

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

**BUREAU OF MONITORING AND
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

Annual Compliance Report

Eckerd Transition Project Bridge – Circuits 11, 15, 16, 17, 19, & 20

Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. D/B/A Eckerd Connects

(Contract Provider)

2909 North West 21st Avenue

Oakland Park, Florida 33311

Review Date(s): December 10-12, 2019



Promoting Continuous Improvement and Accountability
in Juvenile Justice Programs and Services



Rating Definitions

Ratings were assigned to each indicator by the review team using the following definitions:

Satisfactory Compliance	No exceptions to the requirements of the indicator; or limited, unintentional, and/or non-systemic exceptions which do not result in reduced or substandard service delivery; or systemic exceptions with corrective action already applied and demonstrated.
Limited Compliance	Systemic exceptions to the requirements of the indicator; exceptions to the requirements of the indicator which result in the interruption of service delivery; and/or typically require oversight by management to address the issues systemically.
Failed Compliance	The absence of a component(s) essential to the requirements of the indicator which typically requires immediate follow-up and response to remediate the issue and ensure service delivery.

Review Team

The Bureau of Monitoring and Quality Improvement wishes to thank the following review team members for their participation in this review, and for promoting continuous improvement and accountability in juvenile justice programs and services in Florida:

Paula Friedrich, Office of Program Accountability, Lead Reviewer (Standard 1)
Christine Calvert, Office of Program Accountability, Regional Monitor (Standard 2)
Rosa Flores, Office of Program Accountability, Regional Monitor (Standard 1)
Patrick Morse, Office of Program Accountability, Regional Supervisor (Standard 3)
Mae Turner, DJJ Probation, Circuit 15, Senior Juvenile Probation Officer (Standard 3)
Regina Washington, DJJ Probation, Circuit 11, Senior Juvenile Probation Officer (Standard 2)

Program Name: Eckerd Transition Project Bridge-Circuits 11, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20

MQI Program Code: 1300

Provider Name: Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc D/B/A Eckerd Connects

Contract Number: 10115

Location: Broward County / Circuit 17

Number of Beds: 142

Review Date(s): December 10-12, 2019

Lead Reviewer Code: 139

This review was conducted in accordance with FDJJ-2000 (Contract Management and Program Monitoring and Quality Improvement Policy and Procedures), and focused on the areas of (1) Management Accountability, (2) Assessment Services, and (3) Intervention Services, which are included in the Transition Services Standards.

Overall Rating Summary

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All indicators have been rated Satisfactory and no corrective action is needed at this time.

Standard 1: Management Accountability Transition Services Rating Profile

Indicator Ratings

Standard 1 - Management Accountability		
1.01	* Initial Background Screening	Satisfactory
1.02	Five-Year Rescreening	Satisfactory
1.03	Pre-Service and/or In-Service Training	Satisfactory
1.04	Incident Reporting (CCC)*	Satisfactory
1.05	Abuse reporting (DCF)*	Satisfactory
1.06	Administration	Satisfactory
1.07	JJIS and Data Requirements	Satisfactory

* The Department has identified certain key critical indicators. These indicators represent critical areas that require immediate attention if a program operates below Department standards. A program must therefore achieve at least a Satisfactory Compliance rating in each of these indicators. Failure to do so will result in a program alert form being completed and distributed to the appropriate program area (detention, residential, probation).

Standard 2: Assessment Services Transition Services Rating Profile

Indicator Ratings		
Standard 2 - Assessment and Performance Plan		
2.01	Referral Process	Satisfactory
2.02	Admission and Services Provision Processes	Satisfactory
2.03	Assessments for Services	Satisfactory

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Standard 3: Intervention Services Transition Services Rating Profile

Indicator Ratings

Standard 3 - Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services		
3.01	Individualized Plan of Care	Satisfactory
3.02	Community Referrals	Satisfactory
3.03	Transition Services Case Management	Satisfactory
3.04	Release/Discharge	Satisfactory

* The Department has identified certain key critical indicators. These indicators represent critical areas that require immediate attention if a program operates below Department standards. A program must therefore achieve at least a Satisfactory Compliance rating in each of these indicators. Failure to do so will result in a program alert form being completed and distributed to the appropriate program area (detention, residential, probation).

