DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

IG # 14-0053
CCC # 2014-05006
WB # N/A

BRANCH: RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

PALM BEACH JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

DATE OF REPORT: FEBRUARY 3, 2015

INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED BY: INSPECTOR TRACEY SHEARER

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 12, 2014, Palm Beach Juvenile Correctional Facility Administrator Travis Jean-Claude notified the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Central Communications Center (CCC) Office of Inspector General (OIG) that youth [redacted] alleged Youth Care Workers (YCW) JoQuetta Shannon, Duval Grandison, Tristian Hunter, Ricky Williams, and Fontia Hopson allowed youth to fight one another. Youth [redacted] reported one instance in which YCW Shannon allowed four youths to attack youth [redacted].

During the course of the investigation, youth [redacted] identified additional staff who allowed youth to fight one another. Furthermore, the OIG found sufficient reason to investigate whether Master Control Operator Quanzameka Bryant was negligent in performing her assigned duties and whether facility staff failed to report an incident to the CCC within the required two hour timeframe.

An investigation was completed on November 12, 2014.

Based on interviews conducted and records reviewed there is sufficient evidence to prove that on September 11, 2014, YCWs Crystal Burrows and JoQuetta Shannon allowed several youth to strike youth [redacted] without immediately intervening. Therefore, the allegation of Improper Conduct against Burrows and Shannon is **SUSTAINED.**

There is sufficient evidence to prove that YCWs Courvosia Kendricks, JoQuetta Shannon and Duval Grandison have allowed youth to engage in physical altercations with each other without intervention. Therefore, the allegation of Improper Conduct against them is **SUSTAINED**.

There was not sufficient evidence to prove or disprove that YCWs Tristian Hunter, Fontia Hopson, and Ricky Williams arranged or allowed youth to engage in physical altercations. Therefore, the allegation of Improper Conduct against them is **NOT SUSTAINED**.

There is sufficient evidence to prove Master Control Operator Quanzameka Bryant did not properly perform her job duties when as the Master Control Operator, she failed to notice when the camera in Charlie classroom became inoperable. Therefore, the allegation of Improper Supervision against her is **SUSTAINED**.

There was not sufficient evidence to prove or disprove Case Manager McRae was aware of youth [redacted] allegations and did not report them. Therefore, the allegation of Failure to Report against McRae is **NOT SUSTAINED**.

There is sufficient evidence to prove Therapist Ruth Delva, Former Clinical Director Jacqueline Nesci, and FA Travis Jean-Claude were all made aware of youth [redacted] allegations, but failed to ensure it was reported to the CCC within the required two hour timeframe. Therefore, the allegation of Failure to Report against Delva, Nesci, and Jean-Claude is **SUSTAINED**.

II. INVESTIGATIVE PREDICATE AND BACKGROUND

On September 12, 2014, Palm Beach Juvenile Correctional Facility Administrator Travis Jean-Claude notified the DJJ OIG CCC, youth [redacted] reported that YCWs Joquetta Shannon, Duval Grandison, Tristian Hunter, Ricky Williams, and Fonita Hipson allowed youth to fight. One instance allegedly on September 11, 2012, at 8:30 a.m., when Shannon allowed four youths to attack youth [redacted]. (*Exhibit 1*) During the course of the investigation, youth [redacted] provided details of other incidents involving this allegation. Inspector Shearer also found sufficient evidence to investigate whether Master Control Operator Bryant failed to adequately perform her job duties by not monitoring the security cameras and that Case Manager McRae, Former Clinical Director Nesci and FA Jean-Claude failed to report an incident to the CCC within the required two hour timeframe.

Palm Beach Juvenile Correctional Facility (PBJCF) is a DJJ contracted 118-bed high-risk residential program for male youths. It is operated by Youth Services International, Inc. (YSI), and is located in Circuit 15, Palm Beach County, Florida. It provides mental health and substance abuse services to the youth.

III. MATTERS INVESTIGATED

Allegation #1: Improper Conduct

Synopsis - Youth [redacted] alleged YCWs JoQuetta Shannon, Duval Grandison, Ricky Williams, Tristian Hunter, and Fontia Hopson allowed youth to fight each other. ***[Inspector's Note**: This allegation involves four separate incidents that occurred on September 10, 2014, and September 11, 2014. It was determined that two additional staff, YCW's Crystal Burrows and Courvosia Kendricks were also involved.]*

Applicable Statutes/Rules/Policies/Guidance

> **Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, 1100 Rights of Youth in DJJ Care, Custody, or Supervision Policy** statement states: "Employed or contracted staff will treat youths with the courtesy and dignity inherently due every person. Staff will act, speak and conduct themselves in a professional manner...Employed or contracted staff will not treat a youth in a cruel or inhumane manner. Unnecessarily harsh or indecent treatment is prohibited, regardless whether that treatment constitutes child abuse under the law...Employed or contracted staff will not deprive a youth of basic needs including...medical care and security."
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> **PBJCF Abuse Free Environment 1.09 Policy** *states,* "...Palm Beach Juvenile Correctional Facility provides an environment in which youth, staff, and others feel safe, secure and not threatened by any form of abuse or harassment. PBJCF staff will adhere to a code of conduct that forbids staff from using physical abuse, profanity, threats or intimidation..."

PBJCF Consequences and Sanction 3.12 Policy *states,* "...At no time will a youth or a group of youth be given the authority to impose sanctions or control over youth. PBJCF prohibits the use of group punishment..."

PBJCF Behavioral Intervention Techniques 3.14 Policy *states,* "...Under no circumstances will physical force be used as punishment..."

Youth Services International Ethics and Compliance Program

Unethical Conduct E101 states, "Employees shall not commit or allow any act or omission that jeopardizes security, health, safety and/or welfare of youth, staff and/or visitors. Employees shall be responsive to youth needs."

