

Ministry of Community
and Social Services

Ministry of Children and
Youth Services

Ministère des Services
sociaux et communautaires

Ministère des Services à l'enfance
et à la jeunesse



Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Unit
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June 5, 2014

Chris Carter
60 Barthe Street
Chatham, Ontario
N7L 1T6

Re: Appeal PA13-39

Dear Mr. Carter:

Please find enclosed pages 8 and 21 of the requested report, without any severances in accordance with the Information and Privacy Commissioner's Order PO-3345:

"I order the ministry to disclose the withheld portions on pages 8 and 21 of the report by providing the appellant with a copy of these pages on or before June 30, 2014."

Please note that the Information and Privacy Commissioner upheld the ministry's decision to withhold the remaining portions of the report from disclosure.

Please contact Paul Wigle, Policy Analyst, at (416) 327-0312, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cate Parker".

Cate Parker
Senior Manager

Enclosures

cc: Sherry Liang, Senior Adjudicator, Information and Privacy Commission of Ontario

INTRODUCTION

In December 2011, the South East Region of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) initiated an operational review of the foster care program at the Children's Aid Society of the County of Prince Edward (PECAS). The review was a response to recent events including:

- 3 investigations by the society and the Ontario Provincial Police involving allegations of sexual abuse and 1 involving allegations related to child pornography in PECAS foster homes:
- The fact that the Society was assigned 2 provisional licences for foster care in 2011.

This report presents the findings of the operational review team and requirements and recommendations to address issues identified in the course of the review.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF OPERATIONAL REVIEW

The purpose and scope of the operational review are set out in terms of reference which were presented to the executive director and board members of the Society on December 1, 2011 (See Appendix A)

The purpose of the review was to assess:

- the safety of children and youth in foster homes at the time of the review; and,
- the efficacy of actions taken with respect to the foster care program and services at the Society.

The scope of the review was to include:

- an examination of information about foster homes and foster children/youth over a 3 year period;
- an examination of administrative controls as they relate to completeness and accuracy of information used for decision making purposes.

The objectives of the review were to identify any opportunities for improvements in administrative procedures and any specific concerns about foster care practices. The review was to be a focussed and limited operational review rather than a comprehensive and in depth look at all aspects of the organization.

The review was carried out by a team with expertise in child welfare, interviewing, project management and program review. It was conducted under the authority of the *Child and Family Services Act*, Part 1, Section 6 (1) and section 17.

PECAS Foster Care Program Operational Review Report
January 25, 2012

balances that provides the board with the objective information it requires to fulfill its responsibilities.

b) Management

In conducting interviews and file reviews, a number of issues and questions were identified related to the management and administration of the society. Some of those matters were clearly within the scope of the review while others bore an indirect relationship to it. The key concerns identified are:

- The management team does not appear to have developed a comprehensive strategy to address the impact of the sexual abuse allegations in the short and longer terms;
- There is conflict among staff in the society that is having an impact on service delivery.

With respect to the sexual abuse allegations, the executive director has reported to the ministry that the following steps have been taken:

- Staff were asked to review all placements for risk of abuse immediately following the 2010 disclosures regarding 2 of the homes in which sexual abuse allegations were made;
- Youth who made the allegations were offered victim/witness services and counselling services were also offered to all youth who were cared for by the CAS, including youth no longer in care;
- Some research has been done including consulting a psychologist on risk reduction for children in care;
- Youth in care were given a day long session in the fall of 2010 on topics including self esteem and empowerment, experiences being in care and communication. The purpose was to gather information and inform decision-making on change in practice;
- All child protection staff persons were provided with a training session on sexualized behaviour;
- There was a consultation with the Foster Family Association and statements that the society intends to have ongoing consultations with foster parents to seek their advice and provide opportunities for discussion on proposed changes to practice.

In addition, it is believed that there was a critical incident debrief in 1 foster home for children who had been involved and one supervisor indicated she had spoken specifically to one of her staff regarding availability of counselling. It is also understood that the executive director and the board chair have sought legal advice.

Although a number of steps have been taken, it does not appear that the management team has followed up on the review of placements, the session for youth or the foster