

CSSD Chronicle

State of Connecticut Judicial Branch
Court Support Services Division
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American Correctional Association Reaccreditation of Connecticut's Juvenile Detention Centers

(Editor's Note: The following information was provided by CSSD's Patricia Nunez, Program Manager, Juvenile Residential Services)

The American Correctional Association (ACA) was founded in 1870 as the National Prison Association. It is the oldest association developed specifically for practitioners in the correctional setting. The mission of the ACA is to provide a professional organization for all individuals and groups, both public and private, that share a common goal of improving the justice system

An ACA audit for juvenile detention facilities involves assessments in the following areas: administration and management,



ACA auditors touring Hartford Juvenile Detention's control center

the physical plant, operations and services, and programming. It also assesses issues that may affect the quality of life at the facility including staff training, healthcare services, incidents of violence, crowding, and provisions of basic services that may impact the safety of juveniles and staff.

Through the standards and accreditation process, the juvenile detention facilities engage in a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process to review policy and procedures.

The Road to Accreditation—In 2000, Connecticut operated three state detention centers, located in Bridgeport, New Haven and Hartford. At that time, the three centers began their quest for ACA accreditation to insure continued excellence in service and good stewardship of the public trust. The CSSD Accreditation Committee was formed to check compliance with almost 400 standards in the following areas: administrative and fiscal controls; staff training and development; physical plant; safety and emergency procedures; sanitation; food service; and rules and discipline.

Initial ACA accreditation was awarded in 2003 to the three detention centers making Connecticut the only state in the country to achieve this recognition. Accreditation status is good for three years with a great deal of oversight and monitoring taking place to maintain standard compliance.

In 2009, ACA returned to the state detention centers to review the previous three years and check that the fa-

ilities continued to maintain high standards. Reaccreditation status was again awarded to all three detention facilities.

2012 Reaccreditation—Certified auditors from the American Correctional Association visited Connecticut the week of March 25, 2012 to once again audit the state’s juvenile detention centers. This time, the reaccreditation focused on Hartford and Bridgeport, as the juvenile detention center in New Haven was closed in 2011.



At the Hartford Juvenile Detention Center (from left to right) Stephen Grant, CSSD Director, Family and Juvenile Services; William Carbone, CSSD Executive Director; Joel Player, Auditor; Doug Sproat, Auditor; Lillian Gilliam, Auditor; Jennifer Alicea, CSSD Juvenile Detention Superintendent, Hartford; Dave Chapman, Accreditation Manager, Hartford; Karl Alston, CSSD Deputy Director, Juvenile Residential Services

Juvenile Detention Superintendents Jack Fitzgerald – Bridgeport, and Jennifer Alicea – Hartford, hosted three auditors for a week of site visits. Juvenile Detention ACA Managers Keith Orrico – Bridgeport, and Dave Chapman – Hartford were responsible for coordinating and ensuring compliance with standards in their facilities.

Both detention centers were audited and recommended for reaccreditation status to the Board of Governors of the ACA. The compliance standards results were: Bridgeport Detention 99.2%, and Hartford Detention 99.7%.

A Praiseworthy Detention System—Auditors Doug Sproat, Joel Player, and Lillian Gilliam found Connecticut’s detention centers to be a model for the country. Sproat stated that the detention centers are truly committed to providing juveniles under their care with superb treatment. The highest praise went to the staff who work in the centers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Sproat noted that the staff’s common goal—to help juveniles—was evident in every interaction.

Both the maintenance and kitchen departments in both facilities were highlighted by the auditors for their dedication to the facility’s operation. Sproat indicated the facilities were “gleaming” and that the food was “excellent.” In addition, the auditors were highly impressed with the education levels of staff.

Joel Player noted an “impressive list of credentials by the staff who provide treatment to juveniles.”

