Staff Expectations - Polinsky Children's Center

(Revised 11/04/22)

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Background

The A.B. and Jessie Polinsky Children's Center (PCC) is as a 24/7 Temporary Shelter Care Facility (TSCF) that serves vulnerable children ages 0 to 17 years old who are removed from their home when they can no longer remain safe with their family of origin due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment.

PCC serves as a 10-Day TSCF licensed by the State of California Health and Human Services Agency Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division. As a TSCF, PCC is governed by Temporary Shelter Care Facility Interim Licensing Standards and existing CCL regulations contained in Title 22, Division 6, Chapters 1 & 5. PCC staff expectations and trainings align with Child Welfare Services (CWS) expectations and CCL regulations.

Purpose

The following expectations are intended to provide a general framework for PCC staff within CWS. They were developed to allow for the use of professional judgement, critical thought, as well as allowing for individual variations in background, learning style, leadership approaches, program/unit expectations, and strengths. While variation is acceptable, a commitment to consistently demonstrating Live Well San Diego and <u>Safety Enhanced Together (SET) core values</u>, expectations, and behaviors is expected. This will ensure that every child/youth, family, and community partner can be assured CWS is continually working towards the vision that every child grows up safe and nurtured.

Purpose (cont.)

PCC staff will ensure that they build positive relationships with children/youth, ensure a caring and safe environment, and have an understanding of trauma informed care approaches, cultural humility lens, and de-escalation techniques for children/youth's behaviors. PCC staff will present themselves in a manner that has a positive influence on child/youth development by understanding Safety-Organized Practice (SOP) and by role modeling those principles.

Protective Services Supervisor (PSS)

Refer to Administration- Staff Expectations- Protective Services Supervisor (PSS) policy, which outlines PSS expectations. Additional, responsibilities specific to PCC include the following:

- Provide supervision to Protective Services Workers (PSW's), Residential Care Worker Supervisors (RCWS) and Social Work Supervisors (SWS)
- Have a visible presence in their assigned cottages and supervise staff interactions with children/youth to provide support and guidance when needed
- Assist in providing administrative support, and apprises management of developing concerns on campus
- Develop implementation plans for new regulations, policies and procedures
- Train and support staff on State Community Care Licensing (CCL) regulations
- Plan, coordinate, and train staff to ensure activities for children/youth are consistent with their treatment plan
- Plan, coordinate, and supervise activities designed to improve social skills of children/youth through field trips, recreation activities, work assignments, meals and other group activities
- Make decisions impacting the safety and wellbeing of children/youth under critical timeframes and take immediate action in emergency situations
- Coach staff in crisis intervention, behavioral management, emotional escalation and trauma informed approach that support children/youth
- Direct and assist in physical restraints of children/youth
- Maintain accurate records and documentation
- Conduct regular walkthroughs of the cottages to ensure compliance with CCL requirements and policy, procedures, and practice

Social Work Supervisor (SWS)

For a full job description of Social Worker Supervisor (SWS), which outlines SWS expectations, please see <u>Class Specifications</u>. Under general supervision, SWS is a first line supervisor class responsible for the work of a unit providing social services within CWS. When assigned to PCC, essential functions include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinate, train and make decisions to ensure daily activities for children/youth are consistent with children/youth's treatment plan
- Plan, coordinate and supervise activities designed to improve social skills of children/youth through field trips, recreational activities, work assignments, meals and other group activities.
- Make decisions impacting the potential safety and well-being of children/youth, often under critical time frames and take immediate action in emergency situations
- Coach staff in crisis intervention and behavioral management, emotional escalation and the comfort and counsel of children
- Direct/assist in physical restraints
- Other duties as assigned

Duty Officer (DO)

The Duty Officer (DO) functions as the designee of the Child Welfare Services (CWS) Managers and has all the authority and responsibilities in the Managers' absence after hours, weekends, and holidays. A DO is assigned for all shifts at PCC.

