



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**East Central Regional Human Rights Authority
Human Resource Center of Edgar and Clark Counties
Austin House
Report of Findings
Case #10-060-9005**

The East Central Human Rights Authority (HRA) of the Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission voted to pursue an investigation of Human Resource Center of Edgar and Clark Counties after receiving the following complaints of possible rights violations:

Complaints:

- 1. The home is unclean. The home has a bug infestation (bed bugs) that is not being properly treated by a certified exterminator.**
- 2. The CILA provider did not let people come to the home to visit during the holidays due to the infestation and no alternate visitation site was available.**

If the allegations are substantiated, they would violate protections under the Illinois Administrative Code (Ill. Admin. Code tit. 59, § 115.300) and the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code (the MHDD Code) (405 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 5/2-103).

Complaint Summary:

The Human Rights Authority received a complaint that the Austin House CILA (Community Integrated Living Arrangement) has an ongoing problem with bed bugs that is not being properly treated by an exterminator. The infestation caused the CILA home to cancel holiday visitation and parties with no alternate visitation location was available.

Investigation

To pursue the matter, the HRA visited the facility and program representatives were interviewed. Relevant practices, policies and masked sections of the consumer's records were reviewed.

Interviews:

On February 26, 2019 at 10:30 am, the HRA met with agency staff members, including: The Executive Director for Human Resource Center (HRC) of Edgar and Clark Counties, the Community Service Supervisor, the QIDP (Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional), and the DSP (Direct Support Professional). The meeting occurred at 611 S. Austin St in Paris, IL.

The meeting began with introductions, a review of HRA procedures, and a review of the allegations being addressed in this investigation.

The staff provided some general information about Human Service Center of Edgar and Clark Counties. The provider offers a variety of services to Edgar and Clark Counties including mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation, prevention services, day programming, and residential services. The CILA program currently serves 5 individuals, 3 of them reside at the Austin House location. There are 7 DSP (Direct Support Professionals), and 1 QIDP that provide services to the Austin House on a rotating basis. One staff member is assigned per shift (unless all 3 individuals are attending the day program). All staff receive DSP training of 120 hours plus yearly renewal trainings.

Staff reported that the CILA has a monthly pest control treatment and inspection completed by a pest extermination company. In February 2018, the extermination company was conducting a routine inspection and found that the home had a bed bug infestation. The provider notified all guardians. Staff then received estimates for treatment and hired a local provider that was not the extermination company that discovered the infestation because the local provider offered a yearlong guarantee for a lesser price. The local extermination company completed their first treatment on 2/21/18 and has been coming back periodically for inspection and treatment over the last year in addition to the monthly treatment and inspection through the first company. Treatment includes liquid and aerosol treatments that require the consumers and staff leave the property for a few hours. All treatments have been completed while the consumers were at the day program to avoid any disruption to placement. Staff stated that they have completed extensive research and believe that they have become more vigilant in looking for and treating bed bugs. In December 2018, a consumer came to the staff concerned about bites on his leg. The staff inspected the home and did locate another infestation of bed bugs. The local company was contacted and completed additional treatment. Staff believe they know where the bed bugs are originating and have implemented precautions in the home to prevent further infestation. In addition, HRC has created a bed bug policy effective this 1/30/19 to further train staff and consumers about identifying and treating possible bed bug infestations.

Staff reported that they do not have any restrictions for visitation at the Austin House. With only 3 consumers residing in the home, they do not require a formal policy and have no requirements for any notification and/or sign in/out sheets to monitor visitors. HRC stated that when the bed bugs were identified again in December 2018 guardians were notified and the Christmas party was delayed. The holiday celebration was rescheduled at an alternate location for visitor comfort. There was a conflict for one family member and HRC offered alternate arrangements to accommodate the family member's comfort but the family member chose not to attend. Additionally, staff arranged to drive an hour to meet the family member and exchange gifts. Staff do not recall the infestation affecting any other visitation for the consumers residing in the CILA. There have been no restriction of rights notifications or human rights reviews for any of the consumers residing in the home because the infestation/treatment did not warrant either action.

