



State of Washington

STATEWIDE REENTRY COUNCIL

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Dec. 1, 2020

Dear Gov. Inslee and Washington State Legislators:

Please accept this letter as part of our biennial report on the activities and recommendations of the Washington Statewide Reentry Council. As you are fully aware, the entire state continues to face extraordinary challenges due to COVID-19. People who are reentering our communities following incarceration face all of the same challenges posed by a global pandemic, and face additional, substantial barriers to accessing housing, healthcare, and employment. Investing in successful reentry strengthens individuals, families, and communities, and improves public safety by reducing recidivism.

The Statewide Reentry Council (council) unanimously agreed to center race equity in all of its practices and recommendations. This report documents some of the ongoing racial disparities in the Washington criminal legal system. The current national focus on race equity and policing reform must include addressing racial disparities at all levels of the criminal legal system and not ignore mass incarceration. This report includes the council's race equity statement and action plan¹ and the council urges all entities working on reentry to reflect on these issues and take bold and decisive action.

Since its inception, the council has held a strong focus on legislation and statewide executive policies. COVID-19 created the necessity to engage more directly with people and communities in dire need of reentry support. We held three listening and resource sharing sessions for service providers, state agency representatives and directly impacted people and their family members since March and plan to schedule more. We also used the council budget to provide community organizations with vital funding for housing, transportation and communication for people who recently exited Washington correctional facilities. The details of these grants are outlined in the report.²

The council and a large and diverse group of stakeholders have identified and pursued various areas to improve reentry, which is included in this report's appendix. Our strategic planning sessions also identified the following reentry related focus areas: racial equity, housing, centering community, education, employment, and improving communication between and among the

¹ See Appendix D

² See Appendix B

council, government agencies, community organizations and currently and formerly incarcerated people and their families.

For the sake of providing a narrow focus and specific recommendations for this report, we are limiting the scope of its body and we urge the Governor's office, Legislature, and state agencies to work with the council and other key stakeholders to:

1. Address the ongoing housing crisis facing people with arrest and conviction records, including rental housing discrimination.
2. Boost and center community involvement in, and ownership of, reentry, increase training for and access to technology and provide comprehensive/holistic individualized reentry planning and services for everyone who will or may be leaving our prisons and jails.
3. Reduce the prison and jail populations, which is particularly urgent due to COVID-19.

Thank you for your commitment to improving reentry in Washington.

Sincerely,



Dan Satterberg, co-chair
King County Prosecuting Attorney



Tarra Simmons, co-chair
Executive Director, Civil Survival Project

Biennial Report of the Statewide Reentry Council



Pursuant to RCW 380.040(4)

December 1, 2020

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Lisa Brown, Director

WASHINGTON STATEWIDE
REENTRY COUNCIL

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Executive Summary

The Washington State Legislature created the Statewide Reentry Council in 2016 to improve public safety and outcomes for people reentering the community from incarceration ([43.380 RCW](#)). This report satisfies the legislative requirement under [RCW 43.380.050\(4\)](#) to "submit to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature a ... report of its activities and recommendations by December 1st of its first year of operation, and every two years thereafter." This report outlines early lessons learned during COVID-19, summarizes the ongoing racial disparities in Washington's criminal legal system, provides recommendations for improving reentry and summarizes council activities and progress.

Key Findings

- Systemic racism and racial disparities persist in Washington's criminal legal system, negatively impacting Black, Indigenous, People of Color individuals, families and communities and perpetuating intergenerational trauma and poverty.
- Access to safe and affordable housing remains a primary barrier to successful reentry.
- COVID-19 is especially hazardous and potentially deadly for incarcerated people and people exiting prisons and jails without proper resources.
- Successful reentry requires individualized planning that includes safe and affordable housing, strong community supports and access to essential technology, including training on using the technology.

Summary of Recommendations

The council identified dozens of reentry-related areas that need improvement. However, the council decided to focus this report on a narrow set of impactful recommendations listed below. Please see the appendices for a more expansive list of council, agency and stakeholder focus areas, updates and recommendations.

End Housing Discrimination and Homelessness Following Reentry

- Pass the Housing Justice Act.
- Expand and fully fund the Department of Corrections (DOC) Housing Voucher Program.
- Use vacant public land to provide reentry housing.

Center Community and Family, Expand Technology and Provide Comprehensive, Individualized Reentry Plans

- Fund community organizations and any associated DOC and county staffing needs to provide reentry services inside prisons and jails and following release.
- Expand the use of technology to increase access to families, community-led groups and programs, DOC programs, education and vocational training.
- Provide comprehensive individualized reentry plans beginning upon system entry.

Address Systemic Racial Disparities and COVID-19 Risks by Reducing Prison and Jail Populations

- COVID-19 is especially hazardous for incarcerated people and people exiting incarceration without sufficient resources and support. Prison and jail populations can and must be safely reduced.
- Support DOC agency request legislation to increase "good time."
- Support DOC agency request legislation to expand the Graduated Reentry Program.
- Support the efforts and recommendations of the Criminal Sentencing Task Force (CSTF) and the Sentencing Guidelines Commission that would reduce prison and jail populations.