The PSS and SWS classifications function as the (DO) and are tasked with the following:

- Assess and manage emergency interventions or situations that take place at PCC
- Oversee the operation of PCC
- Ensure a safe and secure environment for children/youth and staff
- Make necessary decisions in unusual or emergency situations

Protective Services Worker (PSW)

Refer to Administration- Staff Expectations- Protective Services Worker (PSW) policy, which outlines PSW expectations. Additional, responsibilities specific to PCC include the following:

Cottage PSW

- Conduct Needs and Services assessments in conjunction with assigned SW for infants, children and youth at PCC
- Assess emotional, behavioral, developmental and social needs of infants, children and youth while at PCC
- Maintain ongoing contact with children and youth for relationship building
- Review and update daily behavioral sheets and Special Incident Reports
- Report pertinent information to the assigned SW and PCC mental health team
- Serve as a liaison between PCC and the assigned SW
- Attend on-site Transitional Teaming meetings and Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings
- Attend weekly Cottage meetings
- Coordinate services with a multiplicity of agencies that serve infants, children and youth, including DSEP, Fred Finch, Probation and Law Enforcement
- Provide ongoing feedback to assigned SW regarding aforementioned duties, and provide recommendations for appropriate services
- Participate in the Interagency Placement Committee

Social Workers I and III (SW I, III)

Refer to Administration- Staff Expectations- Social Workers (I, II, III) policy which outlines SW I and III expectations. Social Workers assigned to PCC have specific duties which may include and are not limited to the following:

Social Worker I

- Supervise visits between siblings, parents and/or relatives
- Provide documentation in CWS/CMS and feedback to case carrying SWs
- Transport children to school and appointments, therapy sessions and doctor visits, refer to Administration-Transporting Children
- Transport or mail belongings to youth once they have left PCC

Social Workers I and III (SW I, III) (cont.)

- Maintain records or contacts in CWS/CMS and PCC database
- Help in special events
- Attend ongoing training
- Manage the visitation calendar
- Engage and effectively communicate with culturally diverse populations
- Generate Hotline referrals when warranted

Social Worker III

- Screen children/youths' intake eligibility for PCC
- Interview children/youth at Intake to determine their immediate needs using trauma informed practice
- Provide a warm welcome to children/youth, SWs, and community partners entering PCC
- Assist children/youth in reviewing the "Me at PCC", Foster Children's Rights forms and PCC Resident handbook
- Work with Law Enforcement to determine entry eligibility
- Evaluate for diversion and refer out to other agencies if warranted
- Generate Hotline referrals when warranted
- Respond to calls from the public, including family members, law enforcement and Customs and Border Protection

NOTE: Refer to the Polinsky Children's Center Entries policy for guidance on intake procedures and forms.

Residential Care Worker Supervisor (RCWS)

The Residential Care Worker Supervisor (RCWS) is responsible for overseeing the work of Residential Care Worker (RCW) and Residential Child Care Specialist (RCCS) staff. Expectations include the following:

- Direct the work of the RCW/RCCS including determining appropriate one-on-one coverage, coordinating outings, arranging and monitoring age-appropriate groupings for play
- Coordinate break times for staff
- Know where staff and children/youth are at all times
- Serve as the liaison between the SWS/PSS and RCWs
- Review each child/youth's case, be aware of special needs issues involving children/youth at PCC, including implementation and monitoring of behavior management issues
- Intervene and/or respond to critical incidents and emergency situations; assist in physical restraints and write follow-up reports
- Report emergency incidents immediately to the DO
- Provide consultation to staff on the care of children/youth, conduct daily meetings with staff, and review all new policies and procedures
- Coordinate necessary information between RCW shifts and assigning oncoming staff to tasks, etc.

Residential Care Worker Supervisor (RCWS) (cont.)

- Address boundaries/conflicts within the cottage and ensure that staff will treat all children with equal care and guidance
- Report RCW performance issues to the SWS/PSS.
- Maintain objectivity towards all staff and children/youth
- Order and monitor supplies for the cottage
- Ensure the cottage is left clean at the end of each shift
- Ensure Special Incident Reports (SIRs) are accurate and timely

For full job description, refer to RCWS, for job specifications.