Program Overview

The Department contracts with Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. D/B/A Eckerd Connects, to provide transition, assistance, and support services to youth ages eleven and older re-entering the community from residential programs in Circuits 11, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20. The program has sites in Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, Monroe, Broward, St. Lucie, and Lee Counties and is contracted to provide 142 slots. The program's management team consists of one vice president of operations, one program director, and three program managers. The program has an expanded leadership team which includes the management team members, as well as three transition supervisors. The program is designed to provide supportive services to successfully integrate the youth back into the community and to prevent recidivism. The program provides youth with core services including education, mentoring, vocational, restorative justice, transportation, gender-specific programming, and parenting life skills. Transition services also include social and life skills training, mentoring, vocational education, vocational training, résumé development, employment training, job placement, educational services, and personal budgeting. Provided services are based upon the Department's referral addressing goals and objectives, which are outlined on the youth's individualized transition plan. Eligible youth who have a legal status with the Department and have been placed on post-commitment probation or conditional release supervision receive education and vocational services from the program. Discharge planning begins during each youth's admission phase and continues in stages until the time of the youth's release. At the time of the annual compliance review, the program had five vacancies, including three transition support specialist positions and two transition coordinator positions.

Standard 1: Management Accountability

1.01 Initial Background Screening (Critical)

Satisfactory Compliance

Background screening is conducted for all Department employees, contracted provider and grant recipient employees, volunteers, mentors, and interns with access to youth and confidential youth records. The background screening process is completed prior to hiring an employee or utilizing the services of a volunteer, mentor, or intern. An Annual Affidavit of Compliance with Level 2 Screening Standards is completed annually.

The program maintains a written policy and procedures requiring each new staff, independent contractor, consultant, intern, and volunteer to be background screened prior to hire. The program had a total of six new staff and one new volunteer since the last annual compliance review. Each newly hired staff and intern received an initial background screening prior to their hire date and all were rated eligible for hire. Each of the six staff personnel records contained a pre-employment assessment with a passing score. For each person, the program reviewed the Department's Central Communications Center (CCC) person involvement report, the Staff Verification System (SVS) module, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's (FDLE) Automated Training Management System (ATMS) results and completed a review of personnel records prior to hiring the staff or utilizing the volunteer. The program's Annual Affidavit of Compliance with Level 2 Background Screening Standards was submitted to the Department's Background Screening Unit on January 3, 2019, as required.

1.02 Five-Year Rescreening

Satisfactory Compliance

Background screening/resubmission is conducted for all Department employees, contracted provider and grant recipient employees, volunteers, mentors, and interns with access to youth. Employees and volunteers are rescreened every five years from the initial date of employment.

The program maintains a written policy and procedures requiring all staff, independent contractors, consultants, interns, and volunteers to receive a five-year background rescreening calculated from their initial date of hire. The program had three staff eligible for five-year rescreening since the last annual compliance review and each was completed prior to each staff's anniversary date, but no more than twelve months prior to each anniversary date.

1.03 Pre-Service and/or In-Service Training

Satisfactory Compliance

All Transition Services staff shall successfully complete training requirements as set forth in the standards. The training shall be completed prior to the delivery of direct services to Department youth and/or as in-service training to Transition Services staff.

The program maintains a written policy and procedures requiring new staff to complete pre-service training requirements prior to working with youth, as well as annual in-service training requirements. The program's contract requires additional training to be completed during pre-service and in-service training. The program maintains a written training plan which was approved by the Department's Office of Staff Development and Training on February 7, 2019. A review of seven pre-service training records confirmed six staff received the required training including the additional training identified in the program's contract prior to delivery of direct care services to Departmental youth. One training record for a contracted staff who began direct service to youth on April 27, 2019 indicated training on civil rights and adolescent brain

development were not completed until after the contracted staff initiated direct service to Department youth. The trainings were completed eleven and fifty-six days late respectively. An informal interview with the transition director indicated the noted exceptions likely occurred due to the contracted agency using an outdated training plan. A review of nine in-service training records validated eight staff received the required training including the additional in-service training outlined in the program's contract. One staff did not complete all required in-service training due to unexpected medical leave which began in September and continued through the end of the calendar year. All reviewed training was documented in the Department's Learning Management System (SkillPro).

1.04 Incident Reporting (CCC) (Critical)	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>Whenever a reportable incident occurs, the program notifies the Department's Central Communications Center (CCC) within two hours of the incident, or within two hours of becoming aware of the incident.</i>	

The program maintains a written policy and procedures requiring all incidents be reported to the Department's Central Communications Center (CCC) within the required time frame and consistent with the Department's requirements. The program had a total of seven incidents reported to the CCC within the annual compliance review period. A review of five randomly selected CCC reports indicated each was reported within two-hours of the incident occurring or within two hours of becoming aware of the incident. A review of seven pre-service and nine in-service staff training records validated each received training on reporting incidents. A review of fourteen case management records and internal incident reports since the last annual compliance review indicated there were no incidents required to be reported to the CCC or the Florida Abuse Hotline which were not reported. The program did not have any youth grievances submitted since the last annual compliance review.