Physical Abuse E104 states, "Employees shall protect youth from physical abuse and/or excessive or unnecessary use of force..."

Youth Rights E105 states, "Employees shall protect youth against violations of youth rights."

Negative Behavior/Unprofessional Conduct E114 states, "Employees shall not display negative behavior or unprofessional conduct that could reflect negatively on the employee, YSI and/or the contracting agency. Employees shall conduct themselves in such a manner so as to avoid convictions or law violations."

Youth Empowerment E131 states, "Employees will not place youth in positions of authority over other youth."

Records Review - During the course of the investigation, unless otherwise noted, Inspector Shearer reviewed the following records:

Letter penned by FA Jean-Claude (*Exhibit 2*) - *[**Inspector's Note**: This letter was sent to DJJ Senior Management Analyst Supervisor Johnny Richardson on September 12, 2014.]* The letter reflects that FA Jean-Claude reported youth [redacted] told him that staff allowed youth to fight in areas not seen on camera. Youth [redacted] said that on September 11, 2014, at approximately 8:35 a.m., four or more youths fought youth [redacted] (no first name) in Charlie classroom. A youth turned the camera so the fight could not be seen.

Jean-Claude reviewed the CCTV (closed circuit television) which showed that while YCW Shannon provided supervision, youth [redacted] (no first name provided) got up and turned the camera. When youth [redacted] came in the classroom, Shannon turned the light off while four or five youths hit him. The Abuse Registry was contacted.

Youth [redacted] reported the following staff have allowed youth fights to occur: YCW Joquetta Shannon, YCW Duval Grandison, YCW Tristian Hunter, YCW Fontia Hopson, and YCW Ricky Williams.

Jean-Claude verified YCW Shannon cut off the lights in the classroom and placed her on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation.

Unsigned Handwritten letter dated September 11, 2014 (*Exhibit 3*) - *[**Inspector's Note**: Youth [redacted] confirmed he wrote this letter.]* Youth [redacted] reported that for a period of two weeks, staff Shannon, Grandison, Hunter, Hopson and Williams allowed youth to fight off camera. Youth [redacted] felt he would get hurt if it continued.

On September 10, 2014, Shannon set it up so the youths could fight off camera in the blind spot. Grandison walked off so there was no one to break up the fight.

On September 11, 2014, while in the classroom, Shannon told youth [redacted] to turn the classroom camera the opposite way so the youths could fight. At 8:00 a.m., Shannon turned the lights off and everyone attacked youth [redacted] (no first name provided).

Those involved were: Youths [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted].

YCW Joquetta Shannon Witness Statement dated September 12, 2014 (*Exhibit 4*) YCW Shannon reported that while in Charlie classroom on September 11, 2014, youth [redacted] (no first name provided) climbed on a desk. After Shannon told him to leave the camera alone and get down, youth [redacted] (no first name provided) then attempted to climb on the desk. Shannon also told him to leave the camera alone. When youth [redacted] (no first name provided) entered the classroom with cookies, five to six youths rushed him, horse playing and took the cookies. Shannon told the youths to stop and return to their assigned seat. Shannon helped youth [redacted] off of the floor. The youth stated he said he was fine. The Shift Supervisor was notified about the camera.

PBJCF Youth Written Statements (*Exhibit 5*) - Youths [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] provided written statements. The record reflects the youths either reported not seeing any fights off camera, denied staff allowed them to fight, or said they knew nothing about the allegation.

Youth [redacted] Written Statement dated September 12, 2014 (*Exhibit 6*) Youth [redacted] reported a youth was attacked while walking into the classroom after staff turned off the lights. For a period of two weeks, staff allowed youth to fight off camera.

On Site Initial Assessment by SMAS Johnny Richardson (*Exhibit 7*) - The record reflects on September 13, 2014, Richardson, Deputy Regional Supervisor Patrice Starks, and Shared Services Monitor Paula Friedrich responded to the PBJCF to observe and interview youth [redacted] and youth assigned to Charlie Dorm.

Youth [redacted] reported that as he entered the classroom, YCWs Burrows and Shannon were seated on each side of the doorway. Once he moved to the middle of the classroom, youth Ware struck him about the head and upper body, causing him to drop a bag of cookies he was carrying and defend himself.

At approximately 5:30 p.m., on September 12, 2014, youth [redacted] informed FA Jean Claude that YCWs Shannon, Grandison, Hunter, Williams and Hopson allowed youth at the program to fight outside of the camera view. He identified the incident that occurred on September 11, 2014, involving youth [redacted] as one example. FA Jean-Claude reviewed the video and verified Shannon turned off the lights as youth [redacted] entered the classroom. Once the lights were off, four youths assaulted the youth. Shannon turned the lights back on and broke up the altercation. Richardson reviewed the video which also included staff Burrows.

Neither Burrows nor Shannon completed a Protective Action Response (PAR) report, even though video footage showed Shannon physically engaged with youth [redacted].

Individual interviews of each of the youth witnesses did not reveal any additional details or information.

Surveillance video review of Charlie Dorm classroom indicated that at 8:34, youth [redacted] stepped on an occupied student desk and tampered with the camera, causing it to go black and "remain useless" while staff Shannon watched. There was no indication staff Shannon or Burrows took any appropriate action in response, to include notifying any supervisor or management. There were no educators present in the classroom at the time of the incident.

Staff Shannon, Burrows, Hopson, and Hunter were placed on administrative leave.

Fourteen DJJ Bureau of Monitoring and Quality Improvement, Residential-Youth Interview forms (*Exhibit 8 and 9*) - Youths [redacted] all completed a residential youth interview form.

Youths [redacted] and [redacted] both reported staff allowed youth to fight. Youth [redacted] reported Phase II youth "sneak" to fight, but was unsure if staff looked away. The remaining youths did not indicate whether or not staff allowed the youth to fight.