Residential
Care Worker
(RCW) and
Residential
Child Care
Specialist
(RCCS)

Staff who provide direct care and supervision of children/youth are vital to the success of PCC, deliver critical front-line services, and have direct impact to the children/youth served. They are vital in ensuring that children/youth are participating and benefitting from the core and support programs offered on campus each day that help to heal from the trauma they have experienced. Staff spend the most time with children/youth and the quality of the children/youth's experience is determined by the quality-of-care staff provide.

The table below outlines typical shift expectations for the RCW/ RCCS. Expectations may be modified based on operational needs and as directed by the RCWS, PSS/DO, or PCC Management.

Shift Duty	Expectations			
General	 Childcare staff will perform supervision, protection, and care of children individually and in groups at all times. They are expected to: Accept cottage assignments as directed by the RCWS. Immediately report to work area prepared to work at the designated start time. Transport and/or accompany individual and groups of children/youth to appointments, outings, and field trips outside the facility. Be familiar and consistent with the children/youth's routines and regimens. Be alert and know where each child/youth is at all times. Know the procedure in handling assaultive behavior by children/youth. Alert RCWS/SWS/PSS of any concerns that need immediate attention. Maintain normal voice level at all times, unless a child/youth is in immediate danger. 			

Shift Duty	Expectations				
Bedrooms/Bed Time/Sleep Hours	 Remain outside children/youth's room. Ensure children/youth are not congregating in one another's bedroom. Use a whisper voice tone when children/youth are in bed. Open and close doors quietly. Avoid shining a flashlight in the child/youth's face. Leave shift quietly. 				
Breaks	Per the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA), the RCW/RCCS are allotted two 15-minute breaks per 8-hour shift. DO/RCWS will provide break plans. As all children at PCC must be supervised at all times, it is important that prior to taking an authorized break, staff report to the RCWS or shift organizer to ensure supervision coverage of the children they are providing care for. To limit distraction of other staff supervising children/youth on campus, staff are not authorized to take their breaks in other cottages and are encouraged to use the following designated areas for breaks: Staff Lounge Front Parking Lot Intake Parking Lot Intake Parking Lot				
Cottage	 An RCWS or RCW from each shift will provide a brief synopsis of what occurred during each shift in the "Red Book" (each Cottage has a "Red Book" located in the supervisor's office). Read the "Red Book" (and each new entry file(s) as directed by the RCWS) before each shift. Monitor children/youth at all times and know their location. Monitor the upstairs and hallway areas whenever children/youth are present. Inform other RCWs when leaving vicinity/ assignment to ensure that all children/youth are monitored. 				

Shift Duty	Expectations			
Cottage (cont.)	 Communicate with the RCWS and ensure equity when children/youth requests clothing or any other identified item(s) that are culturally required or needed (i.e. hair grooming and hygiene grooming products). Assist and supervise a child/youth doing laundry. Assist youth in a smooth acclimation to the agreements/values/rules of their new temporary community. Staff will ensure children/youth are not engaging in inappropriate conversations, and in turn, will not be engaged in inappropriate conversations of their own. 			
Child Safety	 Conduct physical counts of all children/youth throughout each shift and as requested by the Duty Officer. Inform the RCWS when a child/youth cannot be accounted for during a mandatory physical count. Mandatory counts occur during the following times: Mealtimes Bath time Return to and from school Before, during, and after outings Avoid food handling issues including foodborne illnesses by consuming any personal food and drink brought on campus away from the child. This includes not bringing food into the cottage and eating in front of the children/youth. Personal food items are to be stored in the employee lounge only. Per CCL, personal food items cannot be stored in the cottage refrigerator. Ensure that hair grooming and hygiene products are returned, and the hygiene cabinet is locked at all times. Per CCL, personal hygiene items cannot be left unattended in the bathrooms or bedrooms. Ensure that the diverse hair grooming needs of children will be met, which may include styles that require braiding or haircuts. Additionally, staff with diverse knowledge of hair care maintenance ensure that proper hair products are provided for youth. Supervise children/youth when provided with personal items such as tweezers, mirrors, razors, nail clippers, or any sharp objects. 			