1.05 Abuse Reporting (DCF)*	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, a youth is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the youth's welfare, as defined by Florida Statute, or a youth is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care, reports such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Abuse Hotline.</i>	

The program maintains a written policy and procedures to address required reporting of abuse and/or neglect. The policy establishes processes and guidelines for the provision of a safe and secure environment for youth and staff, as well as ensuring accurate information regarding reportable incidents is disseminated to the Department's Central Communications Center (CCC) and the Florida Abuse Hotline. Youth are informed of the abuse reporting process during their orientation to the program at admission. Youth are also provided a handbook detailing the procedures for reporting abuse. Observations during the annual compliance review indicated the Florida Abuse Hotline and CCC telephone numbers were posted throughout the program. A review of fourteen case management youth records indicated there were no allegations of abuse reported either by the youth or staff. An interview with the program director indicated there were no complaints against staff or allegations of abuse since the last annual compliance review and youth have unimpeded access to self-report. A review of nine staff personnel records supported each staff acknowledged the program's expectations, child abuse and neglect policy, and reporting requirements as evidenced by each staff's signature on the

program's written code of conduct. A review of seven pre-service and nine in-service staff training records validated each completed abuse and neglect reporting training.

1.06 Administration	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>The program shall provide a safe and appropriate treatment environment, including administrative and operational oversight.</i>	

The program maintains a written policy and procedures to ensure accurate data is shared with the Department and stakeholders. The program completes monthly reports detailing population and program data inclusive of youth admissions, releases and transfers, youth services, census, staff vacancies, youth progress reports, provider service summary reports, and contract compliance reports which are submitted to the Department, as required by the contract. The program also reports on fidelity monitoring of the contracted Home Builders Institute services. A review of the monthly reports for the past six months validated this practice.

1.07 JJIS and Data Requirements	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>The program and subcontracted service providers shall utilize the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) for data entry and shall monitor accuracy at all times.</i>	

The program maintains a written policy and procedures to ensure an accurate census is maintained of youth admitted into the program and the integrity of the data entered into the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS). The program utilizes the JJIS Youth Placement-Facility module for the acceptance or rejection of all referrals. Referrals made by the Department are reviewed within seventy-two hours of submission to determine whether each youth is accepted or rejected. The program maintains a census of all youth who were accepted into the program and received services. A review of the program's current census in comparison with the JJIS Youth Placement-Facility module supported the accuracy of the census. A review of five youth closed records indicated each record documented the youth's acceptance into the program for services. All five closed youth records included each youth's date of admission, date of discharge, and release reason on the JJIS face sheet. Five closed records were reviewed and four indicated JJIS was updated within seventy-two hours of each youth's admission and updated within twenty-four hours of the youth's release from the program. One closed youth record documented a discharge date of November 8, 2019, while JJIS recorded the discharge date as July 8, 2019. An informal interview with the transition director indicated the discrepancy was a typographical error. The program requested correction of the discharge date in JJIS by the data integrity officer (DIO) during the annual compliance review, which was completed immediately as validated by the youth's updated face sheet in JJIS. No other discrepancies were identified.

Standard 2: Assessment Services

2.01 Referral Process	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>The program shall review each referred youth's referral by email and JJIS to assess the youth's service needs and shall accept or reject all Department youth referred for transition services within seventy-two (72) hours of referral from the Department (excluding weekend and holiday hours).</i>	

The program maintains a written policy and procedures regarding referrals and use of the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) which became effective July 1, 2019. The program policy designates the program manager as the responsible party for reviewing and accepting referrals through the Department's Resource Booking module within seventy-two hours of receipt. Upon receipt of a youth referral, the program sends notification through e-mail to the youth's assigned juvenile probation officer (JPO) regarding the acceptance or rejection of the referral. Fourteen youth case management records were reviewed and were applicable for referrals to the program. None of the records were applicable for the referral being rejected. Each of the fourteen reviewed referrals documented an automated e-mail sent from the JJIS Resource Booking module followed by an e-mail from the program to the assigned JPO and JPO supervisor documenting the acceptance of the referral within seventy-two hours, as required.