The HRA was given a tour of the CILA home. The home appeared to be clean and clutter free. All three bedrooms at this location are sizable.

Records Reviews:

Human Service Center of Edgar and Clark Counties provided the HRA with the following records:

Inspection reports demonstrated that Austin House CILA receives monthly inspection and pest control. On 2/13/18, in addition to the regular monthly treatment, it was documented that a bed bug was found, and the supervisor was notified. All other notes state that no visible issues were found.

The local pest extermination company control records indicate that the CILA home was treated for bed bugs on 2/21/18, 3/7/18, 3/21/18, 6/12/18, 6/25/18 and 12/19/18 using liquid and aerosol treatments. The statements include the license number of the exterminator (which was verified as accurate and valid in the State of Illinois).

HRC created a policy on 1/30/19 titled "Prevention and Management of Bed Bugs in CILA home". The policy outlines how HRC staff and residents will be educated in identifying, reporting, treating, and preventing bed bugs.

A redacted case note dated 12/19/18 documents that a parent/guardian contacted the CILA upset that the CILA had bed bugs. The parent/guardian stated that she does not feel comfortable coming to the home for a Christmas visit as planned. Staff assured her that the bed bugs were being treated and the consumers rights were being preserved and offered alternate resolutions to the Christmas visit (including meeting at an alternate location for any length of time requested).

Conclusions

1. The home is unclean. The home has a bug infestation (bed bugs) that is not being properly treated by a certified exterminator.

The Illinois Administrative Code (Ill. Admin. Code tit. 59, § 115.300) states "6) The agency shall ensure that: A) Living arrangements shall be safe and clean within common areas and within apartments over which the agency has control. B) Living arrangements shall be free from vermin. C) Waste and garbage shall be stored, transferred and disposed of in a manner that does not permit the transmission of diseases. D) Private water systems shall comply with 77 Ill. Adm. Code 900 (Drinking Water Systems Code). E) Copies of inspections when performed by local and State inspectors in regard to health, sanitation and environment shall be maintained". The HRA witnessed that the Austin House is clean and free of clutter. HRC admits that they have had a bed bug infestation over the past year but the situation is being managed through monthly preventative treatments and inspections as well as additional treatments specific to treating bed bugs. The records indicate that Austin House has had 6 bed bug treatments by a licensed professional in the last 12 months.

Based on the findings above the East Central Human Rights Authority concludes that the consumer's rights were not violated and, therefore, the complaint is unsubstantiated. No recommendations or suggestions are being made in relation to this complaint.

2. The CILA provider is not letting people come to the home to visit the consumers and no alternate visitation site is available.

The MHDD Code (405 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 5/2-103) states “Except as provided in this Section, a recipient who resides in a mental health or developmental disabilities facility shall be permitted unimpeded, private, and uncensored communication with persons of his choice by mail, telephone and visitation.” Section 5/2-202 of the MHDD Code requires a service provider to adopt policies and procedures to implement rights. The provider reports that they do not have any restrictions on visitation at the Austin House and only one visitation has been impacted by the bed bug infestation. In that situation, documentation states that the family member was able to come to the home but chose not to attend because they did not want to come to a home that had been treated for bed bugs.

Based on the findings above the East Central Human Rights Authority concludes that the consumer’s rights were not violated and, therefore, the complaint is unsubstantiated. The HRA makes the following suggestions:

1. The provider develop a set of written guidelines, policy and procedures for visitation that align with the MHDD Code (405 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 5/2-103 and 5/2-202) and provide those guidelines to the consumers (and guardians).

The HRA would like to thank the Human Resource Center of Edgar and Clark Counties for their cooperation with this investigation.

RESPONSE

Notice: The following page(s) contain the provider response. Due to technical requirements, some provider responses appear verbatim in retyped format.
