

**Cassie Cordell Trueblood, et al., v. Washington State
Department of Social and Health Services, et al.
Case No. C14-1178 MJP**

Workforce Development Annual Report

October 10, 2023

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Introduction

This report is responsive to the requirement that the Department of Social and Health Services submit an annual report each year by December 5 to describe progress in meeting specific expectations concerning workforce development activities pursuant to the Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement (hereafter “Settlement Agreement”). This report details how the Workforce Development Program is contributing to the goals of compliance with the Court’s orders and providing support for the behavioral health workforce. This is the fourth annual report.

Background

All criminal defendants have the constitutional right to assist in their own defense. If a court believes a mental disability may prevent a defendant from assisting in their own defense, the court puts the criminal case on hold while an evaluation is completed to determine the defendant’s competency. After an evaluation the court may determine the defendant competent to stand trial, resulting in continuation of the criminal proceeding. If the court determines the defendant is not competent to stand trial, the court may order the defendant to receive mental health treatment to restore competency.

In April 2015, a federal court found that the Department of Social and Health Services was taking too long to provide these competency evaluation and restoration services in *Cassie Cordell Trueblood et. al. vs. The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services et. al.*

As a result of the permanent injunction entered in this case, the state is required to provide court-ordered in-jail competency evaluations within 14 days and inpatient competency evaluation and restoration services within seven days of receipt of a court order. The *Trueblood* injunction applies to people who are detained in city and county jails awaiting competency evaluation or restoration services. Many of the programs created as a result of *Trueblood* also target people who have previously received competency evaluation and restoration services and are released and at risk for re-arrest or re-institutionalization.

Implementing programs that train first responders and the forensic workforce in recognizing and responding to mental health challenges increases the likelihood that people will receive necessary services and treatment timely. The goal of providing timely services and treatment is to divert people experiencing mental illness from the criminal court system.

On Dec. 11, 2018, the Court approved a comprehensive Contempt Settlement Agreement, which was designed to move the state closer to compliance with the court injunction. It included a plan for phasing in programs and services. In each phase, the state has focused its efforts within specifically identified and agreed-upon geographic regions. The Settlement Agreement included three phases of two years each and can be expanded to include additional phases.

Phases run parallel to the legislative biennia, beginning with the 2019-2021 biennium. As of fall 2023, the Settlement Agreement is in Phase 3:

- Phase 1: July 1, 2019-June 30, 2021. Pierce County, Southwest, and Spokane County regions.
- Phase 2: July 1, 2021-June 30, 2023. Phase 1 regions continue and add King County region.
- Phase 3: July 1, 2023-June 30, 2025. Phase 1 and 2 regions continue and add Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap Counties (the Salish region), and Mason, and Thurston Counties (the Thurston/Mason region).

Final Contempt Settlement Agreement Requirements for Workforce Development

Workforce development (WFD) involves initiatives that educate and train people to create, sustain and retain a viable workforce that meets the needs of current and future business (e.g., service) needs. The DSHS Office of Forensic Mental Health Services implements and oversees a forensic mental health services workforce development program to address workforce needs to successfully implement the initiatives within the Settlement Agreement. In addition to providing relevant training for its own staff, DSHS also provides training to jail staff, the courts, attorneys, and other involved partners.

The Settlement Agreement requires DSHS to employ workforce development specialists who focus on workforce development activities in the following areas as specified on pages 33-35 of the Settlement Agreement:

2. Workforce Development; Degree and Certification Programs

a. The State will seek funding to hire, or contract with, workforce development specialists. The positions will be assigned to specific workforce functional areas to include:

- (1) Community, including crisis response, homeless, in-home, residential, and clinic-based services*
- (2) Inpatient, including residential treatment facilities, private hospitals, and state hospitals*
- (3) Law enforcement and corrections, including jails and prisons*

