

**HILL'S COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT SERVICES, Inc.**

**Site visit report  
February 9, 2009**

Grant number 9S304

Location: 3658 Warder Street, NW, Washington, DC 20011

Grant Monitor: Princess Johnson

Program Monitor: Patrice Bailey

Service Areas: Project Based Housing and Substance Abuse

Budget: \$300,000.

Attendees: **HAA Staff:** Patrice Bailey, Program Officer, Princess Johnson, Grants Management Specialist, Donovan Walcott, Budget Officer; **Hills Staff:** Lakisha Goldsberry, Administrative Assistant, William Kelly, Program Director

Reason: Allegations from clients and staff of non-payments of salaries and bills and non-delivery of services.

Intend to review policy and procedures for:

- program implementation
- staff conduct
- grievance and
- incidents of death
- Financial documents

Findings:

There were no **Program Policy and Procedures** available. Mr. Kelly said he had asked about it and was told it was being updated by Mr. Raymond Blanks.

I reviewed (3) client files, CNFE 0920792, RTTP 120249, DNVN 12008602, LRT0051870 and the new resident, (no number assigned yet) and found no consistency among them. Some had no consent forms, some, no urinalysis, one had no intake assessment, none had an agreement by client to pay a rental portion of 30% of their income, and none had an Individual Housing Plan that would outline steps to becoming more permanently housed. I reviewed the Sign In/Out book again and noticed that there had not been an entry since January 23, 2009. There were only 2 residents in the house. Present capacity 5.

There were no **Policy and Procedures for staff** or **Code of Conduct** for staff available. We were told that it doesn't exist. However, there were staff schedules posted on the wall. Group schedules posted and in the (2) staff folders reviewed there was a one pager that lists a series of orientations that the staff in attendance said they never attended. Ms. Goldsberry informed us that there had been no HIV groups in 3 weeks and only 1 substance abuse group that was held last Friday by Mr. McNair. Ms. Johnson asked about Mr. Mabry's position there. Both staff

members replied that they had never seen him. He's not on the posted schedule. And none of the clients had ever seen him. (Mr. Mabry is the only person budgeted that has received his every payment).

**There were no Grievance Procedures in place or Policy and Procedures for Unusual Incidences and Death.** Staff said it didn't exist.

The **Financial documents** were not available. We were told they were not kept at that office. However, there was much discussion about staff payments and W2 forms. The W2's that were shown to Ms. Johnson and Mr. Walcott didn't appear to be authentic. Mr. Walcott called the office of Tax and Revenue and discovered that Hill's Community Residential Support, Inc. was not registered with them under the Vendor ID listed in their NOGA. Staff informed us that they have no medical, dental or life insurance or paid days off. Taxes paid to District of Columbia and Maryland, Department of Employment Services Compensation Division, Social Security Administration, Health insurance and Disability insurance is included in the categorical budget justification for fringe.

In addition to the above subjects of concern, we were also informed that Ms. Hill provided 24 hour coverage of the house in her absence by using [REDACTED], who is alleged to be a resident at another Hill's Community facility. [REDACTED] was at Donna's House from Wednesday, February 4 through Sunday, February 8, 2009. It was alleged by staff that [REDACTED] left because she had no money and no food for the 5 days she was left there. [REDACTED] reported to staff that she had been with Ms. Hill for a long time on and off and she came by the residence and told [REDACTED] to "come on, I need you stay at this other house for me for a few days" and bought her to Donna's House.

It is also reported that Ms. McSwain, the staff member that works the 4:00 pm – 12:00 am shift and provides HIV groups, has resigned. Mr. Kelly expects her letter of resignation to be faxed to the office by Friday, February 13, 2009.

Last week Mr. Kelly informed us that Ms. Hill had asked him to go to Landlord Tenant court in her absence. We are now being told that Mr. Raymond Blanks went to court for her. I am unaware of Mr. Blank's connection to Hill's.

#### Conclusion:

There are clearly many distractions at Donna's House and no clear supervision and current program delivery. The constant staff turnover is having an effect on the program deliverables they are funded for by HAA/HOPWA.

Corrective Action:

Develop and implement the following:

Written program policies and procedures.

- Structure day to day operation of the program including days and times for groups, clean-up house meetings if any, house chores etc.
- A tool to monitor and document client participation in required program activities.
- Procedure for handling unusual incidences and death.

Written staff policies and procedures to include at a minimum:

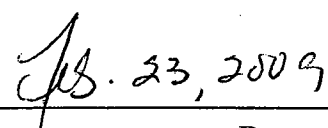
- An organizational chart the displays organizational relationships and demonstrates who has responsibility for administrative oversight and clinical supervision over each service area.
- Job descriptions and duties for each position.
- Orientations with respect to administrative procedures, program goals, cultural sensitivity, and policies and practices to be adhered to under the grant agreement.
- Code of Conduct – addressing appropriate behavior for staff, dress codes, call-in procedures, etc. and boundaries between staff and clients.


