides an effective alternative to secure detention for youth in the community while still maintaining public safety. Research shows that youth placed in secure detention are more likely to reoffend, perform poorly in school and are less likely to succeed later in life. In addition, youth detained in secure detention facilities are more likely to be treated more harshly at later stages of the system. Providing an alternative such as the Shelter Care II facility lessens these impacts on youth involved with the court process while providing a public safety service to the community. During FY 2015, Shelter Care II had 191 placements with a successful program completion rate of 84 percent.

Access to Mental Health Services

As described above, all youth are administered the (MAYSI-2) upon entry to the facility. This assessment provides staff a general view of any mental health issues the youth may have and allows them to provide appropriate referrals to formal psychological assessment if necessary. This plays an important role in getting youth access to services.

Positive Environment

Youth are offered supportive counseling, education, exposure to positive recreational activities, a structured environment with positive adult role models, and the ability to participate in services with outside treatment providers.

Medical Services

For the residents whose parents are not able to access medical treatment, the program offers medical services in order to address presenting medical issues either through a course of treatment or through an assessment process that results in a referral to seek the services of specialized professionals. Additionally, the program is prepared to transport residents to the local health department to obtain testing for sexually transmitted infections. In an emergency medical situation, residents are transported by staff to a local medical facility in order to obtain necessary treatment.

Mandates

Primary Services Provided

- Shelter Care – Fully Mandated (Virginia Code § 16.1-227; § 16.1-234)

Mandates for Shelter Care come primarily from the [Code of Virginia](#). Please see the mandates section in LOB #184: Court Services Administration for are the fundamental elements, including Shelter Care, needed for a Juvenile Justice System. It further directs that there is an adequate and coordinated program of court services, probation, parole and detention facilities and other specialized services and facilities.

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Trends and Challenges

Please refer to the trends and challenges section of LOB #184: Court Services Administration for challenges around mental health, transportation, racial and ethnic disparities, and language barriers that impact this line of business:

- Mental Health Needs of Clients
- Delivery of Services to a Culturally Diverse Community
- Racial and Ethnic Disparity
- Transportation

In addition, the introduction of the Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI) by the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), in particular, had an impact on the number of youth placed in Shelter Care II. Please refer to LOB #187: Juvenile Detention Center Services for a description of the DAI.

Shelter Care II also has larger staff turnover than other parts of the agency as many staff members take promotional positions within the agency or neighboring jurisdictions. The onboarding process is lengthy and training is extensive for new employees taking as long as 6 months for new staff to become proficient in their duties and program knowledge. This can impact service provisions to residents if too many staff members are new at the same time. In addition, as a short-term facility, program staff are not decision makers with regard to case management and court recommendations though they do work with probation officers for those youth under post-dispositional court supervision.

Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
LOB #188: Shelter Care			
FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$863,318	\$860,302	\$914,741
Operating Expenses	31,523	28,886	37,475
Capital Equipment	0	13,227	0
Total Expenditures	\$894,841	\$902,415	\$952,216
General Fund Revenue	\$214,715	\$147,111	\$149,138
Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund	\$680,126	\$755,304	\$803,078
POSITIONS			
<i>Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)</i>			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	14 / 14	14 / 14	14 / 14
Total Positions	14 / 14	14 / 14	14 / 14

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Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Shelter Care II (SCII) child care days provided	2,586	2,536	2,093	2,315	2,315
SC II facilities utilization rate	59%	58%	48%	53%	53%
SC II cost per bed day	\$344	\$351	\$359	\$398	\$398
Percent of parents satisfied with SC II Services	96%	96%	100%	90%	90%
Percent of SC II youth who appear at scheduled court hearing	97%	92%	92%	90%	90%

Changes in juvenile offending rates have led to an overall reduction of youth involved in the juvenile justice system including the use of Shelter Care II. In FY 2015, Shelter Care II provided 2,093 child care days down 32 percent from the 3,090 child care days in FY 2007.

As such utilization rates also fell from 71 percent in FY 2007 to 48 percent in FY 2015. Cost per bed day has increased moving from \$344 in FY 2013 to \$359 in FY 2015. Parents have been consistently satisfied with SCII services over the last three years with 100 percent satisfaction rates in FY 2015.

In addition, the percent of Shelter Care II youth appearing at their scheduled hearing remained consistent from FY 2014 to FY 2015 at 92 percent.