- b. *Workforce development specialists may conduct or manage the following duties:*
- (1) *Participate in workforce development workgroups with stakeholders such as state hospitals, community healthcare organizations, law enforcement, and jails*
 - (2) *Conduct training needs surveys/gaps analysis*
 - (3) *Assist in the development of a master training plan(s)*
 - (4) *Develop and coordinate training including standardized training manuals and guidelines*
 - (5) *Collaborate with other community-based, organizational workforce development staff*
 - (6) *Conduct training program(s) evaluations; and*
 - (7) *Other duties as assigned at the sole and exclusive discretion of the State.*
- c. *The functions and duties outlined in this subsection may be implemented with direct hiring, contracting, or any combination thereof.*
- d. *The workforce development specialists may collaborate with other workforce development efforts (for example, the workforce development efforts of the Economic Services Administration), as appropriate.*
- e. *The State will produce a report annually describing the activities of the workforce development specialists outlined in this subsection and making recommendations about the specific workforce development steps necessary to ensure success of this Agreement. The State will distribute this report to key and interested legislators. This report will also be distributed to the Executive Committee, and that Committee shall consider whether to adopt those recommendations for possible inclusion in future Phases of the Agreement. The annual schedule for this report shall be set to align with the Phased approach of this Agreement, and to allow for consideration of the Executive Committee's recommendations in the established state budget process.*
- f. *The State will assess the need and target areas for training programs, certification programs, and possible degree programs. The State may collaborate with colleges, including community and technical colleges, and universities to accomplish this task,*

but shall also have discretion to accomplish this task through other means. This assessment shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements:

- (1) *Existing training, certifications, and degree programs in Washington for relevant professions; for example, nursing, psychiatry, psychology, counseling, law enforcement, or other professions determined at the discretion of the State.*
 - (2) *Programs for relevant professions in other states.*
 - (3) *Statewide staffing needs for all programs covered by this Agreement for a period of the subsequent ten years.*
- g. Upon completion of the assessment in § III.E.2.f. above, the State shall produce a report regarding that assessment that may be shared with appropriate committees of the Legislature. The report will include:*
- (1) *High, medium, and low-cost recommendations, and*
 - (2) *Long, medium, and short-term recommendations for future action regarding training and certification programs.*
- h. While the State shall pursue the elements outlined this subsection in good faith, the State is not required to establish new degree or certification programs pursuant to this Agreement.*
- i. In addition to the requirements outlined in § III.E.2.a-h. above, the State will make all reasonable efforts to fill the positions required to timely implement all Phases of this Agreement, as outlined in § IV.A. Reasonable efforts may include the use of incentives.¹*

This fourth annual workforce development report will describe progress from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, in meeting these requirements and discuss strategies for continued progress over the coming year. The requirements listed above serve as a framework for progressing systematically through DSHS' workforce development program to date. A section follows on each workforce development duty that discusses program activities in each task area. After discussion of each task area, the report includes recommendations regarding specific workforce development steps needed that, if implemented, could help ensure success of the Settlement Agreement.

¹ Document 599-1. In *Cassie Cordell Trueblood, et al., v. DSHS, et al., No. C14-1178 MJP. Attachment A – Amended Comprehensive Settlement Agreement. As submitted with Dkt. 599, Amended Joint Motion for Preliminary Approval of Settlement Agreement. October 25, 2018. Filed October 25, 2018, Page 34 of 54.*

2a. Hire Workforce Development Specialists

The department is required to seek funding to hire workforce development specialists. Specialists are assigned to the following workforce functional areas: community, inpatient, and/or law enforcement. In 2019, funding was allocated for positions dedicated to workforce development activities and DSHS hired four full-time equivalent workforce development specialists assigned to provide workforce development in the functional areas mentioned above and jail technical assistance (JTA). Some overlap exists between the training and technical assistance offered to jails through the JTA program and the forensic workforce support provided through the WFD program. An example of this overlap is training events hosted by JTA developed with diverse audiences in mind in which there is a broad representation of stakeholders. These trainings serve to better educate and inform the forensic workforce as well as to provide technical assistance to jails.