Develop a plan to ensure:

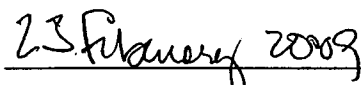
- Staff should be in place to maintain program operation. Staff should be made aware of the employment agreement and benefits.
- Sprinkler system should be completed as per letter dated July 18, 2008 requesting \$10,000. to finish what was 85% already complete.

Supply the lease agreement for 3658 Warder Street, NW and whatever financial documents the Grants Management Division requests.

  
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Program Officer Signature

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## PROGRESS NOTES

**Program Monitor: Patrice Bailey**

**Grant No.: 9S0304**

**Funding Source: HOPWA**

**Service Area: Project based Housing & Substance Abuse**

**Location: 36598 Warder St., NW, Washington, DC**

**Report prepared by: Patrice Bailey**

On February 3, 2009, Sherita Grant received a call from [REDACTED], a one year resident at Donna's House of Hill's Residential Community. Ms. Grant immediately called me into her office so that we could speak with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] first called Housing Counseling Services and was instructed to call HAA to report the following complaints:

- a new client arrived at the facility today and there was no staff at work to receive her. Several calls were placed to Ms. Hill to avail. [REDACTED] and another resident, [REDACTED] directed the new client, [REDACTED] from the House of Ruth, to an available bed and informed her that no staff was in.
- [REDACTED] has concerns about eviction and the possible discontinuance of the program. She alleged there were several bills unpaid by Hills. (Rent = \$4,180.; Pepco = \$1,300; B&W Stats, Co. and the staff. Her allegations are based on notices left on the front door from the landlord, service technicians coming out to turn off the electricity, the inability to take urinalysis at B&W Stats because they reported that the bill had not been paid and the arguments and calls from the staff about their pay or lack thereof.
- [REDACTED] is very disgruntled about the lack of structure and supervision at this facility. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] agreed that during their stay they have not sat with staff to develop any kind of plan for transitioning into a more permanent housing situation. No recovery plan, housing plan, or budget plan.
- There have been no substance abuse groups since staff haven't been coming to work. [REDACTED] is terribly concerned about her sobriety and wants to be placed in another facility.
- She also made mention of a Hill's staff member who runs errands and arrives at the facility high off something and sells items, (soap, lotions, etc.) to the clients. However, she praised other staff members who have bought them food on several occasions. In particular Ms. McSwain. [REDACTED] recalled reading in a Hill's pamphlet when she first arrived 6 months ago, that food would be purchased for the residents and there would be a nutritionist and a cook to prepare daily meals. Residents were invited to eat out if the prepared meals didn't suite them but they report that they have never had anyone prepare meals for them and no one is buying food for the house anymore. [REDACTED] suggested I obtain a copy of the pamphlet from Mr. Kelly.

I asked the Division Chief, Leo Clarke to accompany me to Hill's to confirm the allegations of no staff being on duty. While we were there, [REDACTED] called the Program Director William Kelly. Mr. Kelly stated that his reason for not being at work was because he is sick but he had to go see his colleague Lakisha Goldsberry, Administrative Assistant, who was also out because she is hospitalized. While in the facility I observed the sprinkler system that's still incomplete, the alley cat whose shot records were never submitted to our office, several of the resident's rooms were a complete mess and the staff sign in book being the same book visitors

log in on. We were also informed that the residents were given keys to the facility to enable them to come and go when staff isn't there and there was no [REDACTED] present. She left her belongings at the facility and left back out when she was told there was no staff in today.

Once I arrived back at the office I spoke with Mr. Kelly again who confirmed the resident's allegations about the rent. Mr. Kelly is required to be in court on Friday, February 6, 2009 at 9:00 am, representing Ms. Hill who will be out of town, responding to a writ of execution for rental payment for 2 months, totaling \$3800. plus legal fees totaling \$4,100. Mr. Kelly also confirmed the non payment to employees. Mr. Kelly indicated that no one's been paid since January 9, 2009. He also indicated there were several staff members that have not been coming to work as a result of not getting paid. Namely, Ms. McSwain, 4:00 pm – 12:00 shift, Ms. Prescott, 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend person, and Mr. McNair, who holds the substance abuse groups. Mr. Kelly mentioned an elderly lady that was in the facility from Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> whom he didn't know but assumed she was called in because Ms. Hill allegedly wouldn't pay staff on the holidays.

In conclusion, I have had to follow up on 2 calls received by this office in the past 3 months from clients who either did not want to be placed at Hills or wanted to be removed from Hills as well at previous and current staff. There was also a death at Hill's that was handled questionably. [REDACTED] has written a letter to me addressing her concerns and [REDACTED] has shown an anxiousness to express her opinion about the program. Although those things are worthy of concern, it was not until now I feel it necessary to thoroughly investigate the program for housing regulations, policies and procedures for staff, program structure and financial audit. I have spoken with Cheryl Pack at Homes for Hope regarding a possible transfer for [REDACTED]. Once all of the facts are gathered in our office, I'd like to schedule another meeting with Hill's to discuss our findings and recommendations.