



U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Office of Professional Responsibility
Inspections and Detention Oversight Division
Washington, DC 20536-5501

**Office of Detention Oversight
Compliance Inspection**

**Enforcement and Removal Operations
ERO San Antonio Field Office**

**Karnes County Family Residential Center
Karnes City, Texas**

March 3-5, 2020

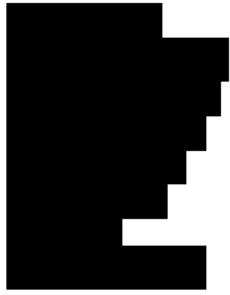
**COMPLIANCE INSPECTION
of the
KARNES COUNTY FAMILY RESIDENTIAL CENTER
Karnes City, Texas**

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FACILITY OVERVIEW

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) Office of Detention Oversight (ODO) conducted a compliance inspection of the Karnes County Family Residential Center (KCFRC) in Karnes City, Texas, from March 3 to 5, 2020.¹ The facility opened in 2012 and is owned and operated by the GEO Group. The ICE Office of Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) began housing detainees at KCFRC in 2012 under the oversight of ERO's Field Office Director (FOD) in San Antonio (ERO San Antonio). The facility operates under the Family Residential Standards (FRS).

ERO has assigned Deportation Officers (DOs) to the facility. A KCFRC Administrator handles daily facility operations and is supported by [REDACTED] personnel. The GEO Group provides food services and medical care at the facility. The facility holds no national accreditations.

Capacity and Population Statistics	Quantity
ICE Detainee Bed Capacity ²	830
Average ICE Detainee Population ³	198
Male Detainee Population (as of 3/3/2020)	187
Female Detainee Population (as of 3/3/2020)	11

This was ODO's first compliance inspection of the KCFRC.

¹ This facility holds female residents and male and female children with low security classification levels for periods longer than 72 hours.

² Data Source: ERO Facility List Report as of March 2, 2020.

³ *Ibid.*

COMPLIANCE INSPECTION PROCESS

ODO conducts oversight inspections of ICE detention facilities with an average daily population greater than ten, and where detainees are housed for longer than 72 hours, to assess compliance with ICE national detention standards. These inspections focus solely on facility compliance with detention standards that directly affect detainee life, health, safety, and/or well-being.⁴

ODO identifies violations of ICE detention standards, ICE policies, or operational procedures as “deficiencies.” ODO also highlights instances in which the facility resolves deficiencies prior to completion of the ODO inspection. Where applicable, these corrective actions are annotated with “C” under the *Compliance Inspection Findings* section of this report.

Upon completion of each inspection, ODO conducts a closeout briefing with facility and local ERO officials to discuss preliminary findings. A summary of these findings is shared with ERO management officials. Thereafter, ODO provides ICE leadership with a final compliance inspection report to: (i) assist ERO in developing and initiating corrective action plans; and (ii) provide senior executives with an independent assessment of facility operations. ODO’s findings inform ICE executive management in their decision-making to better allocate resources across the agency’s entire detention inventory.

⁴ ODO reviews the facility’s compliance with selected standards in their entirety.

FINDINGS BY FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DETENTION STANDARDS MAJOR CATEGORIES

FRS Standards Inspected ⁵	Deficiencies
Part 1 – Safety	
Environmental Health and Safety	0
Sub-Total	0
Part 2 – Security	
Admission and Release	0
Funds and Personal Property	0
Searches of Residents	0
Sexual Abuse and Assault Prevention and Intervention	0
Staff-Resident Communications	0
Use of Physical Control Measures and Restraints	1
Sub-Total	1
Part 3 – Order	
Discipline and Behavioral Management	0
Sub-Total	0
Part 4 – Care	
Food Service	2
Medical Care	0
Suicide Prevention and Intervention	0
Sub-Total	2
Part 5 – Activities	
Educational Policy	1
Recreation	0
Religious Practices	0
Telephone Access	0
Visitation	0
Sub-Total	1
Part 6 – Justice	
Grievance System	0
Law Libraries and Legal Material	0
Sub-Total	0
Total Deficiencies	4

⁵ For greater detail on ODO’s findings, see the *Compliance Inspection Findings* section of this report.

DETAINEE RELATIONS

ODO interviewed 38 residents, who each voluntarily agreed to participate. None of the detainees made allegations of discrimination, mistreatment, or abuse. Most residents reported satisfaction with facility services except for the concerns listed below.

Environmental Health and Safety: Three residents expressed concern about the water in the adult male housing units. They stated the water had a bad taste and the only filtered drinking water was in the family housing areas.

- Action Taken: ODO observed facility water systems and tested all facility water supplies. ODO found KCFRC used the same reverse osmosis filtration system for all water supplied throughout the facility. ODO staff sampled the water and was unable to replicate the complaint.

Food Service: Three residents stated they had young children and their children would not eat the food served.