Preliminary Plans for Hiring in Fiscal Year 2024

During fiscal year 2024, the team will continue advancing the efforts described in this report. A staff vacancy is anticipated in the coming year and will be expediently filled to ensure continuity and continued success.

2b. (1) Participation in Workgroups

To support workforce needs in the field of forensic behavioral health, the workforce development team participates in both internal and external workgroups. These workgroups address several critical topics impacting the development and/or retention of the workforce. The workforce development team participates in the workgroups listed below:

- ✓ The King County Competency Continuum Workgroup
This workgroup includes a diverse group of stakeholders in King County who work with *Trueblood* class members. This workgroup includes representatives from service provider organizations, the Seattle Police Department, jails, diversion programs, attorneys, judges, Tribes, the Downtown Emergency Services Center, and others. Through participation in this workgroup, DSHS can learn more about King County's specific workforce development needs regarding forensic mental health and find ways to be of assistance.
- ✓ The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
The Workforce Board's Behavioral Health Workforce group conducted an assessment of Washington's behavioral health workforce to address shortages in behavioral health professions in the state. The team is actively participating in meetings relevant to the forensic mental health workforce.
- ✓ Trauma-informed Care Workgroup
This group is working toward the implementation of a trauma-informed philosophy of care

within two forensic admission wards in Western State Hospital. This pilot project will inform future projects to enhance trauma-informed care throughout the remaining BHA wards and facilities. The workgroup is composed of seven subcommittees, one of which is workforce development. The OFMHS workforce development team leads this subcommittee, which is responsible for developing a master list of trainings, a schedule and methodology for training deployment, and audit tools, in support of the trauma-informed approach implementation. Related to this effort, DSHS partnered with the Health Care Authority on a joint venture to develop a series of online training modules regarding the effective application of trauma-informed approaches in working with patients experiencing mental health conditions who are involved in the criminal court system. This work stems from a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. Through this award, five online training modules were produced under contract and are now available to DSHS staff, all other state employees, and any interested community partners. These [trainings](#) were also posted to the DSHS website early in fiscal year 2023.

✓ The Telehealth Governance Committee

The Telehealth Governance Committee is a workgroup tasked with developing and expanding DSHS telehealth capabilities as well as supporting existing infrastructure used by DSHS. The expansion and strengthening of telehealth for applications such as healthcare appointments and forensic assessments provide an alternative method to in-person interaction. This often brings efficiencies pertaining to patient wait times, staff travel, service provider availability and scheduling challenges. Through a leadership role within this workgroup, WFD staff support these efforts.

Preliminary Plans for Participation in Workgroups for Fiscal Year 2024

During fiscal year 2024 the team will continue to build relationships with groups and organizations which employ the behavioral health workforce and those which have an impact on workforce recruitment and retention. The workforce development team will also continue to seek opportunities for participation in additional relevant workgroups as they are identified and continue outreach to external stakeholders to engage in developing increased insight into the forensic mental health workforce needs in the varied communities throughout Washington. Recently staff joined the DSHS Employer of Choice workgroup and will participate in workgroup activities for fiscal year 2024.

2b. (2) Conduct Training Needs Survey/Gap Analysis

As noted in previous annual reports, the workforce development team collaborated with Groundswell Services, Inc. (“Groundswell”) to compile information and facilitate resource connections between Groundswell and key stakeholders within the state’s forensic system to enable the Groundswell team to study and report on Washington’s forensic workforce. The March 2020

Groundswell report identified several training-related gaps for the forensic workforce in Washington state. The report noted that among candidates eligible for certain disciplines and bachelor's-level positions, a lack of familiarity with mental illness and with criminal court-involved individuals may leave them wary of working in the forensic system. Groundswell also noted that across almost all disciplines (other than forensic psychologists), many candidates for positions in hospitals, residential treatment facilities for competency restoration, and community programs have little exposure or training involving forensic populations. Thus, many trainees are not prepared to work effectively with a forensic population. They often have a limited understanding of the forensic system, the laws that influence treatment and disposition, the clinical conditions common to forensic settings, and the more stringent boundaries typically necessary in forensic settings.