YCW Tristian Hunter Written Statement dated September 12, 2014 (*Exhibit 10*) Hunter wrote in his statement that he has never allowed youth to fight on or off camera.

Inactive Status Forms (*Exhibit 11*) - Inactive Status Forms for the following staff: *[**Inspector's Note**: Inactive status forms document staff terminations.]*

- YCW JoQuetta Shannon effective September 12, 2014, for Violation of Company Policy. *[**Inspector's Note:** Shannon's termination was a result of the incident involving youth [redacted].]*
- YCWs Fontia Hopson and Crystal Burrows effective September 14, 2014, for Violation of Company Policy. *[**Inspector's Note**: Burrows' termination was a result of the incident involving youth [redacted]; however, Hopson's termination was unrelated to the allegations in this investigation.]*
- YCW Courvosia Kendricks effective September 29, 2014, for Unsatisfactory Performance, Unsuccessful Completion of Probation.
- YCW Duval Grandison effective September 30, 2014, for Personal Reasons.

Video Summary by Inspector Shearer of camera 1 in Charlie Classroom *(Exhibit 12)* This video showed that on September 11, 2014, youth [redacted] stood on a desk occupied by another youth and moved the camera in Charlie Classroom, which prevented the activities in the classroom from being recorded. YCW Burrows was present but did not intervene. The video continued to record even though the screen was black.

Video Summary by Inspector Shearer of camera 5 in Charlie Classroom (*Exhibit 13*) The video showed that on September 11, 2014, YCWs Shannon and Burrows were seated in the doorway of the classroom as youth [redacted] entered the classroom at 8:51:32. Shannon then reached behind her and turned off the lights in the classroom. Approximately six youths got up from their seats and appeared to hit youth [redacted]. Shannon and Burrows walk towards the youth. Shannon wrapped her arms around youth [redacted], while Burrows appeared to give verbal directives to the other youth. Shannon turned the lights back on at 8:51:54.

Video Summary by Inspector Shearer of camera 9 in Charlie Dorm (*Exhibit 14*) *[**Inspector's Note**: Youth [redacted] indicated staff allowed youth to fight in their rooms while cleaning. Inspector Shearer requested a review of the cameras that would correlate with this allegation. This was provided by FA Jean-Claude. Note that the video is of the hallway only, as there are no cameras in the rooms of the youth.]* This video showed that on September 11, 2014, youth [redacted] entered a room with a mop, while youth [redacted] followed. YCW Shannon and youth [redacted] stood at the doorway, looking into the room. The two youth remained in the room for two minutes and forty-one (41) seconds. YCW Kendricks walked down the hallway, looked back over her shoulder into the room, and remained there until youth [redacted] came out, leaving youth [redacted] inside.

Video Summary by Inspector Shearer of cameras 3, 7, and 9 on Charlie Dorm from September 11, 2014 (*Exhibit 15, 16 and 17*) - ***[Inspector's Note**: FA Jean-Claude provided this video after this Inspector requested a video review of incidents that correlated with youth* [redacted] *allegations.]* The video showed that while YCW Kendricks stood nearby, youths [redacted] and [redacted] pulled youth [redacted] into a room while youth [redacted] resisted. While the three youths were in the room, youth [redacted] also entered. YCW Shannon arrived at the doorway and watched the activities in the room with Kendricks until Shannon finally entered. A sandal was then seen being thrown from the room. Youth [redacted] left the room, followed by youth [redacted]. Youth [redacted] remained in the room for one minute, three seconds.

Video Summary by Inspector Shearer of camera 9 on Charlie small rec from September 10, 2014 (*Exhibit 18 and 19*) - ***[Inspector's Note**: AFA Shantia Daniels provided this video after this Inspector requested a video review of incidents correlated with youth* [redacted] *allegations.]* The video showed three separate physical altercations between youth during small rec while YCWs Shannon and Grandison supervised them. During the altercations, neither Shannon nor Grandison intervened. The first altercation involved youths [redacted] and [redacted] locked in a struggle and exiting camera view. The second altercation involved youth [redacted] and youth [redacted] locked in a struggle, and it appeared youth [redacted] bit youth [redacted] arm. The same two youths were involved in the third altercation, however, four additional youths joined in with youth [redacted], who was identified as the victim. Shannon was spotted briefly entering the dorm; however, she never intervened in the fight.

Redacted Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Offense Report Case 14119438 (*Exhibit 20*) - ***[Inspector's Note**: This report is for informational purposes only as all the names in the report were redacted.]* The report reflects that on September 12, 2014, Deputy Sheriff Mackey #8369 responded to the PBJCF and met a Department of Children and Families Investigator, regarding allegations of staff allowing and setting up youth fights. The facility director admitted he was informed by one youth, that several staff members were setting up fights, even turning off the lights so other youths could fight. The youth involved was interviewed and said it was just horse play. The deputy found no evidence of criminal activity at the time and the report was unfounded.

Interviews - Unless otherwise noted, Inspector Shearer conducted the following interviews, which were sworn and electronically recorded.

Youth [redacted] (Victim/Complainant)
Date of Interview: October 6, 2014 and October 27, 2014

Youth [redacted] stated the following: On September 11, 2014, YCWs Shannon and Burrows were monitoring the class. Youths [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] were in a conversation, but youth [redacted] could not hear what was said. The youths asked YCW Shannon a question, which youth [redacted] did

not hear; however, he heard Shannon tell them that the camera did not work. At that time, youth [redacted] moved the camera and youth [redacted] followed by putting a sticker over the camera lens. Shannon stated aloud that when youth [redacted] came into the classroom from the dorm she was going to turn off the lights so everyone could "jump" him. ***[Inspector's Note**: The classroom and dorm are connected to one another on the same unit.]* Youth [redacted] had been acting out that morning. Shannon also stated, "You all need to beat his ass". When youth [redacted] entered the classroom, all but three youths jumped him.

