

Report Highlights

Division of Youth Services Reporting • Department of Human Services
Performance Audit • July 2023 • 2260P



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C O L O R A D O

Key Conclusion

The Division of Youth Services (Division) has improved the accuracy and quality of the *Educational Outcomes Evaluation of the Colorado Division of Youth Services* (Educational Outcomes Report) and *Recidivism Evaluation of the Colorado Division of Youth Services* (Recidivism Report) since the OSA's 2019 audit of the reports. However, the Division could further improve its quality assurance controls to mitigate the risk of mistakes and human error in the Educational Outcomes Report narrative.

Key Findings

- Since the OSA's 2019 audit of the Educational Outcomes and Recidivism Reports, the Division has improved the accuracy and quality of both reports, including implementing the prior audit recommendations aimed at improving its internal controls over the reports.
- The conclusions and figures presented in the 2022 Educational Outcomes and Recidivism Reports were generally supported by the Division's data on youth and the Judicial Department data it used to prepare the reports. Specifically, we found several minor inaccuracies in the Educational Outcomes Report and no inaccuracies in the Recidivism Report.
- We found the following inaccuracies in the 2022 Educational Outcomes Report, which Division staff reported were caused by human error and missed by its quality control procedures.
 - The Division reported that 240 of the 372 youth discharged in Fiscal Year 2021 left supervision with a high school diploma or General Educational Diploma (GED) in-hand at the time of discharge; however, 3 of the 240 youth attained this achievement between 94 to 500 days after their discharge during subsequent Division commitments.
 - In two instances, the Division reported a number in both written and numerical format, but the two did not agree.
 - In two sections of the report, data points were referenced in multiple places, but the numbers did not agree.
- Although the problems we identified had a limited impact on the overall accuracy of the Educational Outcomes Report, a strong quality control process is important to ensure that those who use the report—Department of Human Services management, the General Assembly, and the public—have reliable information.

Background

- Section 19-2.5-1501(4), C.R.S., requires the Division of Youth Services to annually report to the General Assembly the recidivism data, recidivism rates, and the educational outcomes for youth who discharge from its supervision.
- The Educational Outcomes Report provides information on the academic achievement and academic growth of youth discharged from Division supervision in the preceding fiscal year, and the Recidivism Report provides information such as the recidivism rate, which is the rate at which youth reoffend, over 1, 2, and 3 years after discharge from Division supervision.
- This is the second of two audits required by Section 2-3-124, C.R.S., to examine the "accuracy and quality" of the Educational Outcomes and Recidivism reports. The first audit was completed by the OSA in January 2019.

Recommendations Made

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Responses

Agree: **1**
Partially Agree: **0**
Disagree: **0**