Building on some of the concepts identified in their 2020 gap analysis, such as increasing understanding of the forensic system, workforce development staff led a fiscal year 2023 survey project, which resulted in a contract with Groundswell Services, Inc. to better understand the perspectives of judges and attorneys in order to identify challenges and potential new strategies for reducing wait times for forensic services. The survey was sent to over 3,000 attorneys (prosecution and defense) throughout Washington. It was also sent out to Washington judges through the Administrative Office of the Courts. Groundswell then worked with staff to arrange focus groups with 50 legal system partners to delve into the questions regarding challenges in Washington's competency system from their point of view. Groundswell is compiling the data and research into a final report. The report will be added as an attachment to the next workforce development annual report and staff will review Groundswell's findings and any recommendations resulting from the focus groups.

Additionally, during fiscal year 2023, workforce development staff conducted a training gap assessment pertaining to trauma-informed care as part of the trauma-informed-care pilot at Western State Hospital (previously mentioned in this report). As the lead for the Workforce Development Subcommittee for this pilot, WFD staff examined the curriculum of existing training and compared it with trauma-informed approach core competencies and principles identified by the subcommittee. Areas of deficit were identified, and a plan was initiated to address them.

Preliminary Plans for Conducting Training Needs Survey/Gaps Analysis for Fiscal Year 2024

For fiscal year 2024, the workforce development specialists will continue to work toward addressing identified training gaps from the 2020 Groundswell analysis, the fiscal year 2021 Forensic Workforce Report, and the 2023 Groundswell report regarding information from legal system partners. Workforce development staff will also assemble a workgroup to study the recommendations from the 2023 Groundswell report and initiate plans to address them.

2b. (3) Develop a Training Plan

A substantive accomplishment during fiscal year 2021 was the creation of a master training plan. This master training plan details the career pathways within forensic mental health and the training needed for the success of those career pathways. The plan also provides a conceptual outline of how the DSHS workforce development training efforts fit into a broader set of training systems that are already in place and are operated by multiple system partners. The master training plan describes strategies for how DSHS, and its workforce development team can fit into this complex system and strategically add value to the development of a skilled and robust forensic mental health workforce.

Preliminary Plans for Developing a Training Plan for Fiscal Year 2024

During fiscal year 2024, workforce development staff will continue to implement strategies from the training plan. This will include the continued provision of New Employee Orientation for OFMHS staff and contributing to the monthly JTA training events. Additionally, during fiscal year 2024 workforce development staff will continue to run the curriculum review committee to ensure standardization and quality of OFMHS trainings. The team will also continue to address training requests and questions sent to the training request mailbox.

2b. (4) Develop and Coordinate Training, Standardized Manuals, and Guidelines

A course catalog has been developed, which outlines available training topics, including a brief summary of the topic, training objectives, and details about the training format (e.g., in-person, self-directed, or webinar). To provide exemplary training, the team maintains a master instructor contact list for external subject matter experts. This list acts as a resource for professional consultation, peer review, and to solicit instructors when needed.

Additionally, two guidebooks have been created for the workforce and are available on the OFMHS website. The first is [Best Practices for Behavioral Health Services in Jail Settings](#). This guidebook includes best practice guidance on several topics relevant to people with mental illness who are involved or may become involved in the criminal court system. In addition to feedback and requests from webinar participants, the guidebook has served as a source for monthly jail technical assistance webinar trainings and will continue to serve as a foundational source for future trainings in the upcoming year.

A second guidebook was developed, titled [The Intersection of Behavioral Health and the Law](#). This guidebook was created through a collaborative effort between DSHS and HCA. It serves as a workforce training resource that addresses the history, rules, laws, services, and practices pertaining to the forensic mental health setting. The guidebook was used as a foundational source for the online training series, [Overview of Washington's Adult Forensic Mental Health System](#). This foundational training focuses on the strategic goal of addressing the widespread need for "forensic literacy" that is noted by Groundswell and others.