2.02 Admission and Services Provision Processes	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>A referral and/or pre-service activities shall begin while the youth is in a residential commitment, however, placement does not begin until a youth physically returns back to the community.</i>	

The program maintains a written policy and procedures regarding admission, services, and supports which became effective July 1, 2019. The program is responsible for participating in Community Re-Entry Team (CRT) meetings, contacting the youth's parent/guardian, and engaging the juvenile probation officer (JPO) prior to the youth's release from the residential program. Fourteen youth case management records were reviewed, and twelve records documented the youth was referred to the program prior to release from the residential program. Two referrals were made after the youth were released from the residential program. Eleven of the applicable records documented the program staff participated in the CRT meeting and engaged the youth's JPO prior to release. One record documented the youth was referred only days prior to release from the residential program and CRT meeting attendance was not applicable, and two referrals were received after the youth were released from the residential program; therefore, the program was not made aware of the CRT meeting. Twelve records were applicable for contact with the parent/guardian prior to release and each was completed as required. Two records documented the youth was over the age of eighteen and parent/guardian contact was not applicable.

Youth referred to the program while placed in a residential setting shall receive an admission/orientation within four days of release. Twelve of the fourteen reviewed youth case management records were applicable for being referred while the youth was attending a residential program, and each was admitted/orientated within four days of release, as required. Youth referred to the program after release from a residential setting shall receive an admission/orientation within seven days of release. Two of the fourteen reviewed records were applicable for being referred after release from a residential program and each was admitted/orientated within seven days of release, as required. The program's intake process

shall include documentation of service, expectations and consequences, consent and authorization for use and disclosure, inspection, release of information, consent for service planning, and follow-up. A review of fourteen youth case management records showed thirteen consents were signed on the day of intake/admission. One record documented the parent/guardian participated in the intake conference and provided verbal consent by telephone on August 7, 2019; however, did not sign the consent until December 6, 2019.

2.03 Assessments for Services	Satisfactory Compliance
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<i>The program shall conduct a Service Needs Assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to further define each youth's specific service needs as related to the core services.</i>
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The program maintains a written policy and procedures regarding service needs assessments conducted upon admission which became effective July 1, 2019. The program shall complete the Service Needs Assessment within forty-eight hours of the initiation of services and initial contact with the youth. The program's transition specialist completes a triangulation of transitional needs assessment by reviewing the youth's Exit Residential Assessment of Youth (RAY), the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT)/Community Assessment Tool (CAT), the Youth Empowered Success (YES) Plan, and applicable residential transition plan. The program also conducts interviews with youth, assigned juvenile probation officer (JPO), applicable parent/guardian, and residential program staff, and administers the Ansel Casey Life Skills Assessment, and a Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC) assessment. A review of fourteen youth case management records reflected each contained assessments which were completed within the required forty-eight-hour time frame of initial contact with the youth to assist with assessing the youth's risk factors and to address any other identified needs.

Standard 3: Intervention Services

3.01 Individualized Plan of Care

Satisfactory Compliance

The program shall provide service planning for each youth with a youth-centered approach taking into consideration all the youth's service needs. The Individualized Service Plan (ISP) shall indicate goals to facilitate successful reentry to the community.

The program maintains a written policy and procedures to ensure the transition coordinator will schedule an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) conference with the youth, parent/guardian, and key participants to develop the ISP within seven days of the intake meeting. All youth referred to the program will be assigned a transition coordinator who will implement the ISP within fourteen days of the intake meeting. A review of fourteen youth case management records indicated each record contained an ISP completed within the required time frame with measurable goals addressing the youth's service needs, as outlined in the youth's needs assessment. Each reviewed record indicated an ISP conference was held within seven days after the youth was admitted, with most completed within two days of admission. The assigned transition coordinator was in attendance for each reviewed ISP conference. Thirteen of the fourteen reviewed records validated the youth was present during the ISP conference. One record indicated the youth was invited; however, did not attend the conference. The assigned transition coordinator went to the youth's home to meet with the youth and parent/guardian six days after the conference call. Four of the sixteen youth were eighteen years of age or older; therefore, the parent/guardian was not required to participate in the development of the ISP and provide a signature. The ten applicable youth under the age of eighteen documented the youth's parent/guardian was present during the youth's ISP conference. Nine of the fourteen reviewed records indicated the youth's assigned juvenile probation officer (JPO) was present and participated in the ISP conference. Five JPO's were not present for the conference; however, supporting documentation verified the program notified the assigned JPO in advance of the youth's ISP conference with the invitation to participate. Eight of the fourteen reviewed records indicated each youth earned their General Equivalency Diploma (GED) prior to admission. Six applicable records of youth attending school validated the GED instructor and/or a school representative participating in the ISP conference. Seven youth were identified with vocational interests based on their admission assessment and reviewed documentation supported the career services coordinator participated in the ISP conference. Reviewed documentation supported the program utilizes Home Builders Institute (HBI) for youth in Circuits 15 and 17 and the Eckerd Workforce Development for youth in Circuits 11, 16, 19, and 20. A review of five closed youth case management records verified each record contained an Exit Satisfaction Survey assessing the youth's satisfaction with their vocational/educational, support services, and outcome.

