



January 3, 2017

DHS takes action following client mistreatment at Glenwood State Resource Center Increase in supervision, re-training among changes

(Des Moines, Iowa) - The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) has taken significant personnel action and conducted intensive investigations at the Glenwood State Resource Center in Glenwood, Iowa, following allegations of client mistreatment and failure to report incidents timely.

“We’ve taken aggressive employee action and dramatically increased supervision to ensure our clients are safe and treated properly in their homes,” said Richard Shults, administrator of Mental Health and Disability Services for DHS. “State facilities do not tolerate mistreatment of clients and we require staff to report concerns immediately.”

Investigations found that seven clients were the subject of physical abuse. Thirteen clients were subjected to verbal abuse or neglect. No clients required medical treatment. Client mistreatment involved actions including hitting a client, allowing peer-to-peer aggression, neglecting client personal care needs, talking abusively to and around clients, and teasing clients. The allegations of mistreatment involved clients who reside at four of the 17 homes on the 230-acre campus in southwest Iowa.

DHS immediately placed staff alleged to have mistreated clients on administrative leave pending investigations and notified the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) and local law enforcement. Families and guardians of clients who were subject to mistreatment were also notified of the investigations.

Six employees were terminated and six resigned during the investigations. Additional disciplinary action was taken against five staff and one action is pending. The majority of the incidents involved employees working the evening shift. Any staff found to have abused a client may be placed on the Central Abuse Registry and may be subject to criminal prosecution. Action will be taken should any additional findings conclude client mistreatment or failure to report incidents timely.

In collaboration with DIA, Glenwood has taken significant steps to ensure client safety including:

- Increased supervision of staff, including doubling supervision on weekends and evenings;
- Increased frequency of middle and top management rounds of homes at varying times;
- Re-training supervisors and managers on the signs and symptoms of mistreatment;
- Requiring all staff to be retrained on the standards of client treatment; and

- Requiring all staff to be retrained on reporting suspected client mistreatment

Glenwood serves about 230 clients with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are admitted because of significant behavioral challenges or medical conditions that require intensive, complex active treatment. The goal of the facility is to prepare and support clients to live in the community of their choice. More than 770 staff are employed there.

Gary Anders, Glenwood superintendent, thanks those who came forward to expose the inappropriate employee actions.

“We hope the shameful and unacceptable behavior of a few staff will not detract from the dedicated work of the vast majority of staff members that provide high quality services to Glenwood’s clients,” said Anders. “We remain committed to serving and treating our clients with the dignity and respect they deserve.”

For more information
Amy McCoy
Public Information Officer
515-281-4848
amccoy@dhs.state.ia.us