The five-module online training series covers:

1. An overview of the *Trueblood* lawsuit
2. Competency, and competency evaluation
3. Competency restoration
4. Diversion; and
5. Continuity of care

Each of these online training modules is 30 minutes or less. They provide learners with a foundational understanding of our state's forensic mental health system, with a particular emphasis on competency to stand trial and factors related to the *Trueblood* lawsuit and Settlement Agreement. In fiscal year 2022, this series was piloted with staff at the King County Jail. In fiscal year 2023, workforce development staff incorporated feedback from this pilot and published the modules on the DSHS website making the training available to service providers, educational partners, legal system partners, jail staff, and any other partners in the implementation of Settlement Agreement endeavors. The training series also became available to all state employees through the state's Learning Center. In fiscal year 2023, staff worked to create a certificate for people who complete the online training series.

Also, during fiscal year 2023, workforce development staff continued to coordinate with HCA's Outpatient Competency Restoration Program (OCRP) staff to provide training on the Breaking Barriers program to contracted providers. The Breaking Barriers CORE² curriculum instructor and patient workbooks have been reviewed by a workgroup that consisted of residential treatment facilities and state hospital staff who implement the Breaking Barriers program. This standardized training is provided to staff who facilitate any aspect of the Breaking Barriers program to patients who are ordered into competency restoration. DSHS headquarters master instructors were trained on April 21, 2020, which includes workforce development staff.

Other training projects workforce development staff undertook in fiscal year 2023 were the development of a forensic data system training, and a telehealth user training. The online training for the forensic data system was designed for use by DSHS forensic staff such as navigators, evaluators, and admissions coordinators. The training assists users in understanding the functionality of the data system and how to use it given their unique roles. After development and review, this training was uploaded to the state's Learning Center, making it available to DSHS staff. A SharePoint site was also created to house the training module in addition to release notes, a forensic data system manual, and

² C.O.R.E. is a social skills training component within the Breaking Barriers treatment curriculum designed to aid client's restoration to competency. The acronym refers to: (C)ourtroom knowledge and understanding; (O)ptimal symptom management; (R)elaxation and coping skills; and (E)ffective communication with attorneys and other court staff.

documentation to assist system users.

The second training, the telehealth user training, is designed to provide guidance for external healthcare providers, attorneys, and other stakeholders that join forensic evaluations and assessments. The training is currently under development, with a script and storyboard having been created. A companion piece of work to the telehealth training was to make necessary updates to the OFMHS Forensic Evaluation Videoconferencing Guidebook. Workforce development staff served in a lead role as part of the workgroup to update this manual, incorporating new processes, staff guidance, and hardware and software changes.

In addition to these trainings, as the lead for the workforce development subcommittee, workforce development staff collaborated with the trauma-informed-care WFD sub-committee members to create resources for staff and supervisors in support of the trauma-informed-care pilot previously mentioned in this report. Workforce development staff also continue to provide the OFMHS New Employee Orientation training in support of new staff. During this reporting period about 70 employees were trained. This effort assists in the retention of the behavioral health workforce by providing staff with foundational information at the beginning of their employment.

Lastly, DSHS offers monthly webinars to support law enforcement and corrections staff, and to provide opportunities for information sharing, discussion, and education. This group is one of three workforce functional areas assigned to workforce development staff as required by the Settlement Agreement. Community and in-patient behavioral health service providers are the other two workforce functional areas. The monthly webinars are provided as part of the jail technical assistance program. Workforce development staff contribute to these learning events which have recently garnered participation from a diverse group of stakeholders including law enforcement and corrections staff and spanning the workforce functional areas of community and inpatient services. This audience includes representatives from jail leadership, mental health professionals, nurses, behavioral health navigators, certified peer counselors, legal system partners, diversion specialists, reentry specialists, case managers, transition specialists, designated crisis responders, therapists, community mental health, law enforcement, and educational partners. Some of the topics designed for this broad audience in fiscal year 2023 include:

- Forensic Evaluations via Telehealth: Making it Easier for Jails
- Developmental Disabilities Administration: Who they are and what they do
- An Overview of the Washington State Health Care Authority
- Promoting Staff Resiliency in a Jail Setting
- Clark County Sheriff's Office Reentry Program; Creating and Supporting Community

Connections

- Peer Support Specialists Panel

Preliminary Plans for Developing Trainings, Manuals, and Guidelines, for Fiscal Year 2024

Preliminary plans for fiscal year 2024 involve staff continuing to build on the five-module training series [Washington's Adult Forensic Mental Health System](#) which provides a foundational understanding of our state's forensic mental health system. The workforce development team anticipates the expansion to include modules describing not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) and civil commitment. Workforce development staff will also continue to support various stakeholders by addressing training needs as they are identified and continuing to add beneficial resources and links to the DSHS website relevant to community providers, inpatient providers, law enforcement and corrections, and other interested parties.

2b. (5) Collaborate with Community-based Organizational Workforce Development Staff

Collaboration with community-based organizational workforce development staff is ongoing. Initial efforts included outreach to some county behavioral health staff as well as Washington Workforce Development Councils and communication and collaboration with HCA workforce development staff.

DSHS workforce development staff have connected with King County workforce staff with the Department of Community and Human Services and maintain connections with relevant BHA workforce development partners including those at the Special Commitment Center and Western State Hospital.

In fiscal year 2023, staff overhauled the DSHS workforce development website allowing for easier methods of contact, more in-depth and clear information, and an interface that is more aesthetically pleasing and user-friendly. Previously, information and resources were more challenging to locate.

Preliminary Community-based Workforce Development Staff Collaboration Plans for fiscal year 2024

Preliminary plans for fiscal year 2024 include ongoing relationship building and collaboration between DSHS workforce development staff and community-based organizations via targeted outreach and participation in activities relevant to community workforce development staff. The team plans outreach to statewide community-based organizational workforce development staff to ensure an accurate and comprehensive contact list in preparation for targeted workforce surveys.

2b. (6) Evaluate Training Programs

During fiscal year 2020, workforce development staff began conducting evaluations of its new employee orientation training for OFMHS staff. These training evaluations continue to be conducted.

During fiscal year 2022, staff worked to improve the evaluation of trainings provided as part of jail technical assistance. An online training feedback survey remains available and survey results are analyzed by workforce development staff to continuously improve JTA trainings.

Workforce development also supports the OFMHS Internship Program, which trains interns for independent psychological practice. Applicants considered for internship positions are from APA-accredited clinical or counseling psychology programs. OFMHS currently has four allocations for predoctoral forensic psychology interns and three allocations for post-doctoral trainees. As part of workforce development, an OFMHS training specialist conducts weekly group supervision for the predoctoral interns and provides supervision of the interns' collaborative program evaluation project. At the end of the training year, interns submit a written project summary and deliver a presentation to the training committee and other interested stakeholders regarding their findings. This year's project used data collected by jail technical assistance staff to evaluate the status of mental health services in Washington jails in relation to performance standards defined by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care. There is interest in continuing and expanding this project with next year's cohort of interns, with the additional participation of post-doctoral trainees.

Related to this effort, the training specialist also assists in providing trainings for various target audiences. In April and May 2023, eight hours of training were provided in the etiology and clinical management of personality disorders primarily for the staff of the NGRI programs. This training was also open to interns and other clinical staff, consisting of two three-hour sessions and a two-hour session. OFMHS staff also delivered two three-hour trainings on clinical supervision for staff who supervise the interns and post-doctoral trainees in August.

This program supports the recruitment and retention of forensic evaluators through these activities. Many of the interns and post-docs participating in the program accept positions in OFMHS as forensic evaluators immediately following their training. Others who go to post-docs elsewhere, often return to work in Washington as forensic evaluators and supervisors. Even for those who do not return here, the program continues to build a network of highly qualified professionals with mutual interests in the field. This contributes to the ongoing recruitment of competitive intern and post-doc applicants. This network also provides opportunities for collaboration in various professional development activities, including conference presentations and consultation regarding standards of service delivery.