Youth [redacted] stated that prior to the youth going to small rec, Shannon often said if anyone had "pressure on their chest, to handle that under the camera." ***[Inspector's Note**: The term "pressure on your chest" and "pressure off your chest" were both cited in this report as both terms were used by those interviewed.]* This meant to fight the youth they had a problem with. Once on small rec, Shannon said "thirty seconds", which was the sign that they could fight. During these incidents, the only time Shannon intervened was when someone was getting beat too badly. The other staff, which included YCWs Grandison or Burrows would act as if nothing else was going on and did nothing to intervene.

According to youth [redacted], if youth were planning to fight on camera; Shannon stopped them and told them to wait until they got outside where there was not anyone for staff support. On A-shift one Saturday, on a date youth [redacted] could not recall, he was going to fight youth [redacted] on the Charlie dayroom floor; however, Shannon told them not to and to go outside. That was when she called for small rec. Youths [redacted] and [redacted] went outside and fought. Staff Burrows was the second staff working that day.

Youth [redacted] recalled that around August 2014, he was talking to youth [redacted] in the classroom about problems youth [redacted] was having with other youths. The youths wanted to fight youth [redacted]; however, youth [redacted] did not want to fight them all at one time. YCW Tristian Hunter was working and said he would set it up. The next morning during A-shift, Hunter gave youths [redacted] and [redacted] a mop and broom to appear as if they were cleaning. Youth [redacted] entered youth [redacted] room first and youth [redacted] went in afterwards. Youth [redacted] then went to youth [redacted] room to fight him, but youth [redacted] said "no". Youth [redacted] entered the room and struck youth [redacted] with a mop. Hunter eventually told them to stop. Hunter worked alone that morning. Hunter then told youth [redacted] if he said anything to administration and Hunter got fired, then he would have the youth beaten up. No one else heard Hunter make this statement.

Youth [redacted] further stated that sometime between September 7, 2014, and September 11, 2014, during B-shift, he was upset and did not want to go to his room. Shannon yelled "youth support" and all the youth grabbed him and forced him to his room. While in his room, they "jumped" him. Youth [redacted] gave him a black eye. Youth [redacted] did not remember who else was working that day. ***[Inspector's Note**: According to FA Jean-Claude, Shannon did not work B-shift from September 7, 2014, to*

September 9, 2014. A review of the video for September 10, 2014, did not show this incident.]

Youth [redacted] heard from other youth that YCW Fontia Hopson allowed youth to fight on Echo dorm, but he did not witness any of these incidents. He said he once witnessed a fight between youths [redacted] and [redacted] while YCW Ricky Williams was working. Staff Williams did not arrange the fight; however, he did not intervene either.

Youth [redacted] (Victim)
Date of Interview: October 6, 2014

When questioned about the fight in the classroom, youth [redacted] said he was still on the dorm in his room because he needed a shirt. He started running around and ran into the classroom with some cookies. The other youth started "play" fighting with him, but they were not really fighting. YCWs Shannon and Burrows broke up the fight. Youth [redacted] stated he did not know who turned the lights out when he ran into the room. He did not think Burrows or Shannon planned this incident and was not aware of any staff allowing youth to fight in their rooms.

Various Youth (Witness)
Date of Interview: October 6, 2014

Youths [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] were all interviewed. The youths each stated they did not see the incident in the classroom involving youth [redacted]. Youth [redacted] admitted turning the camera in the classroom, but said it was already broken and he was trying to fix it. He also stated he did not have any discussions with staff about the camera. The youths stated they were horse playing with youth [redacted] and that staff did not plan the incident.

The youths further stated the staff did not allow them to fight. The youths liked to slap box or wrestle, but staff always instructed them to stop and/or gave them consequences (points on their point sheets) when they were caught. The youths denied staff used the terminology "youth support, thirty seconds, or pressure off your chest".

Youth [redacted] (Witness)
Date of Interview: October 6, 2014

Youth [redacted] was identified as one of the youth in Charlie Unit present during the classroom incident and stated the following: The incident in the classroom with youth [redacted] was just horse playing and not a fight. He did not know if it was planned; however, it could have been retaliation against youth [redacted] for keeping them up the night before. He did not know the camera in the classroom was moved and did not hear staff ask youth to move the camera.

He described "youth support" as a term used when youth help staff with another youth. It was typically used when a youth refused to go to his room. The youth would not fight; just push the problem youth up against the wall. Staff Daniels (no first name provided) used the term, but he was no longer employed there.

Youth [redacted] (Witness)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

Youth [redacted] was identified as being present in the classroom during the incident and being forced into his room by other youth. He stated the following: The incident in the classroom was not planned by staff. The youth set it up and it was a youth who turned off the lights. He did not know if staff instructed youth [redacted] to move the camera.

When asked about the incident on September 11, 2014, youth [redacted] stated he would not go to his room until he got his toilet paper from youth [redacted]. YCW Kendricks called "youth support". Youth [redacted] and youth [redacted] used physical force to get him into his room. Once inside the room, youth [redacted] laid him on the mat and youth [redacted] was on top of him. YCW Shannon entered the room and told the other youth to get off of youth [redacted]. Youth [redacted] said although force was used, staff did not allow youth to fight.

Youth [redacted] (Witness)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

Youth [redacted] was identified as being present in the classroom and as one of the youth who forced youth [redacted] into his room. He stated the following: On September 11, 2014, youth [redacted] was delaying movie night by not going to his room during showers. Youth [redacted] and youth [redacted] got youth [redacted] into his room, but staff did not instruct them to do so. Youth [redacted] slapped youth [redacted] and youth [redacted] jumped on him. YCW Kendrick told them to stop and get out of the room, but the youth did not listen to her. YCW Shannon came from the other end of the hallway and told them to stop and they complied.

