
Ministry of National Security's Response to the Eleventh Report of the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity on the Status of the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Third Report of the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity into the Treatment of Child Offenders

Item 4.17

The Committee reiterated the implementation of the 2017 recommendation of the recruitment of additional specialised staff to support and develop rehabilitative policies, programmes and procedures for child offenders, by December 2020, specifically:

- **the addition of welfare officers, ten (10) psychologists, and two (2) pharmacists;**
- **the recruitment of one (1) Special Education Teacher, three (3) Primary level teachers, and three (3) Secondary level teachers.**

Response

With respect to the additional welfare officers, this matter is currently receiving the attention of the Service Commissions Department.

As it relates to the ten (10) psychologists and two (2) pharmacists, it is to be noted that Cabinet approved the employment on contract of ten (10) psychologists, one (1) senior prisons pharmacist and one (1) junior prisons pharmacist. (*Cabinet Minute No. 617 dated March 28, 2019, refers*).

Currently, the position of senior prisons pharmacist is filled. The other positions were advertised in the daily newspapers, with a stipulated deadline date for applications of September 30, 2019. The Human Resource Department of the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service (TTPrS) is currently reviewing the applications received for shortlisting purposes.

With respect to the recruitment of one (1) Special Education Teacher, three (3) Primary level teachers, and three (3) Secondary level teachers, these positions are currently engaged on a short term basis, the Ministry of National Security is actively pursuing long term contracts.

Item 4.18

The Committee reiterated the implementation of the 2017 recommendation that the strategic plan for the Youth Transformation and Rehabilitation Centre (YTRC) be drafted and approved by the respective Ministries by January 2020. The Committee further reiterates that the strategic plan would assist with rectifying the issues of staff shortages and requirements as a rehabilitation centre as well as provided for a streamlined approach to Public Management Consulting Division (PMCD) requests for additional YTRC positions.

Response

The Strategic Plan is on schedule and is expected to be completed by January 2020.

Item 4.19

In support of the National Child Policy's strategic objective to ensure effective support systems and services for children, the Committee recommends that the YTRC Strategic Plan include an internal post-release monitoring programme.

Response

The TTPrS supports this recommendation and it is proposed that the YTRC strategic plan will include recommendations for legislative amendments to incorporate parole and other related Acts.

The current legislation does not require staff to conduct post-release monitoring. As an interim measure, the TTPrS continues to utilise the services of Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Faith-based Organisations (FBOs) to provide, vocational, educational and religious services to inmates and ex-inmates.

Item 4.24

The Committee reiterated the importance of the completion of the infrastructural works in keeping with the stipulations of Regulation 11 to 13 of the Child Rehabilitation Centre Regulations, 2017, with stated time frames, specifically the refurbishment works in Table 8.

Response

Following the approval of the 2019/2020 Budget and the disbursement of the requisite allocations, the infrastructural works will be completed within the stipulated time frames.

Item 4.25

The Committee exhorts the need to attend to the undermentioned outstanding areas of compliance with the Child Rehabilitation Centre Regulations, 2017 by January 2020.

- (a) In accordance with Regulations 4(1), 6(1) and 6(2) of the Child Rehabilitation Centre Regulations, 2017, the appointment of the Advisory Board and the convening of the Discharge Committees respectively.**
- (b) In accordance with Regulations 25(1) and (2) of the Child Rehabilitation Centre Regulations, 2017:-**
 - the recruitment of female infirm staff as part of the specialised staff highlighted at 4.17 above;**
 - quarterly reports on the health of residents sent by the Prison Medical Officer by the last quarter of fiscal 2019.**
- (c) In accordance with Regulations 35(d) and Schedule 4 of the Child Rehabilitation Centre Regulations, 2017, that forms permitting residents to leave the facility be made available.**

(d) Should an intimate search be conducted it should be in accordance with Regulations 62 of the Child Rehabilitation Centre Regulations, 2017.

Response

- (a) The Ministry of National Security is working assiduously towards the appointment of the Child Advisory Board by the stipulated date of January 2020.

A Discharge Committee is in place comprising of the Commissioner of Prisons, Superintendent of Prisons and the Chief Welfare Officer. It is pertinent to note that this Committee will only be convened when a resident is recommended for early discharge.

- (b) With respect to the issue of the recruitment of female infirmary staff, it is to be noted that interviews were conducted and twenty-five (25) Prison Officers (23 males and 2 females) were selected. The TTPrS is desirous of commencing training for these officers within the first quarter of fiscal year 2020 at the College of Arts Science Technology and Applied Arts (COSTAATT).

Concerning the issue of the quarterly reports, said reports were generated by the Prisons Medical Officer for the last quarter of fiscal year 2019 and will be forwarded to the Ministry of National Security in the shortest possible timeframe.

- (c) The TTPrS is currently awaiting forms from the Government Printery. In the interim, however, forms are being generated by the YTRC.
- (d) To date, there has been no occasion for an intimate search to be conducted, however, should such an occasion arise, the Regulation would be adhered to.