Preliminary Training Program Evaluation Plans for Fiscal Year 2024

Workforce development staff will continue to use the standard training evaluation process described above for trainings developed and delivered by OFMHS staff.

2f. - g. Forensic Workforce Report on Education and Training Recommendations

In (f) - (g) of the Final Contempt Settlement Agreement Requirements section found in the first part of this report, workforce development is required to produce a report which *assesses the need and target areas for training programs, certification programs, and possible degree programs*. Workforce development staff completed the report per the requirement and submitted it in June of 2021. The report was titled, [The Washington State Forensic Mental Health Workforce: Assessing the Need and Target Areas for Training, Certification, and Possible Degree Programs](#).

Recommendations on Specific Workforce Development Steps to Support Trueblood Agreement Success

The DSHS/OFMHS workforce development team continues to serve as an integral component of the Trueblood Settlement Agreement effort. In addition to continuing the efforts described above, further recommendations for future work in support of the Settlement Agreement include the following.

Continue to advance the use of telehealth evaluations. Over the past several years, workforce development staff played a central role in introducing and providing technical assistance for telehealth so that competency to stand trial (CST) evaluations can be completed with people in jail via video teleconferencing. This methodology is clinically appropriate in most cases and creates opportunities for more timely completion of CST evaluations. Prior to 2019, this capacity existed in only three jails. Almost every CST evaluation done within a jail had to be completed in person, with the forensic evaluator traveling to the jail to conduct the interview. However, as a direct result of the leadership and effort of workforce development staff, more than 200 CST evaluations each month are completed in jails via the use of telehealth. This has made a significant contribution to the key OFMHS goal of quickening the pace at which the evaluations are completed. It is recommended that staff continue these efforts for fiscal year 2024.

Further develop and deploy training materials. As noted in the Forensic Workforce Report, there is a widespread lack of forensic mental health information currently embedded into the education and training of virtually all health-care professionals such as nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, master's-level clinicians, bachelor's-level staff, crisis intervention specialists, and community workers. DSHS focused on last year's recommendation by making the Overview of Washington State's Adult Forensic Mental Health System training series widely available and created a mechanism by which to provide a certificate of completion for learners who completed this training. For fiscal year 2024, it is recommended that workforce development staff update the series with Trueblood Phase 3 information and expand the series to include modules addressing civil commitment and NGRI.

Another recommendation from last year in this area was to continue work in disseminating the [career pathway brochures](#) developed by staff in fiscal year 2020. This set of Career Pathway

brochures is designed to provide information about and stimulate interest in career opportunities within the field of forensic mental health. In fiscal year 2023, workforce development staff updated the brochures and published them on the DSHS Workforce Development website.

Other areas to expand in regarding training for fiscal year 2024 are to assess training needs for both external and internal audiences and to review existing training for updates. It is recommended that the Breaking Barriers curriculum be reviewed for a potential online offering for new OCRP staff and a training for the Navigator Case Management System be developed. It is also recommended that the training for telehealth providers be finalized and disseminated.

Continue to develop strategic relationships with partners in the legal system. During fiscal year 2022, workforce development staff created a survey to learn more about the perspectives of prosecutors, defense counsel, and judges regarding the continuing increase in demand for pretrial competency services. A total of 279 people returned completed surveys. Among other things, results from this survey identified opportunities for DSHS to help address important training needs. Some of those include an overview of the substantive elements in the Settlement Agreement, recognizing and working with people who live with mental health conditions, an overview of the civil commitment process, and an overview of diversion programs in the state. Following the recommendation from last year's report, in fiscal year 2023 the survey results were sent to all those who received it, and follow-up focus groups were conducted through a contract with Groundswell Services, Inc. to engage further with survey respondents. Staff will focus next fiscal year on reviewing Groundswell's findings and any recommendations resulting from the focus groups.