Youth Daniels further stated they do not wrestle during room cleaning and staff did not allow them to fight.

Various Youth (Witnesses)
Date of Interview: September October 6, 2014

*[**Inspector's Note**: On September 6, 2014, Inspector Shearer accompanied SMA Richardson on a walk-through of the facility. Youths [redacted] and [redacted] of Alpha Unit asked to speak with this Inspector about the program. The following was derived from the interviews.]*

Youths [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted] were interviewed regarding staff allowing youth to fight.

Youth [redacted] stated he was present when youth [redacted] asked YCW Williams if youths [redacted] and [redacted] could fight, which they did.

Youth [redacted] confirmed he asked YCW Williams if they could fight, but YCW Williams did not answer him.

Youth [redacted] said YCW Williams told them to fight; however, youth [redacted] denied this incident occurred.

Youth [redacted] alleged YCW Hopson allowed him to fight youth [redacted]; however, youth [redacted] denied the two fought.

Former Youth Care Worker Crystal Burrows (Subject)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

Burrows was employed at PBJCF for approximately five months as a Youth Care Worker before she was terminated following an incident in the classroom involving youth [redacted].

Burrows stated the following: On the morning of the incident in the classroom, youth [redacted] refused to move with the rest of the unit to class. YCW Shannon moved with the rest of the youth to the classroom, while Burrows stayed back to watch youth [redacted] until a supervisor came. The supervisor did not come, so Burrows eventually went next door to the classroom and left youth [redacted] in the dorm. *[**Inspector's Note**: The classroom adjoins the dorm on the same unit.]* Burrows was sitting by the classroom door when youth [redacted] ran into the room. All of the other youth got up laughing and started hitting youth [redacted]. She removed the youths from youth [redacted] and the youths sat down. Burrows said she did not know who turned the lights off or back on in the classroom. When she was shown that Shannon had turned the lights off, Burrows could not offer an explanation as to why, and said neither she nor Shannon planned the incident. Burrows wrote an incident report and gave the report to Supervisor Mercidieu Etienne and documented it in the logbook. *[**Inspector's Note**: According to AFA Shantia Daniels, there was no incident report located. Furthermore, the Charlie logbook was destroyed by a youth and it could not be confirmed whether this information had been logged.]*

Burrows further stated that when she was first asked about the camera being moved, she said she was not aware that it was, and learned about it when she was notified there was an investigation. Burrows was shown the recording of the incident and confirmed her presence; however, she maintained she did not see youth [redacted] move the camera.

Burrows further stated she never had any discussions about allowing youth to fight each other. She did not allow youth to fight and considered herself a strict staff. She said she was not aware of staff using the terms "youth support" or "thirty seconds". She admitted

that youth try to help out when other youth refuse to go to their rooms, but it was not directed by staff and she did not allow it.

Former Youth Care Worker Courvosia Kendricks (Subject)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

Kendricks was employed at PBJCF for approximately two months and stated she was terminated for allowing youth to fight. ***[Inspector's Note**: Kendricks was terminated related to the incidents cited in this investigation.]*

Kendricks stated the following: She defined the term "youth support" as when youth counseled one another to de-escalate a situation, but it did not mean youth put their hands on one another. She never heard the terms "thirty seconds" or "pressure off your chest" used by anyone. Youth never asked her for permission to fight and she never allowed youth to fight in one another's room.

When discussing the incident on September 11, 2014, involving youth [redacted] and youth [redacted] on the dorm, Kendricks said youth [redacted] was getting candy from youth [redacted] and youth [redacted] wanted some. The youth were not fighting, but she and YCW Shannon were using verbal commands to get the youth out of the room.

When asked about youth [redacted] being pulled into his room by youths [redacted] and [redacted], Kendricks initially said FA Jean-Claude told her this occurred, but she did not know what happened. She said she had not seen the video, but she would have given verbal commands. When shown the video of the incident and asked whether the youth pulling youth [redacted] in the room was policy, Kendricks responded "No." When asked what she did to prevent youth [redacted] from being dragged into his room, Kendricks said she used verbal commands. She said the youth were just standing there in the room, and reiterated they were not fighting. She said it was her responsibility to prevent youth from horse playing, wrestling or fighting. Kendricks added that she wrote an incident report and gave it to either supervisor Joseph McKelton or Hilton McClain.

Youth Care Worker Ricky Williams (Subject)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

Williams has been employed with PBJCF since 2012. ***[Inspectors Note:** Youths [redacted] and [redacted] identified Williams as one of the staff that allowed youth to fight.]*

Williams stated the following: He did not know nor had he heard the terms "youth support", "thirty seconds", or "pressure off your chest". He added that if youths fought when he worked, he separated them and youths have not asked him for permission to fight or horseplay.

Williams did not recall any fights between youths [redacted] or [redacted] and said they did not ask him if they could fight. He stated he never arranged any fights between youth, nor did

he know why youth alleged he had arranged or allowed them to fight. He added that he did not know anything about other staff allowing youth to fight.

Youth Care Worker Tristian Hunter (Subject)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

Hunter has been employed at PBJCF for ten months. *[**Inspectors Note:** Youth [redacted] alleged Hunter brought youth to one another's room to fight.]*

When Hunter was asked about the terms "youth support", "thirty seconds" and "pressure off your chest", he replied youth call "youth support" to help staff break up youth fights, but staff do not make the call. He said he never called "youth support" or heard staff use the term.

According to Hunter, when he first started as a new staff, a couple of youths asked him if they could fight, but he did not allow them to do so. He said youths do not ask if they can fight or horseplay, they just do it and staff tell them to stop. He added he did not allow youths to fight in one another's room.

Hunter stated he did not respond slowly to fights, as that would give youths the impression he permitted them to fight. He stated he did not know why youth alleged he allowed them to fight.

