



Maryland Department of
Juvenile Services
Treating • Supporting • Protecting

DJS Response

DJS appreciates the opportunity to respond to the report on the Colbourne Group Home. Currently, the Colbourne Group Home has relocated and is now the Haddon Group Home. Though the JJMU report indicates they do not have an Administrator who is also a Certified Child Care Administrator, their State Director is indeed certified as is their Group Home Manager and a copy of his license was provided to the JJMU. Since it is the intention of the Group Home to always have a certified administrator, a plan is in place to send multiple staff for certification so that in case of planned and unplanned absences, others can step into this role.

As to the fire code violation allegations and rundown living quarters, the move to the new Haddon location has resolved these issues. Visits by DJS Program Evaluators have taken place from late December to present and since the move on December 23, 2008 no such significant violations have been found. The Group Home Manager has committed to maintaining the new location in a clean and safe manner.

Though it would have been ideal to move earlier (as was planned), the office of licensing through DJS was proceeding slowly to ensure to the program met COMAR standards and would not enter the Haddon home under a plan of correction. The home was fully licensed by DJS on December 17, 2008 and youth moved in just six days later. And though one staff was found to have been inappropriate for their program, he was terminated when that was discovered; MENTOR Maryland has a policy that requires both CJIS and CPS clearances for all youth workers.

From MENTOR Maryland's internal investigation of the Colbourne Group Home incident on 12/22/08 and from numerous site visits and notes from DJS Program Evaluation Monitors, it is clear that several issues led to the incident involving the youth in question to not be formally reported to CPS or DJS in a timely manner.

Though police, DJS workers, parents and clinical staff were all notified the next day, that delay was inexcusable considering that the staff working that day both were aware of the event and/or were not supervising the youth properly. Both are no longer working for the group home. CPS was indeed not called until the DJS Program Evaluator visited that next month, but assurances have been made to DJS that the Haddon Group Home will make the necessary corrections to ensure staff understand their reporting responsibilities. Their staff have been updated with all of the necessary DJS contact information and will be expected to follow through in every relevant situation with those contacts. DJS Program Evaluators will ensure they follow up on a regular basis and report on compliance at Haddon, and DJS has already created a process in conjunction with the JJMU that will allow the JJMU regular monthly access to all DJS internal monitoring reports made on this program. We welcome any other reports from the JJMU if Haddon is not following this new procedure or complying with expectations. We do believe DJS' internal systems to be adept at identifying these problems as was done in this case.