Recommendations

End housing Discrimination and Homelessness Following Reentry

Access to safe and affordable housing remains a primary barrier to successful reentry following incarceration. The council emphasized the importance of addressing this crisis in previous reports to the legislature, during legislative testimony, work sessions, and legislative and community events. The council will continue to do so until substantial progress has been made.

Approximately 8% of individuals released from DOC custody, or nearly one in 10, report releasing directly into homelessness. This percentage does not include county jail releases into homelessness, federal prison releases into homelessness, people releasing into unstable or unsafe housing situations or people who become houseless after release. In a competitive housing market with a shortage of safe and affordable units, people with criminal records face the same barriers and the actual discrimination based on the record itself. Following incarceration, it is incredibly difficult, if not impossible, for most people to quickly attain the necessary rental history, references, deposit, credit score, etc., to rent an apartment successfully.

Even when the stars align to meet all of the standard tenancy requirements, people are often denied because they cannot pass the background check based on their arrest or conviction records alone. People with sex-related convictions or convictions involving violence face the most barriers and discrimination when attempting to attain housing. Perhaps surprisingly, given the recent societal interest in forgiveness for "non-violent drug offenses," people with drug distribution convictions are also often categorically banned from many rental housing providers' properties. People with sex, violence, and drug distribution convictions often end up indefinitely stuck in transitional group-living situations, become forced to live in buildings only with other people in the same boat or end up experiencing homelessness. None of those scenarios is conducive to successful reentry, particularly when taken out of necessity and desperation rather than choice.

Access to safe and stable housing for people directly impacted by incarceration is paramount to healthy individuals, families, communities, successful reentry and societal reintegration. Without safe and stable housing, it is nearly impossible to maintain health care, including mental health and substance use disorder treatment, or to maintain employment or participate in vocational training or higher education. Separate reports could be written on each of these topics as they relate to reentry. However, pursuing any of them is nearly impossible without housing. Safe and stable housing is the foundation for successful reentry upon which nearly all else is built. While data exists on how many people in Washington release immediately into homelessness from DOC custody, little data is available on long-term housing issues for people with records. This topic warrants further study. In all likelihood, Washington would mirror the Prison Policy Initiative's troubling results in its report on homelessness among formerly incarcerated people.¹

Next Steps

Pass the "Housing Justice Act"

Prospective tenants, property owners, and property management companies currently have no direction whatsoever from the state on when, if ever, housing discrimination based on a prior criminal arrest or conviction is permissible. People of Color, particularly Black, Indigenous, and Latinx people, are disparately impacted by criminal records and, therefore, disparately impacted by rental housing discrimination based on

¹ Prison Policy Institute, "Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among formerly incarcerated people," <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html>

criminal records. Black (African American) people, particularly black men, are by far the most targeted and negatively impacted by Washington's criminal legal system.² The Housing Justice Act³ would help address rental housing discrimination against prospective tenants with arrest and conviction records that meet all other qualified tenant criteria. As previously noted, safe and stable housing is fundamental to successful reentry and community reintegration. Denying people access to rental housing due to past convictions is detrimental to successful reentry and public safety and perpetuates racism.

Expand Funding and Eligibility for the DOC Housing Voucher Program

The DOC Housing Voucher Program contracts with housing providers across the state to temporarily fund the housing expenses for eligible people releasing from DOC custody. People who are not releasing to community custody supervision are currently ineligible. The council recommends expanding eligibility for all people leaving DOC custody, creating a similar county jails program, and fully funding each. The council advises against strict, short time limits on these programs. Currently, the DOC program is limited to a maximum of three months due to funding limitations. It is less costly, in many ways, to invest in reentry than to set people up for failure.

Use Vacant Public Land for Reentry Housing

Public lands and vacant buildings are frequently used to house vulnerable populations. Quixote Village is a great example of this.⁴ [Quixote Village](http://www.quixotecommunities.org/olympia-quixote-village.html) resulted from organizing and advocacy by people living in a homeless encampment in Olympia who partnered with a nonprofit organization and eventually received local, state, and federal government funding to build tiny homes on public land in Olympia. Thurston County leased the property to the nonprofit, Panza, at a rate of \$1 per year for 41 years. [Weld Seattle](https://www.weldseattle.org/housing) has also used creative types of housing for its program participants, many of whom have been impacted by the criminal legal system.⁵

Use DOC Facilities to Build Transportable Housing

The council recommends using public, vacant land and buildings specifically to house people who have reentered or are otherwise impacted by the criminal legal system. Further, the council recommends exploring the possibility of constructing transportable housing units inside existing DOC factories. DOC has expressed initial interest and support of this idea, which currently remains in its early stages. This recommendation came directly from an incarcerated person whom executive director, Christopher Poulos, met inside a DOC facility and stayed in contact following their release. Most people in DOC custody that can work are required to work when a facility job is available. Using existing DOC factories and tools for incarcerated people to build something that they will personally be able to use or that other formerly incarcerated people will be able to use adds value to their work and centers and shifts agency/ownership over the reentry process directly to incarcerated people.