William Carbone, CSSD Executive Director and Stephen Grant, Director of Family and Juvenile Services were personally present for the close-out meetings held in Bridgeport and Hartford Detention. Carbone took the opportunity to personally thank all detention staff—from administrators, to line staff,



At the Bridgeport Juvenile Detention Center (from left to right) Stephen Grant, CSSD Director, Juvenile and Family Services; Keith Orrico, Accreditation Manager, Bridgeport; Karl Alston, CSSD Deputy Director, Juvenile Residential Services; Jack Fitzgerald, Superintendent; Lillian Gilliam, Auditor; Doug Sproat, Auditor; Joel Player, Auditor; William Carbone, CSSD Executive Director

to contractors—for all their hard work and dedication. Carbone praised the commitment demonstrated by the Center Superintendents, administrators, and line staff. In addition, he thanked Judge Barbara Quinn for her efforts in maintaining appropriate funding for the detention centers, despite the state’s tough fiscal climate, in order to secure its continued reputation for safety and security of juveniles.

Karl Alston, CSSD Deputy Director of Juvenile Residential Services is extremely proud of how far juvenile detention has progressed over the last several decades. Alston started his career in Bridgeport Detention in 1985, and he has been an active force in bringing detention standards to where they are today. Alston stated, “ACA is an integral part of detention’s Continuous Quality Improvement program. By bringing in research and evidence-based programming, we are able to provide quality services to juveniles. ACA has allowed detention to evolve as a juvenile justice system. If it were not for the strong commitment by CSSD and the Judicial Branch, we would not have been able to develop as much as we have. I would like to personally thank William Carbone and Stephen Grant for their continued support and commitment to the ACA accreditation process”.

Alston went on to explain how ACA accreditation has benefited Juvenile Residential Services. “Detention has established itself as a true collaborator with outside agencies such as the Department of Children and Families, as well as multiple CSSD units, including Juvenile Probation, Grants and Contracts, and Clinical and Educational Services.”

Stephen Grant, CSSD Director of Juvenile and Family Services also commented, “The ACA reaccredi-

tation process is an incredibly detailed and intensive process. The auditors carefully inspected every department in the detention centers to ensure compliance with standards. I am very proud of the unparalleled services and security that both facilities consistently provide to Connecticut's most vulnerable and at-risk juveniles." Grant also recognized the efforts of those who made the reaccreditation possible. "I appreciate all of the hard work and attention to detail provided by the staff in the Bridgeport and Hartford Juvenile Detention Centers."



Auditors met with Dr. Elaine Yordan (pictured above), who is the Responsible Physician at Hartford Juvenile Detention

Comprehensive Healthcare—Jeffrey Davis, MSW, Central Responsible Health Authority for Juvenile Residential Services, spoke in depth with the auditors regarding the healthcare services offered in detention. Auditor Lillian Gilliam commented that CSSD should be proud of the healthcare system it has developed in detention, for it is one of the best she has seen across the country.

Davis noted, "What makes our healthcare system unique is that we contract with multiple community-based providers across Connecticut. These providers have embraced the ACA process and are integral to providing continuity of care to the juveniles we serve. There is constant communication occurring between detention administrators, staff and the healthcare providers to ensure seamless care."

The next step in the reaccreditation process is to go before the ACA Board of Governors this summer. At that time, the detention centers will receive the chairperson's recommendation and a final decision on the reaccreditation will be made.

Expanding Accreditation Across Juvenile Residential Services—Following in the footsteps of the two state detention centers are the two contracted, gender responsive, secure community residential programs—SAGE, located in Hamden, and Washington Street Detention (WSD), located in Hartford. Both underwent initial accreditation as a "Small Juvenile Detention Center" in 2009, and will undergo reaccreditation later this year.

Juvenile Residential Services looks forward to maintaining their ACA accreditation while they continue their search for new and promising best practices in juvenile justice.

For more information on the juvenile detention accreditation process, please contact Patricia Nunez, Program Manager at Patricia.Nunez@jud.ct.gov or visit the [ACA, Standards and Accreditation](#) website.



The CSSD Chronicle is a regular publication of information and news about the Court Support Services Division. Questions or comments on this edition, or suggestions for future articles, can be directed to Linda.Grzeika@jud.ct.gov