3.02 Community Referrals

Satisfactory Compliance

The program shall have established links with other local community organizations to ensure the supportive service needs of the youth can be met in accordance with their Individualized Service Plan.

The program has a written policy and procedures to ensure youth are referred to community services and/or in-house services based on their needs. A review of fourteen youth case management records indicated each contained documentation the youth were referred to in-house services and mentor services based on their need's assessment. Nine of the fourteen reviewed records were applicable, and each indicated the youth was referred for life skills

services. Seven of the fourteen reviewed records were applicable, and each was referred for gender-specific services. The program utilizes Home Builders Institute (HBI) for youth in Circuits 15 and 17 and the Eckerd Workforce Development for youth in Circuits 11, 16, 19, and 20. Seven of the fourteen reviewed records were applicable, and each was referred for vocational services. Seven of the fourteen youth were applicable for mentor services and each was referred for services. Each reviewed record documented the referral type, community organization or in-house provider, date, and indicated the juvenile probation officer (JPO) was notified of the referral by program staff. Each applicable reviewed record documented a referral was made within the fourteen-calendar day time frame of the youth's identified need of a specific service. Supporting documentation verified program staff followed-up on all referrals to ensure services were assessed.

3.03 Transition Services Case Management	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>The program shall provide one or more core transition services, specifically vocational services and /or education services, including mentoring and transportation with related support services.</i>	

The program maintains a written policy and procedures outlining the program manager or designee ensures each youth receives the necessary referrals for service. The program manager/designee regularly reviews each transition coordinator's casework to ensure quality delivery of services. Case reviews include review and signature of all out-going case documents, as well as documentation of casework activities recorded in the youth record and in the electronic health record (EHR). The program ensures each youth and parent/guardian receives the necessary services and support to overcome problems, improve behaviors, develop skills, build strengths, promote personal responsibility, and establish pro-social connections. A review of fourteen youth case management records indicated the transition coordinator ensured each youth was referred to the necessary service within fourteen days of the need being identified. Thirteen of fourteen youth records documented a follow-up was conducted every fifteen days to ensure services were received, as outlined in the youth's individualized service plan (ISP) and documented all follow-up in the case notes and on the monthly progress report. One youth record had three instances in which the follow-up review was not conducted every fifteen days. One review was two days late, another review was three days late, and one review was six days late. The program identified and implemented corrective action with the assigned transition coordinator who was subsequently terminated for the late follow-up reviews. A review of program practice for the past thirty days verified follow-up reviews are now conducted within the required time frames. Seven of the fourteen youth were applicable for mentor services and each reflected the mentor made contact with the youth at least four hours each month face-to-face, telephonically, or electronically. Seven of the fourteen reviewed records were applicable, and each was referred for vocational services. Reviewed documentation supported the program maintains a copy of the curriculum utilized for vocational training. The program also utilizes the Home Builder's Institute Project Bridge Role Model Training curriculum.

3.04 Release/Discharge	Satisfactory Compliance
<i>Prior to release or discharge of a youth from services (prior to completion of the intervention) the Program/Provider must coordinate discharge planning with the youth's JPO.</i>	

The program maintains a written policy and procedures ensuring the initiation of discharge planning for each youth begins at intake and involves the transition coordinator, youth, parent/guardian, and juvenile probation officer (JPO). Staff, youth, and parents/guardians are

encouraged to provide input on programming and services through regular participation in a variety of forums designed to inform and encourage participation and successful completion. A review of five closed youth case management records indicated the transition coordinator documented coordinating discharge planning within thirty days of each youth's anticipated release date. Reviewed documentation supported the youth's assigned JPO was notified of discharge planning. A copy of the youth's discharge summary was uploaded into the Department's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) Document Upload Library upon the youth's release from the program and the JPO was notified electronically.