Shift Duty	Expectations				
Child Safety (cont.)	 Allow children/youth in the storage, staff areas, kitchen, laundry room, or another child/youth's bedroom only with staff's permission. Doors leading to the laundry room, staff office, and staff lockers must be kept locked at all times. 				
	Absent Without Leave (AWOL)				
	 When a child/youth attempts to leave or leaves PCC without permission: Consult with management team and refer to Polinsky Children's Center - Absent Without Leave (AWOL) Follow the children/youth and notify the covering Supervisor. Assigned SWs, refer to Absent Client - No Contact for SW responsibilities. Debrief and complete SIR; refer to Special Incident Reports (SIRs) for further instructions on how to complete the SIR forms. 				
	Overnight Checks				
	 On the overnight shift, at least one RCW must be assigned to the upstairs and one RCW to the downstairs of the cottage. These staff should not be given tasks that take them away from their assigned areas. On the overnight shift, RCWs will conduct bedtime with random bed checks every 15 minutes. Bedtime checks will be documented on the Polinsky Children's Center Overnight 15 Minute Room Check (06-12) for all cottages and the Polinsky Children's Center Toddler Overnight Room Check for cottage B (06-13) which includes behavior specific information during checks. Children/youth who are enhanced will have 5-minute checks during the overnight shift which will be documented on the Polinsky Children's Center Overnight 5 Minute Room Check (06-14). Bedroom doors should remain open. However, if a youth specifically requests that the door be closed, that request must be honored. 				

Shift Duty	Expectations		
Child Safety (cont.)	Enhanced Children:		
	 The RCW/RCCS assigned a child on a 1 to 1, will be within arm's reach of the child at all times. The RCW/RCCS assigned to .5 child will be within hearing and eyesight of the child at all times. 		

For full job description, refer to RCW and RCCS.

Youth Advocates/ Volunteers

Youth Advocates/Volunteers are on campus to provide services and support to children/youth. They are not PCC staff members. Youth Advocates/Volunteers cannot perform the duties of an RCW or RCCS and will not be left with children/youth without an RCW or RCCS supervising. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Intervening with any child/youth conflict or crisis situation (youth advocates/volunteers will be asked to leave the area if a child/youth is in crisis).
- Walking child(ren)/youth to nursing, visitation, or accompanying them on a pass.
- Supervising phone calls or inspecting child(ren)/youth.

Youth Advocates/Volunteers may consult with the RCWS in order to take a child(ren)/youth on a walk in the PCC courtyard.

Expectations for all Polinsky Children's Center (PCC) Staff

All PCC staff will uphold the highest standards of conduct in the performance of their duties.

Expectation	Action			
Code of Conduct	The PCC Staff are expected to maintain acceptable levels of performance and conduct themselves in accordance to the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Code of Conduct. Being professional and courteous enhances peer relationships and promotes a workplace culture based on respect and teamwork. The same professionalism is expected when working with children, families and others working at PCC. Professional conduct includes but not limited to the following practices:			
	Staff must be dependable and are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:			

Expectation	Action		
Code of Conduct (cont.)	 Come to work on time. Be "Ready to Work" - defined as having taken care of all personal business (use of locker/bathroom, personal conversation, preparation/consumption of food, etc.) and ready to supervise children and/or complete other cottage tasks as assigned. Notify the Duty Officer (SWS or PSS) and Control Center RCWS of any emergency if leaving early for time sheet adjustment. 		
	NOTE: Staff will be notified by their supervisors when patterns of poor attendance and punctuality are observed.		
	Supervision of Children/Youth		
	 Staff are not allowed to engage in any activities that would distract them from observing and caring for the children/youth, such as: responding to personal cell phones; talking or texting on the phone on non-work related matters; reading non-work related books/newspapers/magazines; sleeping on the job, or socializing with other staff. 		
	Conflict Resolution		
	 Demonstrate conflict resolution skills and a team approach when possible and address disagreements with co-workers in private. If unable to resolve the situation, determine if the conflict needs additional discussion with the following: RCWS SWS PSS PCC Management Departmental Human Resources Officer (DHRO) and/or PCC Manager(s) 		
	Dress Code		
	 In addition to the HHSA dress code, there is authorized and required attire for residential care staff at PCC for the safety of staff and children. These include the following guidelines: Wear close-toed shoes or close-toed sandals with a strap on the heel. 		