He further stated he did not threaten youths to conceal information about staff arranging youth fighting each other and denied any knowledge of other staff allowing youths to fight.

Former Youth Care Worker JoQuetta Shannon (Subject)

A certified letter was mailed to the last known address of staff Shannon on October 22, 2014, and as of November 11, 2014, no response was received. Additional attempts to reach Shannon were made via telephone; however, messages were not returned.

Former Youth Care Worker Duvall Grandison (Subject)

A certified letter was mailed to the last known address of staff Grandison on October 22, 2014, and as of November 11, 2014, no response was received. Additional attempts were made to reach Grandison via telephone; however, the phone number of record was incorrect.

Former Youth Care Worker Fontia Hopson (Subject)

A certified letter was mailed to the last known address of staff Hopson on October 22, 2014, and as of November 11, 2014, no response was received. Additional attempts were made to reach Hopson via telephone; however, all messages were not returned.

Conclusions/Recommendations - Based on interviews conducted and records reviewed, there is sufficient evidence to prove that on several occasions, youth have been allowed to fight with little to no staff intervention. However, there was not sufficient evidence to prove or disprove these

fights were arranged by the staff. While numerous youths interviewed failed to corroborate statements made by youth [redacted], surveillance video supports his allegations. Therefore, the allegation against YCWs Shannon, Burrows, Kendricks, and Grandison for Improper Conduct is **SUSTAINED**. There was insufficient evidence to prove or disprove staff members Hunter, Williams or Hopson allowed the youth to fight; therefore, the allegation of Improper Conduct against them is **NOT SUSTAINED**.

Allegation #2: Improper Supervision

Synopsis - During the course of the investigation, the OIG determined there was cause to investigate whether Master Control Operator Quanzameka Bryant failed to properly monitor surveillance video cameras.

Applicable Statutes/Rules/Policies/Guidance

> **Youth Services International Ethics and Compliance Program** Employee Alertness E108 states, "While on duty, employees shall remain alert, aware of and responsive to their surroundings (i.e. their post and area of responsibility)..."
>
> **Employee Code of Conduct** states, "Employees violating any article of code will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination." Article 3. "I will maintain proficiency in all assigned duties and respond properly to all routine and emergency situations."

Records Review - During the course of the investigation, unless otherwise noted, Inspector Shearer reviewed the following records:

> **Video Summary by Inspector Shearer of Charlie classroom camera 1 on September 11, 2014** *(Exhibit 12)* - This video showed youth [redacted] moved the camera in Charlie Classroom, causing the camera to become inoperable and the screen in Master Control to go black. The video continued to record even though the screen was black.
>
> **Photographs of Master Control** (*Exhibit 21 and 22*) - These photographs show how the video monitors are set up in Master Control.

Interviews - Unless otherwise noted, Inspector Shearer conducted the following interviews, which were sworn and electronically recorded.

Quanzameka Bryant (Subject)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

Bryant has been employed at PBJCF for eight years and works Master Control on A-Shift (7am-3pm).

Bryant stated the following: She is the Master Control Operator and her job responsibilities include monitoring the cameras. Bryant stated it was her responsibility to notice if a screen in Master Control went black and a camera became inoperable, as well as notifying the supervisor and maintenance.

Bryant stated she was working in Master Control on September 11, 2014, when a youth moved the camera in Charlie classroom. Bryant said did not see the camera move, nor did she notice when the screen went black, even though there are only two camera views for Charlie Classroom, because she had a "lot to do". Bryant said she believed she had performed her job functions to the best of her ability, despite her failure to notice that the camera had become inoperative.

Bryant admitted she noticed that the lights had gone out in the classroom, because the camera view flickered. She said she called the classroom and told staff to turn the lights back on. She added that she did not see any of the commotion involving youth [redacted].

Conclusions/Recommendations - Based on interviews conducted and records reviewed, there is sufficient evidence to show that Bryant failed to properly perform her job duties as Master Control Operator, in that she neglected to notice the inoperative camera in Charlie classroom. Bryant acknowledged that monitoring the camera was her job responsibility. Therefore, the allegation of Improper Supervision is **SUSTAINED**.

Allegation #3: Failure to Report - Violation of Policy/Rule

Synopsis - During the course of the investigation, the OIG determined there was sufficient reason to investigate whether Case Manager Shameka McRae, Therapist Ruth Delva, Former Clinical Director Jacqueline Nesci, and FA Jean-Claude failed to notify the CCC of a reportable incident within the required timeframe.

Applicable Statutes/Rules/Policies/Guidance

FAC 63F-11.003(1) states, "All designated incident types shall be reported to the CCC within two (2) hours of the affected facility, office or program learning of the incident..."

FAC 63F-11.004(5)(a) states, "Force: Any alleged use of force... that results in an allegation of abuse..."

PBJCF Incident Reporting 1.08 Policy *states*, "...Supervisors shall ensure that all incidents reportable to the Central Communication Center (CCC) are reported on the

appropriate form(s) as soon as possible, but no later than, two (2) hours after any reportable incident occurs, or two (2) hours of the program learning of the incident, and immediately reported to the Administration Duty Officer (ADO), to ensure that appropriate actions are taken, following such occurrences..."

Records Review - During the course of the investigation, unless otherwise noted, Inspector Shearer reviewed the following records:

Email Correspondence between FA Jean-Claude, Therapist Delva and Clinical Director Nesci dated September 11, 2014 (*Exhibit 23*) - Delva sent an email on September 11, 2014, at 7:15 PM to FA Jean-Claude, AFA Daniels, Case Manager McRae and Clinical Director Nesci among others, advising them of allegations that staff were allowing youth to fight one other. Delva further advised that the cameras were turned around and lights shut off in order to prevent the fights from being captured on screen.