Center Community Organizations, Expand Access to Technology and Provide Comprehensive, Individualized Reentry Planning

The council strongly believes that individuals, families and communities play essential roles in facilitating successful reentry. While DOC and county jails have a fundamental role in promoting successful reentry, it is not prudent or realistic to expect them to be entirely responsible for reentry matters. It is time to further resource capable community organizations to provide reentry services. These services and supports include

² See Figure 1

³ Bill Information, SB 6490, Addressing Housing Concerns for Individuals Impacted by the Criminal Justice System, Washington State Legislature, <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=6490&Year=2019&Initiative=false>

⁴ Quixote Communities, Quixote Village. <http://www.quixotecommunities.org/olympia-quixote-village.html>

⁵ Weld Seattle Website, <https://www.weldseattle.org/housing>

but are not limited to housing, transportation, cell phones, access to treatment for addiction and other mental health issues, mentorship (including credible messengers⁶), family reunification and faith-based support. This recommendation also includes supporting community organizations working inside DOC and county jail facilities, much of which has now ceased due to COVID-19.

The council also strongly supports the full implementation of Gov. Inslee's [Executive Order 16-05](#) "Building Safe and Strong Communities through Successful Reentry," which directed DOC and Juvenile Rehabilitation to expand technology infrastructure to support successful reentry safely. In 2017, [agency updates on their progress related to Executive Order 16-05 were published](#), but more work remains. This technology infrastructure should include internet access and virtual platforms/resources for incarcerated people to provide more access to services, education, and community programs, using Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc. When asked for input on this, a council member sent the following related to education specifically:

"Providing basic education to justice-involved individuals is the minimum standard for providing opportunities to the lowest levels of employment. Is that who we are? Five years ago, the standard for sustainable living wage employment was a one-year credential or more. Today, the minimum standard is a two-year post-secondary education to pursue sustainable employment to earn above-poverty wages. It is our intent to work to provide justice-involved individuals equal access to quality high-demand, high-wage education that leads to sustainable living-wage employment. This effort enhances prison culture, community safety, healthy families and communities. It is a pathway to closing one prison at a time through reducing recidivism. Given the disproportionate incarceration rate and higher sentencing structures of Black, Brown and Indigenous People, it is imperative we look to provide at a minimum a post-secondary education. Employers are looking for both vocation-skilled and academically prepared workers.

Prison education programs operate without secured internet, without access to on-campus support such as library access, regular access to computer support, collaborative learning communities and/or research-rich technology. An increasing level of classroom support is moving to online-only availability. Educational textbooks and materials are quickly becoming historical relics. Open Educational Resources are becoming standard in educational environments in the community. COVID -19 has forced all educational systems, K-12 through universities across our nation, to rely on technology, equipment, software and programming. It is critical prison education move forward on post-secondary education and secured internet, to mitigate barriers and challenges for justice-involved individuals to navigate successful reentry transition."

-Council Member Pat Seibert-Love

The council urges that technological expansion be made swiftly and used for formal education programs, family and other social interactions, access to community resources and programs and whatever else may be safe and conducive to successful reentry.

One note of caution is that the council is wary of the possibility of technology replacing all or much in-person contact on a long-term basis. While the council urges the full use of vital technological advancements, they must not be used as an excuse to reduce in-person family visits and other in-person events, even if doing so may produce cost savings or a perceived improvement in security.

⁶ The Atlantic, "Reporting for Work Where You Once Reported for Probation," <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/12/credible-messengers-reform-criminal-justice-system/603514/>

Next Steps

Create and Implement Comprehensive Individualized Reentry Plans for All People Leaving DOC Custody

The council continues to urge the full implementation of comprehensive individualized reentry planning for all people who will be leaving DOC custody. This planning should begin upon system entry and adapt the incarceration itself as much as possible to be conducive to successful reentry based on individual needs. Some progress has been made since the council's 2018 report, which contained the same recommendation. DOC is now using a three-phase reentry planning process for people participating in the Graduated Reentry Program. DOC intends to begin implementing this new and improved reentry planning process for the general population.

The council further recommends that family, community members and organizations where people will be releasing be included in the planning process and, when possible, participate with the person being released to develop and implement the plans. For this to be effective, the person being released must take ownership of the plan and be centered in its creation and implementation every step of the way. Individualized incarceration and reentry plans may cover areas included but not limited to physical health, mental health and substance use, family, faith, employment, and education.

Support and Fund Community Organizations Providing Reentry Services

Centering and supporting community organizations to provide reentry related services is vital. While government entities play a role in promoting successful reentry, welcoming community members and organizations from the areas where people will be released from correctional facilities and supporting their work in the community is essential to promoting successful societal reintegration. When community and government truly work together to support reentry planning and programs, recidivism is reduced.⁷

The council recommends that the legislature provide funding to the Department of Commerce to award grants to community organizations that can provide reentry related services. During 2020, the council and Department of Commerce administered reentry grants to five separate organizations across the state. Details of these grants are provided in the summary of council activities and progress and Appendix B. These grants successfully provided for the immediate transitional needs of people exiting prisons and jails and must be continued and expanded.