Continue cultivating relationships with potential collaborators. It is recommended that staff continue building relationships with potential partners involved in the training, recruitment, retention, and professional development of positions needed for the forensic workforce in Washington. This requires the identification of potential intra- and possibly interstate partners. As mentioned above, fruitful partnerships have been developed via the interviews that were conducted to inform the Forensic Workforce Report. As potential partners are identified, staff plans to engage in focused outreach efforts to further cultivate these valuable partnerships.

Increase awareness of our work and develop networks. It is recommended that the workforce development program continue to work to increase awareness with stakeholders across the state, including service delivery systems such as state hospitals, jails, and community service organizations serving the criminal court system involved population, to raise awareness of potential workers regarding career opportunities in the field of forensic mental health, and to motivate potential workers to pursue these opportunities. In fiscal year 2023, workforce development staff redesigned the DSHS workforce development and jail technical assistance websites to increase awareness among stakeholders. This was also a recommendation from last year's annual report regarding enhancing external-facing websites.

Increase training opportunities and support of jail staff. Monthly virtual training events continued through fiscal year 2023 as part of jail technical assistance. These events have grown to include a wide audience encompassing community behavioral health providers, legal partners, educational partners, peers, and more. It is recommended that this effort continue in support of the law enforcement and corrections functional area of workforce development and through this forum, build connections and information sharing through encouraging diverse attendance.

Enhance engagement and interactivity of online training. Creating effective content and processes for online learning will be crucial to workforce development success. A recommendation from last year was to seek out additional training and IT resources for the DSHS workforce development team to support improvements in the online resources we are striving to provide to the community, inpatient, and law enforcement workforce. In fiscal year 2023, workforce development participated in Articulate training, Learning Center training, and e-Learning community forums. For fiscal year 2024, it is recommended that workforce development staff continue to access available training and learning opportunities.

Update training materials and guidebooks. The workforce development team has created various trainings, manuals, and guidelines in the course of their work. With the move into Phase 3 in fiscal year 2024 and with changes in processes and new legislation, it is important to review those products and work towards updating the material. For this coming year, it is recommended that staff assess their inventory and plan to initiate necessary changes. Specifically, the guidebooks, *Best Practices for Behavioral Health Services in Jail Settings* and *The Intersection of Behavioral Health and the Law* should be reviewed as well as the course catalog and training plan mentioned earlier in this report.

Advance the DSHS effort to become an Employer of Choice. During fiscal year 2022, workforce development staff conducted an internal survey of all Office of Forensic Mental Health Services staff, titled OFMHS Workplace Culture Survey. Workforce development staff analyzed the survey results, noted key themes, and presented those findings to the OFMHS leadership team for follow-up actions. It is recommended that workforce development staff continue this type of work as it supports staff retention and the broader goal to make DSHS an employer of choice. Other efforts to become an employer of choice include reviewing and redesigning the OFMHS New Employee Orientation, standardizing the OFMHS hiring and onboarding process, and developing the new OFMHS peer and mentorship programs. In fiscal year 2023, staff continued to improve the New Employee Orientation for OFMHS, expanding and updating information and adding more efficient processes for enrollment. Staff began development of surveys for new employees provided at the one month, and six-month mark to help identify any areas requiring more support or training for new staff. It is recommended that this project continue for fiscal year 2024. In fiscal year 2023, workforce development staff created a peer program. Supervisors assign new OFMHS employees a peer to help them navigate their first six months of employment through friendly assistance with routine questions about their

new workplace. To further develop and support employees, staff also began work on a mentorship program. This program will align interested staff with a mentor who can help support them in their professional development. It is recommended that work toward implementing this program continue in fiscal year 2024.

Summary

This report described the work completed by the DSHS workforce development team during fiscal year 2023, and it provided recommendations and preliminary plans for fiscal year 2024. The workforce development program supports the development of Washington state's forensic mental health workforce, and the successful implementation of the Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement.