

MEMORANDUM

Jeb Bush,
Governor

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Shelly Brantley,
Director

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DATE: December 19, 2006
TO: APD Area Administrators and Placement Coordinators
FROM: Shelly Brantley, Director
SUBJECT: Residential Placement Considerations in Preventing Sexual Violence

Research indicates that those individuals who have perpetrated at least one previous act of sexual violence will most likely commit another such act if afforded the opportunity. While it generally does not garner significant media attention, the fact is that some individuals with developmental disabilities themselves have been identified as the perpetrators of sexual violence against other disabled consumers (who are often unable to defend themselves and/or report such incidences).

As we continue implementing the individual components of our Zero Tolerance Initiative, one of the most important and immediate ways that the Agency can facilitate the prevention of client-on-client sexual violence within our licensed residential facilities involves taking certain safety measures during the placement process. Specifically, when consumers with previous histories of sexual violence choose to live with other individuals with developmental disabilities in residential settings, it is imperative for area APD staff to ensure that an adequate level of staff training, oversight, and supervision (as well as the provision of behavior analysis services as appropriate) is available and provided immediately following the placement. Considering that the severity of certain cognitive, behavioral and/or physical impairments may inherently engender greater consumer vulnerability, the characteristics of the other residents of the facility should be considered as well (prior to the final placement decision) in order to lessen the opportunity for sexual violence.

I appreciate and acknowledge the ongoing efforts of our area staff members in the successful implementation of our Zero Tolerance Initiative. If you have specific questions or require additional information concerning any of our Zero Tolerance activities, please feel free to contact Tom Rice at (850) 414-7649.