

Agency Name	Division For Children, Youth and Families
Audit Name	STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES PRE-ADJUDICATED PLACEMENTS PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT
Audit Period	Feb 2013
Status Report Date	January 2, 2020

Summary of Audit Observations/Findings					
Number	Observation Title	Status [place X in status column]			
		Unresolved	Partially Resolved	Substantially Resolved	Fully Resolved
1	<i>Risk based guideline</i>				X
2	Determine Shelter Care needs				X
3	Formally assess Alternative uses of the Sununu Youth Services Center			X	
4	Establish Administrative Rules for Obtaining DHHS Consent to File CHINS Petitions			X	

Observation 1: No Formal Risk Assessment on CHINS and Delinquent cases

Summary of Finding: We recommend the DCYF, courts, and law enforcement consider establishing risk-based guidelines similar to the Detention Assessment Screening Instrument for placing children within the continuum of placement options.

Current Status: The Division continues to utilize the SAVRY as the risk/needs tool for all adjudicated CHINS and Delinquents. The tool was suspended for several months while the new user agreement was put into place with the vendor. The Division is currently exploring the utilization of the CANS (Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths) as its strengths/needs tool to better support connecting youth to the appropriate level of care both in the community and in residential treatment.

Observation 2: We recommend the DHHS develop and adopt rules relative to a certificate of need formula for shelter care and detention beds in accordance with statute or alternatively seek legislation amending these laws. If seeking an amendment or repeal of the legislation, the DHHS should develop a formal process for determining and regularly assessing shelter care needs in the State.

Current Status: This observation is fully resolved. As stated in June 2014, the Shelter Care statutes at issue were amended by 1990, 201:16, relative to certification of shelter care/detention beds, is repealed.

As indicated then the department has a formal process (CFSR) for determining and assessing shelter care needs throughout the state. The process to assess the need for Shelter and Detention beds remains in effect.

Observation 3: *Formally assess Alternative uses of the Sununu Youth Services Center*

Summary of Finding: We recommend the DHHS formally assess alternate uses of the SYSC, including shelter care, to determine the most appropriate and beneficial options to maximize utilization of the facility and minimize costs.

Current Status: This observation is substantially resolved. The Department continues to review opportunities to maximize the use of the space at the Sununu Center. Since this report in 2013, the DHHS had completed the NH Juvenile Justice Adequacy assessment done in Sept 2017. The assessment was on the NH service array and ways to build capacity. A need identified was Youth Substance Use Treatment. As a response to the assessment in October 2018, a unit at the Sununu was retro fitted to house a non-secure residential treatment center for youth 12-17. As of December 2019, the DHHS terminated the contract with this Youth Substance Use Treatment center. As the treatment needs of youth in the State evolve, there is on-going assessment as to alternative uses for open space at the Sununu Youth Services Center. As of July 14, 2020, the additional space at SYSC is unutilized as additional treatment space. There continues to be regular conversations as how to best implement the use of this space for further treatment options for youth.

Observation 4: *Establish Administrative rules for Obtaining DHHS Consent to File CHINS Petitions*

Summary of Finding: We recommend the DCYF develop administrative rules outlining the process, and criteria, for obtaining DHHS consent to file a CHINS petition.

Current Status: This observation is substantially resolved. As stated in June of 2014, policy is complete and the next step is rule making. The Division has been working on a formal appeal process prior to going to the rule making process. A request was made to Administrative Appeals Unit (AAU) to accept appeals of decisions made by the Division. The AAU has denied that request, stating they do not have the jurisdiction to hear the appeal. The Division is in the process to elevating a discussion on that decision the Attorney General's office and the Department level. There has been no resolution concerning the appeals process and it remains a goal to be resolved prior to moving this forward to the rule making process. As of July 14, 2020, there has been no progress in the development of an administrative rule as it relates to the criteria for obtaining Department consent for filing a CHINS petition.