Additional Vital Reentry Changes Needed:

- Remove the legislative requirement that DOC releases people to the county of their first conviction. This law is often non-conducive to successful reentry. People must be released to the area of the state where they are most likely to succeed, and individualized reentry planning would determine where this is and whether any victim or other concerns must be considered.
- Revise the DOC policy that volunteers may not have contact with people they worked with in DOC custody after their release. This policy is counterproductive to successful reentry, and changing it has been an ongoing recommendation from the council since 2017. This policy can be safely amended as long as it is done so thoughtfully. People need healthy relationships developed with community members while incarcerated the most upon their release.

⁷ Washington State Institute for Public Policy, "The Effectiveness of Reentry Programs for Incarcerated Persons: Findings for the Washington Statewide Reentry Council,"

http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1667/Wsipp_The-Effectiveness-of-Reentry-Programs-for-Incarcerated-Persons-Findings-for-the-Washington-Statewide-Reentry-Council_Report.pdf

- Create a Reentry Bill of Rights for People who will be exiting DOC custody. This proposal overlaps to a degree with individualized reentry planning and would provide a basic checklist of things that all people being released should have in place before their release.
- Make Social Security cards available to people before release from DOC custody and direct counselors to proactively ensure people have proper identification before release. Some of the people who are most likely to have major challenges with reentering successfully are also unable or uncomfortable with vocally advocating for their reentry needs to be met by staff before release. This must be considered and addressed, and IDs are just one example of this larger issue.

Address Systemic Racial Disparities and COVID-19 Risks by Reducing Prison Populations

When people are properly prepared for reentry and provided with the necessary tools to succeed upon release, prison and jail populations can be dramatically and safely reduced. The US must cease leading the world in the number of people incarcerated in jails, prisons or otherwise kept under penal control.⁸ By substantially reducing jail and prison populations, Washington can combat systemic racism and lower the extraordinary risks associated with COVID-19 for incarcerated people and staff.

The following section outlines racial disparities in Washington's criminal legal system, provides an overview of reentry in the COVID-19 crisis and the council's related work and provides specific recommendations on lowering the DOC population. The recommendations are merely vital first steps and not intended to be exhaustive.

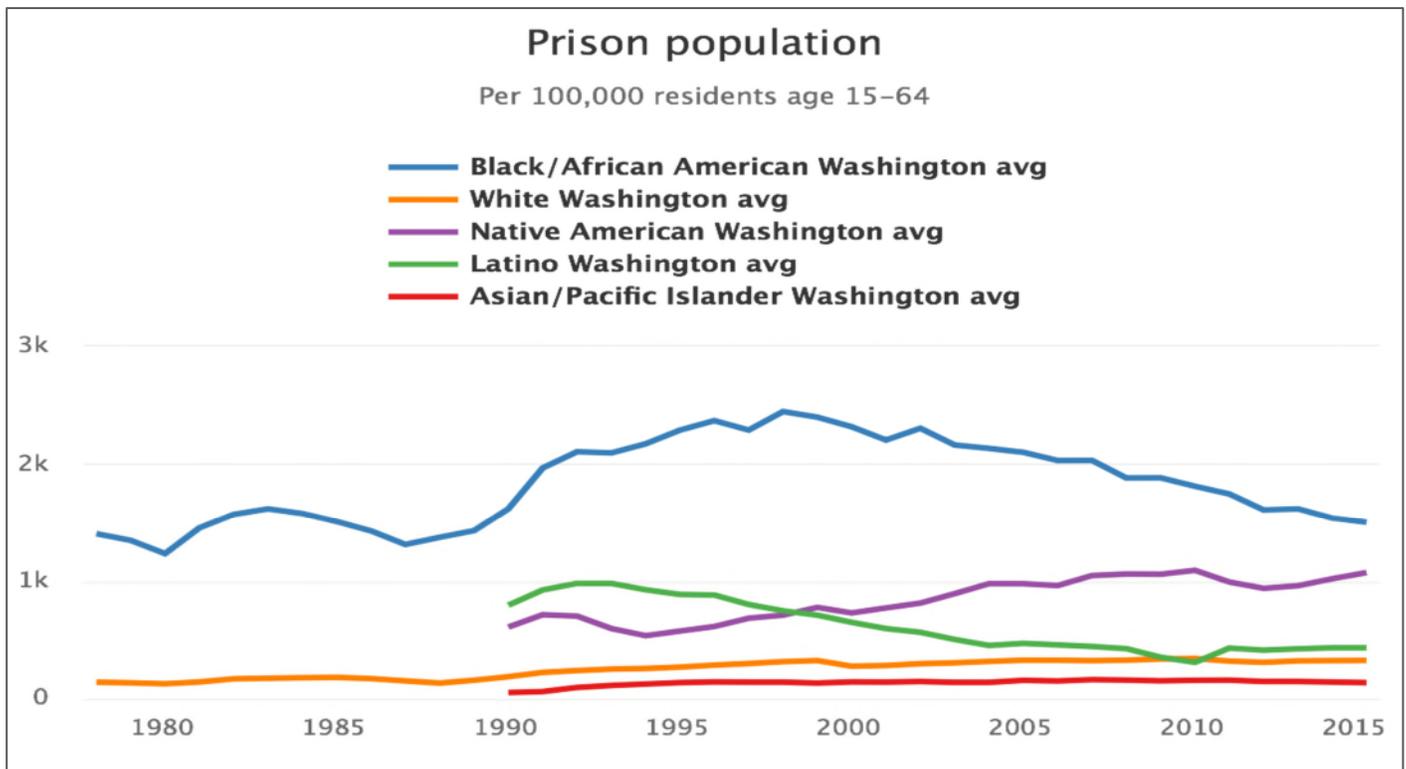
Racial Disparities in the Adult System

African Americans are disparately impacted by Washington's criminal legal system and disproportionately represented in state prisons. Eighteen percent of people in the Department of Corrections (DOC) custody identify as Black or African American but compose only 4% of the overall state population.⁹ Native Americans and Alaskan Natives make up 6% of the prison population and only 2% of the total state population. Figure 1 shows the ongoing racial disparities in the Washington prison population. For example, between 1995 and 2000, approximately 2,500 Black/African American people were incarcerated per 100,000 Black/African American residents versus well under 1,000 per 100,000 white people.

⁸ The Equal Justice Initiative, "The United States Still Has Highest Incarceration Rate in the World," <https://eji.org/news/united-states-still-has-highest-incarceration-rate-world/>

⁹ Washington State Department of Corrections, "Agency Fact Card, June 2020," <https://www.doc.wa.gov/docs/publications/reports/100-QA002.pdf>

Figure 1: Washington State Prison Population by Race



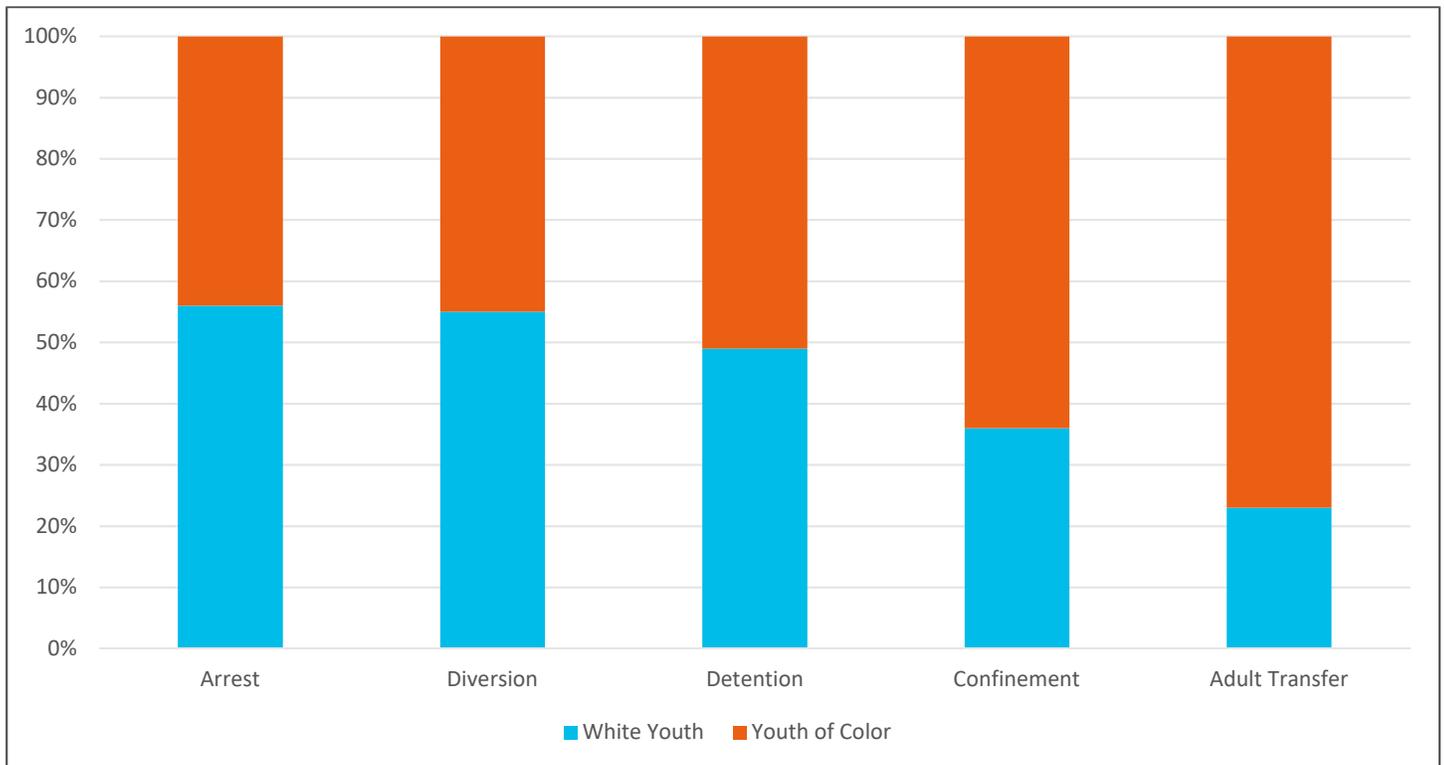
Source: Vera Institute of Justice – Incarceration Trends

Racial Disparities in the Youth System

Harmful racial disparities in youth incarceration are also glaring. At each stage of the adjudication system, youth of color experience worsening outcomes. For example, 56% of youth arrested are white, but only 23% of the youths ultimately transferred to adult DOC facilities are white, while only 44% of arrests are of Youth of Color,¹⁰ yet 77% of youth ultimately transferred to adult DOC facilities are Youth of Color. The recently formed Department of Children, Youth, and Families is working hard to continue addressing these disparities. A summary of their reentry related work is provided in Appendix F.

¹⁰ "Youth of Color" refers to all youth not identifying as White/Caucasian. Source: "OJJDP FY 2019 Title II Racial and Ethnic Disparities Action Plan," <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/WA-PCJJ-Racial-and-Ethnic-Disparities-Plan.pdf>

Figure 2: Disproportionality Worsens for Youth of Color through the System



Source: Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families, OJJDP FY 2019 Title II Racial and Ethnic Disparities Action Plan, <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/WA-PCJJ-Racial-and-Ethnic-Disparities-Plan.pdf>

Council staff requested member feedback regarding racial disparities in Washington's criminal legal system and decided to publish the council member response below in its entirety.

"The council's decision to center race equity in all our work should be embraced by the legislature and public administrators. We urge all reentry-related agencies to commit to work together with, take guidance from, be part of, and hold our agencies and ourselves accountable to community-based movements in communities most affected by structural racialization and structurally racialized systems. If we are to make progress toward equity and justice, we need to work in solidarity and take guidance from Black, Indigenous, and People/Communities of Color who are most harmed by systemic oppression. The council has committed to providing platforms for the impacted to hear their voices and to convey those voices to the executive, legislative and judicial arm of our state governance structure. Policies geared towards breaking down silos and barriers that still keep our returning citizens outside the cycle of belonging must be uprooted. Our commitment to providing voices for the voiceless and those who have lived experience of oppression should be backed with opportunities for employment, housing and educational advancement. We strongly believe that only by working together, taking guidance from and partnering with communities most affected can we affect real change and be accountable to our communities."

-Council Member Francis Adewale

The current widespread national focus¹¹ on promoting racial justice and equity must include, and center on, solutions to racially disparate policing practices and mass incarceration. Racial justice and equity efforts that avoid these topics ignore one of the most glaring and ongoing systemic injustices in the history of the United

¹¹ The Christian Science Monitor, "Police Reforms Surge after Months of Racial Justice Protests," <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Justice/2020/1002/Police-reforms-surge-after-months-of-racial-justice-protests>

States: the over-policing, targeting, and disparate incarceration of Black, Indigenous and other People of Color.¹²

COVID-19 and Reentry

COVID-19 has made the already daunting process of successful reentry even more difficult. Access to programs normally provided inside prisons, particularly those delivered by community members and organizations, has largely been halted entirely. As a result, incarcerated people are not receiving the services and connections necessary to succeed upon release. Access to housing, employment, physical health care, and mental health/substance use disorder treatment upon release has been negatively impacted. Access to social engagement with family and friends has also been negatively impacted, and people are now reentering a society that has, in many ways, "gone virtual," often without being provided with the basic technology skills to adapt successfully. Being incarcerated and even experiencing reentry can also be traumatic, terrifying, and potentially deadly during a pandemic.¹³ The following section details the council's COVID-19 response and summarizes early lessons learned.

Council COVID-19 Response

The council wrote Gov. Inslee and DOC Secretary Sinclair offering the council's assistance and then took the following actions:

- Organized and hosted statewide resource-sharing virtual meetings addressing the COVID-19 crisis
- Connected individuals, family members, government entities and community organizations seeking reentry guidance with appropriate and available resources
- Held regular meetings with DOC leadership regarding their COVID-19 response
- Participated in community meetings related to the COVID-19 crisis inside Washington's prisons and jails
- Provided direct funding to support reentry services to five community organizations across the state

COVID-19 Related Grants and DADS Grant

The council allocated \$80,000 to meet the immediate needs of reentering people during the COVID-19 crisis. The legislature allocated \$280,000 to support [Divine Alternatives for Dads Services \(DADS\)](#).

Appendix B includes grantee reports that include the number of people provided with assistance, what assistance was provided and a budget breakdown. Some grantees included additional valuable information in their reports as well.

Early Reentry Related Lessons and Reaffirmations from COVID-19:

- Prison and jail populations can be thoughtfully reduced without a detriment to public safety. The overwhelming majority of returns to custody related to COVID-19 releases were technical violations rather than new, serious crimes. By dedicating more resources to prepare people for release better and providing necessary services following release, Washington could also dramatically reduce technical violations.
- Community members, families and community organizations are fundamental to promoting successful reentry. The report details this in the recommendations, and the statewide COVID-19 related resource sharing and listening sessions the council held reaffirm it.
- Holistic reentry planning and the full funding and implementation of the plans is essential, particularly during a pandemic.

¹² The Sentencing Project, "Racial Disparity," <https://www.sentencingproject.org/issues/racial-disparity/>

¹³ Columbia Legal Services, COVID-19 Resource and Update Page, https://columbialegal.org/policy_reforms/covid-19/. See also: Reentry Council Letter to Governor Inslee (Appendix G)

- Technology must be further used to increase access to family, DOC programs, education, and all other programs/activities normally brought into facilities by contractors and volunteers. With physical access to facilities currently incredibly limited or stopped entirely, this is even more vital.
- Technology can also increase accessibility for stakeholders to engage with state government. For example, recent virtual council meetings and stakeholder listening sessions have had more participation, generally, and more geographically diverse participation, specifically, than any other council meetings have ever had.
- In collaboration with community members and organizations, staff, or independently, incarcerated people are well-positioned to teach and help one another prepare for reentry and should be properly supported to do so. The Black Prisoners' Caucus' Taking Education and Creating History (TEACH)¹⁴ and the Reentry and Community Health (REACH)¹⁵ at the Monroe Correctional Complex are great examples of this. This work can continue even in the current crisis.

Next Steps

Support DOC Agency Request Legislation to Increase "Earned Time"

In response to the "Truth in Sentencing Movement"¹⁶ during the move towards mass incarceration in the US, many states restricted or eliminated parole or reduced "earned time," which refers to an amount of the formal sentence that does not need to be served so long as a person who is incarcerated does not violate certain rules or laws. Washington was no exception, and these changes contributed to the growth in the state prison population. Given the lessons learned about mass incarceration and the current pandemic, which presents a massive budget shortfall combined with the danger to incarcerated people and staff, DOC is now poised to introduce agency request legislation that would increase good time allowances and lower the state prison population.

DOC Proposal for 50% Earned Time

Under current law, certain people can earn up to 33% off their prison sentence for good behavior. This proposal would change the allowable amount of earned time on a sentence from a maximum of 33% to a maximum of 50% if the offense were not classified as a violent, sex, or crime against a person offense, to include drug offenses. Based on a report by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, incarcerated people who were awarded the increased earned time percentage had a 3.5% lower felony recidivism rate after three years than incarcerated individuals who stayed in prison longer.

Earned Time on Weapon Enhancements

Currently, if an incarcerated person has a weapon enhancement on one or more counts, the enhancement(s) are served consecutive to one another and consecutive to the underlying sentence. The current law does not allow incarcerated people to receive any earned time for the weapon enhancement portion of an incarcerated person's sentence but does allow earned time on the underlying sentence.

This proposal would allow earned time on an incarcerated person's entire sentence, not just a portion of the sentence. The rate of time earned for the enhancement portion would be consistent with the rate allowed for the underlying sentence.

The average daily population (ADP) savings estimate assumes a prospective and retroactive application of the proposed sentencing changes for any incarcerated person with a sentence that includes a firearm or other

¹⁴ The Black Prisoners' Caucus, "TEACH," <http://www.blackprisonerscaucus.org/teach/>

¹⁵ Washington State Department of Corrections, "Changes from Within," <https://www.doc.wa.gov/news/2018/08242018.htm>

¹⁶ United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, "Special Report: Truth in Sentencing in State Prisons," <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/tssp.pdf>

deadly weapon enhancement. It would require any person currently incarcerated, as of the effective date of this legislative change, to have their estimated release date recalculated to reflect the increased percent of earned time allowed. This proposal was included in the Sentencing Guidelines Commission Recommendations as part of the 2019 [Review of the Sentencing Reform Act](#).

This proposal makes the following amendments to [RCW.9.94A.729](#):

- Remove the restriction that weapon enhancements are not eligible for earned time. This change would be applied retrospectively to any applicable sentences.
- Change the maximum amount of earned time on a sentence from 33% to 50% if the offense was not classified as a violent, sex, or crime against a person offense. This change would be applied retroactively and prospectively for anyone who did not commit a crime against a person.

Note of Concern:

The council supports efforts to increase good time. However, the council is concerned that the proposal outlined above may:

- Increase racial disparities in the system
- Exclude many people for crimes/convictions that often have far lower recidivism rates than some crimes and convictions included in the proposal
- Reduce the overall impact of the legislation

Support DOC Agency Request Legislation to Expand the Graduated Reentry Program

The DOC is requesting legislative changes that would reduce the prison population by creating an option for incarcerated people with approved housing plans, regardless of offense or sentence type, to serve the final 150 days of their sentences in partial confinement on electronic home monitoring under the jurisdiction of DOC.

Additionally, individuals serving sentences for property and other offenses would serve little to no time in a prison facility. This proposal would allow certain incarcerated individuals to serve all but 120 days of their sentence in partial confinement on electronic home monitoring. This proposal would not apply to people currently serving sentences for violent crimes, sex crimes and other crimes against persons.

This proposal would not apply to people subject to deportation, civil commitment or interstate compact. This proposal would make the following amendments to [RCW 9.94A.733](#):

- Eliminates the 12-month minimum confinement in a state correctional facility requirement
- Removes the 6-month maximum on participation for the graduated reentry program

Support the Recommendations of the Criminal Sentencing Task Force and the Sentencing Guidelines Commission

The Criminal Sentencing Task Force (CSTF) is currently working on a proposal of dozens of recommendations related to sentencing and reentry. Councilmember Lydia Flora Barlow serves as a co-chair of the CSTF, and many of the reentry specific recommendations were written and submitted by council executive director Christopher Poulos. The CSTF is still working through its internal process, and the current list of potential recommendations is available on their [website](#).¹⁷ The council will support all CSTF recommendations that align with the council's principles and urges the governor and legislature to do the same.