Expectation	Action		
Code of Conduct (cont.)	 Limit accessories that can be a strangulation hazard (e.g., necklaces, scarves, ties, etc.). Limit ornate rings to avoid scratching children/youth. Fingernails are to be kept short and clean to avoid scratching children/youth. Identification badges must be properly worn and visible at all times. Tights or leggings are unauthorized attire unless accompanied by a longer top or dress. Staff should not wear spandex or tight formfitting clothing, beach/exercise-type clothing, clothing that is too tight or that could be considered overly provocative (e.g. visible undergarments, low-cut tops, etc.). NOTE: Staff who are not dressed appropriately for their shift must change or will not be allowed to work. 		
Staff Modeling	 Modeling positive behaviors is a great asset of staffing. Positive modeling includes, at a minimum, the following: Avoiding participating in flirting between staff. Not exchanging gifts or letters between staff and staff and between children/youth. Not unnecessarily denying requests/giving special treatment. Refraining from discussing personal matters with children/youth. Not using inappropriate language. 		
Boundaries	Boundary issues with sexually reactive children/youth and children/youth who have simply not had the opportunity to learn appropriate social skills are a serious matter. Many children/youth need to learn to respect personal space and demand that respect for themselves. Insist on 2-3 feet of space while communicating.		
Personal Electronics	To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, all personal use of electronics (e.g., cell phone, wireless headphones, gaming device, etc.) is prohibited when providing direct supervision. Personal electronics may be stored in the staff office or lockers during the work shift. Staff may use personal electronics before/after shift hours and during their allotted two 15-minute breaks.		

Expectation	Action				
Personal Electronics (cont.)	Staff who are issued county cell phones will be required to have the cell phones charged and on their person during working hours.				
	In the event of or when anticipating a personal emergency during the shift, staff will:				
	 Inform the RCWS as soon as possible and ensure supervision of children assigned to their care prior to responding to the emergency. 				
Confidentiality	Information regarding children/youth and their families at PCC is confidential and protected by law. Staff should refer to the Social Media policy for further guidance.				
	Confidential information will not be shared, distributed, published, etc. Staff must maintain professional boundaries, abide by confidentiality regulations, and refrain from the following:				
	 Engaging in inappropriate conversations and activities with children/youth. Discussing a child's history in front of other children/youth. Asking children/youth directly as to the reason why they are at PCC. 				
	 Maintaining any contact with the child/youth after they leave PCC. 				
	 Exchanging personal information with the child/youth, including but not limited to social media, emails, and phone numbers. 				
	Taking pictures or video of children/youth or participating in social media images or photos with youth. Liking friending commenting with children youth on social.				
	 Liking, friending, commenting with children/youth on social media. 				
Mandated Reporting	 All the aforementioned PCC staff are classified as mandated reporters. When there are allegations of abuse/neglect, the mandated reporter must notify the Hotline by telephone and will prepare and send a written report within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident, refer to Mandated Reporters policy for further instructions on completing a child abuse/neglect report. 				

