

Georgia Department of Human Resources

OFFICE OF REGULATORY SERVICES

The Office of Regulatory Services (ORS) inspects, monitors, licenses, registers, and certifies a variety of health and childcare facilities. It works to ensure that facilities and programs operate at acceptable levels, as mandated by state statutes and by rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Human Resources. ORS also certifies various health care facilities to receive Medicaid and Medicare funds, through contracts and agreements with the Georgia Department of Community Health, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Food and Drug Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A staff of 235 appropriated positions carries out these activities.

The office's adjusted budget appropriation for FY 2005 was \$15.1 million, including \$8.1 million in state funds. For FY 2006 the adjusted budget appropriation was \$14.3 million, including \$7.4 million in state funds.

Residential Childcare

ORS regulates 64 child-placing (private adoption) agencies; 310 residential care facilities and 11 outdoor therapeutic programs. These programs serve children who require placements in residential settings away from their birth parents.

Health care and long-term care

ORS regulates acute health care and long-term care facilities. These include 228 ambulatory surgical treatment centers; 1 birthing center; 310 community living arrangements; 2 comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation facilities; 246 drug abuse treatment facilities; 219 end stage renal disease centers; 1 eye bank; 102 home health agencies; 110 hospices; 180 hospitals; 31 hospitals designated as emergency receiving, evaluation, and treatment facilities; 7 intensive residential treatment facilities for youth; 12 intermediate care facilities for people with mental retardation; 228 mammography facilities; 6 maternity homes; 29 narcotic treatment programs; 376 nursing homes; 116 outpatient physical therapy centers; 1,753 personal care homes; 520 private home care providers; 95 rural health clinics; 480 state-licensed clinical laboratories; 6,895 registered X-ray facilities; 5 traumatic brain injury facilities; and assists the Department of Insurance in their regulation of 12 health maintenance organizations. Most of the regulated health care facilities and nursing homes are certified by ORS for reimbursement under the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

In FY 2005, ORS performed 8,125 criminal record checks for childcare and personal care home facility staff. ORS also took or recommended adverse actions against 3 percent of regulated facilities for noncompliance.

Trends

Many changes are occurring in the industries that ORS regulates. Continuing growth in the use of personal care homes, the placement of persons with disabilities in community settings and the use of agencies that provide long term care services in a person's home is expected to impact the delivery of regulatory services by ORS.

In addition, the public wants more information to help them choose facilities and services. To help meet this increasing demand for readily available information, ORS is putting more information about facilities on the Internet. Currently, the ORS web page offers information about the types of facilities it licenses, rules and regulations for licensed facilities, links to accreditation reports on licensed facilities, survey inspection reports for some kinds of facilities and the ability to file complaints about regulated care online. Publications can also be purchased through the web page at: www.ors.dhr.georgia.gov.

Rapid changes in the way care is delivered continue to affect the way health care facilities are regulated. Rules must be revised and regulatory philosophy must adapt to these changes. Federal regulations now require ORS to collect health assessments of nursing home residents and patients of home health agencies in an electronic format for submission to federal regulators. This database provides better information for compliance monitoring decisions. The survey process used in these facilities will continue to evolve. Enforcement efforts to improve the quality of care consumers receive in licensed facilities will continue to be used or recommended by ORS when determined necessary.