



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

WASHINGTON, DC 20201



AUG 10 2018

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

This letter responds to your July 30, 2018, letter in which you asked the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of Inspector General (OIG), to (1) investigate allegations of physical and sexual abuse at Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) facilities; (2) review the relevant policies and procedures currently in place to prevent abuse; and (3) offer recommendations to better protect migrant children.

OIG takes very seriously the health and welfare of children in HHS's custody as part of ORR's Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) Program. Prior to receiving your letter, we announced a review of ORR grantee facilities' efforts to ensure the health and safety of children in their care. Our review will focus on a variety of health- and safety-related issues, including identification of and response to incidents of harm and employee background screening. To be timely and comprehensive with this work, OIG is rapidly deploying multidisciplinary teams of evaluators, auditors, investigators, and lawyers on site visits to ORR facilities nation-wide. We believe that this work will address the types of abuse allegations referenced in your letter, as well as the adequacy of HHS policies and procedures in place to prevent and deter such abuse. We also expect that this work will result in recommendations to HHS on its oversight of the UAC program, such as steps it can take to reduce incidents of abuse at ORR facilities.

I would also like to note that whenever OIG identifies possible criminal misconduct—whether through referrals, media reports, or information collected as part of ongoing reviews—our Office of Investigations reviews the evidence to determine whether an OIG criminal investigation or a referral to Federal or local law enforcement partners is warranted. If you would find it helpful, we are available to brief you or your staff on closed matters related to allegations of abuse at ORR facilities in which OIG has been involved.

Finally, I would like to highlight a series of audits of eight ORR grantees that OIG is currently completing. These audits focus on grantees' compliance with health and safety requirements and financial controls from 2014 to 2016. Audit teams visited 51 facilities managed by these grantees to test compliance and review internal controls. Three audits have been released and can be found on the OIG website.¹ Additional audits will be released throughout this year.

If you have any questions, please call me at 202-619-3148, or your staff may contact Christopher Seagle, Director of External Affairs, at 202-260-7006 or Christopher.Seagle@oig.hhs.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel R. Levinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Daniel R. Levinson
Inspector General

¹ <https://oig.hhs.gov/oas/reports/region9/91601005.pdf>; <https://oig.hhs.gov/oas/reports/region6/61607007.pdf>;
<https://oig.hhs.gov/oas/reports/region4/41603566.pdf>