- Action Taken: ODO reviewed the medical records for all children in question and the facility weighed one child on March 3, 2020, to determine if the child had weight loss; no weight loss was identified. ODO reviewed the adult menu and found that although it contained foods that appealed to young children (i.e. chicken tenders, macaroni, etc.), the dietician approved adult menu had not been certified as providing for the nutritional needs of young children, and ODO cited this as a deficiency under the Food Service standard. Additionally, ODO noticed all complaints regarding food came from Haitian residents, and the menu consisted of foods directed towards Central American residents. ODO communicated this observation to the facility and the facility indicated they do quarterly surveys of the resident population, asking about what foods were liked, disliked, and if there were any requests for a certain foods to be added to the menu. ODO noted the facility had only been serving the current population for three weeks at the time of the inspection.

COMPLIANCE INSPECTION FINDINGS

SECURITY

USE OF PHYSICAL CONTROL MEASURES AND RESTRAINTS (UOPCM&R)

ODO reviewed [REDACTED] randomly selected training files and confirmed staff are trained annually in: the requirements of the residential standard, use of force continuum, communication techniques, cultural diversity, dealing with the mentally ill, confrontation avoidance techniques, approved methods of self-defense, universal precautions, application of restraints, reporting procedures, and use of protective clothing. However, training files showed staff were not trained in the use of physical control measures team technique as written in KCFRC's policy 2.2.2, and in accordance with the standard (**Deficiency UOPCM&R-1**⁶).

CARE

FOOD SERVICE (FS)

ODO's review of specialized food service programs found nothing to indicate the facility's food service program provided the minimum nutritional needs of infants and toddlers, from newborn to four years old. Additionally, the food service program did not ensure proper sterilization of infant and toddler bottles and utensils (**Deficiency FS-1**⁷).

ODO's review of the dish washing machine temperature logs and inspection of the temperature reading devices confirmed water temperatures and sanitizer levels complied with the standard and were recorded daily; however, ODO noted the pounds per square inch gauge on the dish washing machine, located in the Yellowstone housing area, was inoperable and did not have its glass face-

[REDACTED]

⁶ See ICE FRS, Standard, Use of Physical Force and Restraints, Section, (V)(9)(c)(1-3).

⁷ "The FSA shall develop and implement a food service program that provides for the minimum nutritional needs of toddlers and infants, ranging in age from newborn to four years old. The FSA shall ensure that its menu programs meet recommended government guidelines for well-baby and well-child growth and development. The FSA is also responsible for insuring [*sic*] that infant and toddler bottles and utensils are properly sterilized." See ICE FRS Standard, Food Service, Section (V)(8)(b).

cover (Deficiency FS-2⁸).

ACTIVITIES

EDUCATIONAL POLICY (EP)

ODO reviewed lesson plans, facility policies and interviewed teachers and KCFRC leadership. ODO found KCFRC did not have or use a curriculum based upon a state approved model (Deficiency EP-1⁹). The school-age population at KCFRC does not reside at the center beyond three weeks. Teachers designed lesson plans around concepts they wished to teach. “Teachers created a program from these lesson plans, tailored to the needs and abilities of the children who were in their classes.”

CONCLUSION

During this inspection, ODO assessed the facility’s compliance with 18 standards under FRS and found the facility in compliance with 15 of those standards. ODO found four deficiencies in the remaining three standards. This was ODO’s first compliance inspection of KCFRC. KCFRC was converted to a family residential center, serving a population of male and female adults and children, three weeks before the inspection. Despite the recent changeover, ODO found facility staff to be proficient and professional, and the facility was on par with the FRS ODO inspected in FY 2019. ODO recommends ERO work with the facility to resolve any deficiencies that remain outstanding in accordance with contractual obligations.

Compliance Inspection Results Compared	FY 2019 (FRDS)	FY 2020 (FRDS)
Standards Reviewed	N/A	18
Deficient Standards	N/A	3
Overall Number of Deficiencies	N/A	4
Deficient Priority Components	N/A	0
Repeat Deficiencies	N/A	N/A
Corrective Actions	N/A	0

⁸ “Spray-or immersion-dishwashers or devices, including automatic dispensers for detergents, wetting agents, and liquid sanitizer, shall be maintained in good repair. Utensils and equipment placed in the machine must be exposed to all cycles.

1) The pressure of the final-rinse water must be between 15 and 25 pounds per square inch (psi) in the water line immediately adjacent to the final-rinse control valve.”

See ICE FRS Standard, Food Service, Section (V)(9)(1)(1).

⁹ “Lesson plans and curricula are developed by teaching staff, are based on a state approved model program, and are available for review in each classroom. All teaching staff will submit weekly lessons plans to the Administrator for his or her review and approval.” See ICE FRS Standard, Educational Policy, Section (IV)(4)(d).