At 8:01 p.m. that same date, Jean-Claude responded and advised Delva that if she had specific information (i.e. staff names, youth names, dates, and times) then she is required to cooperate with the investigation that had begun. Jean-Claude instructed Delva to see him the next day to discuss the matter. Jean-Claude also told Delva that since she felt this was "abuse", she needed to call the Abuse Registry and within one hour of making the call, she was to call him or Daniels to ensure their compliance with the CCC.

Letter penned by J.C. (*Exhibit 2*) - ***[Inspector's Note**: This letter was sent to Senior Management Analyst Supervisor Johnny Richardson on September 12, 2014.]* The letter reflects youth [redacted] told Jean-Claude on September 12, 2014, that staff allowed youth to fight in areas not seen on camera.

CCC Recorded Call re 2014-05006 (*Exhibit 24*) – This recording is of a conversation between Jean-Claude and the CCC operator on September 12, 2014. When the CCC operator asked what time youth [redacted] informed him (Jean-Claude) of the allegations, Jean-Claude replied "five-ish, five-thirty". ***[Inspector's Note**: This call was made to the CCC at 6:33 PM. Jean-Claude did not mention that he was notified of youth [redacted] allegations on the previous day.]*

Written Statement from Jean-Claude (*Exhibit 25*) - ***[Inspector's Note**: This document was submitted by Jean-Claude to Inspector Shearer on November 6, 2014, as a follow-up to the interview conducted on November 5, 2014, and is a timeline of events Jean-Claude recalled after the interview.]* The document reflects Jean-Claude could not recall the exact timeline of events during his interview, but afterwards, had time to reflect. He was not at the facility on September 11, 2014; he had been at Broward Girls Academy (BGA) that week. He read the email from Delva on September 11, 2014, at 8:01 PM and responded that she should call the Abuse Registry if she felt there was abuse. He received a read confirmation from Delva at 8:07 PM. He had not had any telephone conversations with her, but did speak with Ms. Nesci (Clinical Director). He could not remember the exact

conversation he had with Nesci, but recalled referring back to the email sent by Delva. When he came to work on September 12, 2014, he could not recall what time he spoke to youth [redacted] because he had been at BGA.

Interviews - Unless otherwise noted, Inspector Shearer conducted the following interviews, which were sworn and electronically recorded.

Youth [redacted] (Victim/Complainant)
Date of Interview: October 6, 2014 and October 27, 2014

Youth [redacted] stated the following: He told Case Manager Shameka McRae on several occasions about staff allowing youth to fight. He told her he was scared and concerned about being placed on the dorm. He said that after reporting this to McRae, she came to the classroom and told the youth if anyone touched him on or off camera, they would be placed on ISS. ***[Inspector's Note**: ISS is when youths receive points as a punishment.]*

Youth [redacted] said he also told McRae that YCW Hunter allowed them (the youth) to fight, and that McRae had reviewed the cameras and determined it was true. Youth [redacted] further stated McRae told him she reported it to Jean-Claude.

Therapist Ruth Delva (Subject)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

Delva has been employed at PBJCF as a therapist since December 2013. Her direct supervisor is Clinical Director Evelyn Tarud.

Delva stated the following: She is the therapist for the Charlie Dorm. During an individual session last month with youth [redacted], he told her staff allowed youths to fight each other. Youth [redacted] had a half-written statement with him, which he finished during their session. Delva stated that on that same date, she emailed her supervisor, Jacqueline Nesci, AFA Shantia Daniels, FA Jean-Claude and McRae about the allegation. She also provided Nesci with a copy of the letter that day and Jean-Claude with a copy the following day. She said she and her supervisor (Tarud) decided to investigate the allegations to make sure they were not false before they called the Abuse Registry and CCC. When Delva was asked if it was in her job description to decide if an allegation was true or not, she did not comment. She said she met with Jean-Claude the following morning, and after they reviewed the cameras together and confirmed the allegation, Jean-Claude told her he would call the CCC. Delva advised she did not believe she violated any policies by not reporting the allegation to the CCC within two hours, because she followed the chain of command and assumed they handled the calls.

Case Manager Shameka McRae (Subject)
Date of Interview: October 27, 2014

McRae has been employed at PBJCF for approximately one year and is youth [redacted] case manager. Her direct supervisor is Case Manager Supervisor Dominque Robinson.

McRae stated the following: She first learned about youth [redacted] allegation after receiving an email from Delva. Youth [redacted] never told her about staff allowing youths to fight.

McRae stated she did not warn the youth in Charlie unit not to touch youth [redacted] or they would be placed on ISS, as youth [redacted] alleged.

Facility Administrator Travis Jean-Claude (Subject)
Date of Interview: November 5, 2014 and November 10, 2014

Jean-Claude stated the following: He was employed with YSI for seven years and was the Facility Administrator at PBJCF for four and a half months. His direct supervisor is Regional Director Jasir Diab.

On a date he could not recall, he learned of youth [redacted] allegations from the email he received from Delva after-hours. He told Delva she was a "mandated reporter" and since she was with the youth, she needed to allow him to make an abuse call or to call on his behalf. He said he did not follow up with Delva to ensure she made the call, but agreed he was ultimately responsible to ensure the call was made. He stated Delva was not disciplined for not making the call because they were planning on meeting in the morning. He said he did not call the CCC on September 11, 2014, because he did not have enough information and at the time, it was just an allegation.

According to Jean-Claude, on the morning of September 12, 2014, he spoke to youth [redacted] received the documentation from Delva, and reviewed video with youth [redacted] He said he did not call the CCC that morning because they tried to determine if there was any merit to the allegations.

Jean-Claude admitted he told the CCC operator that he just learned of the allegation at 5:30 because that was when he first made contact with the youth.

Jean-Claude continued to state he did not think he violated policy by failing to contact the CCC because at the time, they were allegations and that once he confirmed the incident, he made the call. He acknowledged he was aware of the reporting requirements for DJJ, but did not think he violated that policy since he instructed Delva to make the call.