Expectation	Action			
Nursing and Medical Clinic	 Call Nursing before taking the child to the clinic. Take the child's cottage file to every nursing visit. Be aware of the child's medical needs and know the procedure for monitoring and caring for the sick child. Correctly maintain medical logs (e.g., input/output, food/drink log, etc.). NOTE: Staff will not take more than three children/youth to nursing			
	at a time. Staff will use good judgment on whether or not a 1.0 should walk to nursing with other minors.			
Parking	The PCC parking lot is reserved for visitors including the general public.			
	During regular business hours of Monday - Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm, parking options for temporary and permanent staff include:			
	 PCC parking lot- staff should only park in unmarked spaces alongside Viewridge Court. Staff are only authorized to park in unmarked spaces as marked spaces have been designated for PCC management, Promises2Kids staff, visitors and volunteers. Street parking 			
	Afterhours Parking PCC staff have open parking at the PCC parking lot during the following hours:			
	 Monday - Friday: 5:30 P.M 6:00 A.M. Saturdays, Sundays, and County Holidays: Anytime 			
	NOTE : Repeated violation of PCC's parking policy (PCC parking lot and Kaiser garage) during regular business hours, will be elevated and subject to necessary and further action by CWS.			

Workforce Development

In alignment, with CWS expectations and CCL regulations section 80065 referencing Personnel Requirements in <u>Title 22</u>, <u>Div 6</u>, <u>Chap 1</u>, <u>Art 5-6 - General Licensing Requirements</u> and <u>Title 22</u>, <u>Div 6</u>, <u>Chap 5</u>, <u>Art 6 (Cont.) - Group Homes</u>, the RCW, RCWS, SWS, and PSS job classifications are required to attend additional trainings at PCC within 90 days of their hire date. On-the-job training will also be provided.

Classroom trainings include the following:

Training	Hours	Provided By	Renewal
New Employee Orientation	4.00	PCC Training Coordinator	N/A
The Nurtured Heart Approach (NHA)	8.00	NHA Certified Trainers	N/A
CPR/First Aid	Certified	The Knowledge Center	Every 2 years
Pro-ACT Workshop	20.00	Pro-Act Certified Trainers	Every 2 years
Pro-ACT Refresher	10 hours	Pro-Act Certified Trainers	Every 2 years (when not taking the 20 hour Pro-ACT Workshop)
Special Incident Report Writing	2.00	Community Care License Liaison	Every 2 years
Water Safety Today	2.00	PCC Training Contractor	N/A
Food Handlers	3.00	Family Health Services	Every 3 years
Mandated Reporting	2.00	CWS Hotline Staff	N/A
Children in Transition	4.00	PCC Training Coordinator	N/A
HEART	0.50	Resource Development Coordinator	N/A

Newly hired residential care staff, hired on or after July 1, 1999, shall complete a minimum of 16 hours of annual training within the first 12 months of employment, for a total of 40 hours of initial training. Annual training (after the first 12 months): staff will complete a minimum of 20 hours of annual training. Staff can refer to Workforce Development for further information regarding Learning Management System (LMS) trainings that are available for annual training.

Regular in-service training required by Assembly Bill (AB) 1197 is provided to all staff who work with children five years old and under and are also open to other staff on a space-available basis. Per AB 1197, Developmental Screening and Enhancement Program (DSEP) provide bi-monthly, two-hour

Workforce Development (cont.)

training sessions for a total of four hours monthly which cover, but are not limited to, the following subject areas:

- Child Development birth to age six
- Cognitive and Physical Development
- Discipline and Limit Setting
- Language Acquisition and Communication
- Dynamics of Trauma and Brain Damage
- Caring for Children who are Victims of Sexual and Physical Abuse
- Preventive Health Practices

NOTE: All Training for RCW/RCCS requires approval by cottage supervisor prior to registration.

Alignment with SET

This policy supports SET <u>Value 1</u>, Relationships with Children, Youth and Families are the Foundation and the guiding principles, PCC staff will have a clear understanding of the definition of safety, knowledge of trauma informed practice, use professional communication that will build on a child and family's strengths. Additionally, it supports SET <u>Value 6</u> and the guiding principles of having a proactive workplace culture of reflection, responsiveness, and shared responsibility and that is guided by the practice framework values. It also supports the agency practices to be knowledgeable of and utilize SET practice behaviors to guide practice with children, families and partners, and appreciate teamwork and a multi-disciplinary approach to practice.