



Robert Schonhorn

Employees of the Karl D. Warner Center say whole crates of toothpaste, deodorant, linen, appliances and other supplies disappear

through theft from the institution. A state investigator says, only half-joking, that motel-style towels belonging to the institution mop up at carwashes all over Staten Island.

Rosenthal, the agency spokesman, declined to estimate the value of goods lost to theft. Security guards are responsible for personal safety as well as property at the institution, which has 1,200 employees.

In August 1980, an agency employee was arrested by police from the 122nd Precinct on charges of stealing Colgate toothpaste and Johnson's baby powder worth \$304, including the value of the handcart belonging to United Cerebral Palsy, with which he tried to trundle the goods away in.

While employees reportedly are responsible for some theft, Bob Young, the Warner Center chief of security, adds that strangers "are walking in and out of here like they own the frigging thing, and they got hundreds of doors to get out of, and all of them got keys."

Agency employees and administrators question the commitment of L&M Security to the facility. Theresa Rafferty, former director of the Warner Center, said she had recommended the use of free-lance guards as a cheaper and equally effective alternative to the security firm.

Medicaid reimburses L&M Security at a rate 51 percent higher than the cost of salaries for the guards, a margin intended to allow for administrative overhead.

But Young, the security chief, said he was hired as a private operator by United Cerebral Palsy, and L&M subsequently added him to its payroll. He said he went on to interview, recommend and train 17 guards, solicited through newspaper ads and word of mouth, while L&M supplied the remaining two men in the force.

The guards receive the federal minimum wage of \$3.35 an hour, while Medicaid reimburses \$5.05 per hour, Young said. The job does not pay fringe benefits. L&M Security bonds the guards, who are unarmed, and equips them with simple uniforms.

Schonhorn said Young gave an exaggerated account of his duties and that an officer of L&M Security did the actual hiring of guards for the Warner Center. He said he had "forgotten" the officer's name, and he failed to respond to a subsequent request for the name.

United Cerebral Palsy apparently owes \$264,421 to L&M Security for 1980, according to Al Vandelloo, associate auditor of medical facilities in the Office for Mental Retardation. But Vandelloo said the dollar figure, while labeled as security services, was not explicitly attributed to L&M Security in the agency's annual report, so it was "impossible" to be sure it represented the subcontract.

(Third article in a six-part series.)

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