Former Clinical Director Jacqueline Nesci (Subject)
Date of Interview: November 12, 2014 (telephonic)

Nesci was the former Clinical Director at PBJCF and Delva's supervisor.

During the telephone interview with Nesci, she stated the following: She had been employed with YSI for approximately seven years and resigned in September 2014, on her own accord. She did not recall all the specifics, but remembered youth [redacted] gave her and Delva a letter. She spoke to Jean-Claude about the matter that same day and he told her he reported the allegations. She said Jean-Claude sent her a text message with the operator's name. Nesci refused to answer any further questions.

Conclusions/Recommendations - Based on interviews conducted and records reviewed, there is sufficient evidence to show that Therapist Ruth Delva, Clinical Director Jacqueline Nesci and FA Jean-Claude were each aware of youth [redacted] allegations, but failed to report them to the CCC within two hours of learning of the information. Therefore, the allegation of Failure to Report against Delva, Nesci and Jean-Claude is **SUSTAINED**. There is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove youth [redacted] informed Case Manager McRae of the allegation. Therefore, the allegation of Failure to Report against McRae is **NOT SUSTAINED**.

IV. ADDITIONAL MATTERS

Other Investigative Activities

The Florida Department of Children and Families completed an investigation into the allegations against YCW Shannon and YCW Burrows (#2014-242078-01). The DCF case was closed with verified findings of Inadequate Supervision.

During the investigation, youth care workers offered justification for their lack of intervention by indicating that management at PBJCF strongly encourages the use of verbal intervention rather than Protective Action Response (PAR), which may contribute to a culture of inaction by facility staff. It is recommended that Program Monitors and/or management address the issue and provide re-training in the proper and effective use of PAR when it is deemed necessary.

Coordination with Law Enforcement

In accordance with Section 20.055 Florida Statute, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office was notified of the complaint against Shannon and Burrows and Report #14-119438 was taken on September 13, 2014. According to PBCSO Deputy Mackey, the department found no evidence of criminal activity and the report was Unfounded.

Coordination with Management

Coordination with management was not required.

V. EXHIBITS

1. CCC Report
2. Letter penned by J.C.
3. Unsigned Handwritten Letter dated September 11, 2014
4. YCW Shannon Written Statement
5. PBJCF Youth Written Statements
6. Youth [redacted] Written Statement
7. On-Site Initial Statement
8. DJJ Bureau of Monitoring and Quality Improvement, Residential Youth Interview Forms
9. DJJ Bureau of Monitoring and Quality Improvement, Residential Youth Interview Forms
10. Hunter Written Statement
11. Inactive Status Forms
12. Video Summary of youth moving camera
13. Video Summary of Charlie Classroom
14. Video Summary of youth entering another's room while cleaning
15. Video Summary of youth pulled into room
16. Video Summary of youth pulled into room
17. Video Summary of youth pulled into room
18. Video Summary of Charlie Small Rec
19. Video Summary of Charlie Small Rec
20. Palm Beach Sheriff's Office Redacted Police Report #14119438
21. Picture of Master Control
22. Picture of Master Control
23. Email Correspondence
24. CCC Recorded Call
25. Written Statement from Jean-Claude
26. Correspondence Sent to Provider & Subject(s), dated December 11, 2014
27. Correspondence Tracking Receipts
28. Return Comments from Qanzameka Bryant received January 22, 2015
29. Correspondence Returned to DJJ "Stamped Return To Sender" for Tristian Hunter, JoQuetta Shannon, and Courvosia Kendricks received January 27, 2015

VI. STATEMENT OF ACCORDANCE

Section 20.055, Florida Statutes, establishes an Office of Inspector General in each state agency to provide a central point for coordination of and responsibility for activities that promote accountability, integrity, and efficiency in government. In carrying out the investigative duties and responsibilities specified in this section, each inspector general shall initiate, conduct, supervise, and coordinate investigations designed to detect, deter, prevent, and eradicate fraud, waste, mismanagement, misconduct, and other abuses in state government.

All OIG personnel have completed appropriate documentation regarding their conduct as set forth by the OIG Investigations Independence Statement. The investigation was conducted in compliance with the Quality Standards for Investigations found within the Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General.

Affected Entity/Individual Coordination

On December 11, 2014, in accordance with Section 20.055(6)(e) Florida Statute, a copy of this completed investigative report was provided to Youth Services International, Inc., a specific entity contracting with the state, and to Facility Director Travis Jean-Claude, Youth Care Workers Crystal Burrows, JoQuetta Shannon, Duval Grandison, Fontia Hopson, Courvosia Kendricks, Tristian Hunter, Ricky Williams, Master Control Operator Quanzameka Bryant, Case Manager Shameka McRae, Therapist Ruth Delva, and Former Clinical Director Jacqueline Nesci an individual(s) substantially affected as defined by Section 20.055(6)(e). *Exhibit 26*

On January 22, 2015, correspondence was received from Bryant indicating she did not have any comments. *Exhibit 28*

On January 27, 2015, correspondence was returned to DJJ stamped "Return To Sender" for Hunter, Shannon, and Kendricks. *Exhibit 29*

No response was received from Youth Services International, Jean-Claude, Burrows, Grandison, Hopson, Williams, McRae, Delva or Nesci.

VII. DISTRIBUTION LIST

Action Official Distribution:

This report is distributed with all exhibits and attachments for action to:
Laura K. Moneyham, Assistant Secretary for Residential Services

Information Distribution:
Copies of the Executive Summary, without exhibits or attachments, have been distributed electronically to:
Christina K. Daly, Secretary
Fred Schuknecht, Chief of Staff
Heather DiGiacomo, Communications Director

Files:

The original of the complete report has been placed in the Investigation File.