¹⁷ For readers unable to access the web, CSTF materials may be available upon request by contacting: Ruckelshaus Center

Reentry Council Activity and Progress

The council focused its attention on three main areas: legislative action, executive branch action and community engagement. Below is a summary of each focus area.

Legislative Action and Progress

During the last three legislative sessions and interims, the council:

- Testified for legislation, presented during work sessions, held council "Hill Days," legislative luncheons, and other events to share the council's priorities, and met with legislators, staff, and community/coalition members, resulting in the passage of 19 Statewide Reentry Council priority bills
- Led or participated in coalitions including but not limited to addressing rental housing discrimination against people with records and restoring voting rights for people on community supervision
- Actively worked on the legislature's Criminal Sentencing Task Force and provided recommendations
- Regularly advised legislators and the governor's office on legislation both proactively and upon request
- Formed and administered a council legislative subcommittee, which meets at a minimum of once weekly during legislative sessions
- Formulated legislative priorities in advance of each legislative session and adapted/amended throughout the session as necessary

Executive Branch Action and Progress

The council has found that much of the work related to improving reentry can come through executive branch policy change, agency culture change, and breaking down silos and increasing collaboration among agencies. To advance this work, the council:

- Held monthly meetings with DOC leadership on reentry related matters and the COVID-19 crisis
- Recommended the formation of, and participated in, the Interagency Reentry Working Group to the governor's office, which was led by Results Washington and included representation from all key state agencies related to reentry
- State IDs are now available for most people in DOC custody upon release
- Recommended that multiple-stage, individualized reentry plans be developed by DOC, which they now have been, are currently being utilized for people in the Graduated Reentry program, and will be expanded to include the general population within DOC custody
- Assisted with planning and presented at the Governor's Results Washington events related to reentry
- Regularly consulted with and advised the governor's staff directly on matters related to reentry
- Recommended ongoing action and accountability related to Gov. Inslee's [Executive Order 16-05](#) related to reentry
- Created a Corporate Outreach Plan, in collaboration with Commerce and DOC, under Executive Order 16-05
- Recommended and pursued prison reforms including but not limited to implementing fundamental changes used in Oregon, California, Connecticut, North Dakota and Norway
- Worked with the [Amend organization](#), DOC, and other key stakeholders to further implementation of transforming correctional culture to be more conducive to successful reentry

901 5th Avenue, Suite 2900
Seattle WA 98164-2040
Phone: (206) 428-3021
Email: sentencing.taskforce.ruckelshaus@wsu.edu

Prison and Jail Action and Involvement

Before COVID-19, council members and staff regularly visited prisons and jails across the state. Activities included but were not limited to:

- Attended, listened, and spoke at numerous events, including but not limited to events sponsored by or involving: Asian Pacific Islanders celebration, Black Prisoners' Caucus, White Bison 12-step group, White Bison Sweat Ceremony, Powwow, Therapeutic Community, Trade-Related Apprenticeship Course, Correctional Industries, Spokane Jail, Clark County Jail, American Legion, Concerned Lifers Organization, REACH at Twin Rivers Unit and multiple visits to Green Hill School and other visits/interactions with Juvenile Rehabilitation involved youth, staff, and service providers
- Held Statewide Reentry Council meetings inside the Washington State Reformatory at Monroe, Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women, and the Green Hill School

Community Involvement

The council held meetings, built relationships and hosted and attended events locally and nationally with organizations including but not limited to those listed below:

- Arnold Ventures
- Asian Pacific Islanders
- Black Prisoners' Caucus
- Civil Survival Project
- Cut 50
- Dave's Killer Bread
- Defy Ventures
- Faith Action Network
- Farestart
- Freedom Project
- Homeboy Industries
- I Did the Time
- Indeed.com
- Just Leadership USA
- King County Credible Messengers
- Koch Industries
- MOD Pizza
- Northwest Justice Project
- Pioneer Human Services
- Public Defender Association
- Seattle Central Community College
- Seattle University School of Law
- Spokane Bar Association
- The Brennan Center for Justice
- The Sentencing Project
- University of Washington - Seattle
- University of Washington – Tacoma
- Washington Community Action Network
- Washington Low Income Housing Alliance
- Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Weld / 1426 Reentry Resource Center
- What's Next Washington
- White Bison 12-Step Group
- Workforce Foundation

The council's executive director, Christopher Poulos, is a member of the following entities:

- Criminal Sentencing Task Force, Reentry Working Group
- Governor's Social Equity in Cannabis Task Force
- Reentry Link Advisory Board
- Underground Ministries Advisory Board
- Faces and Voices of Recovery National Criminal Justice Advisory Board
- DOC and Office of Corrections Ombuds Work Release Working Group

Conclusion

Washington currently faces unprecedented challenges to successful reentry due to COVID-19. By working together, centering community and impacted people, and making strong commitments and investments, Washington can collectively improve reentry outcomes during this pandemic and beyond. This report's recommendations will result in little to no deep, fundamental transformation without the strong support and partnership of the executive branch, legislature, and local government and community stakeholders.

Investing in successful reentry is not without cost, but not investing in successful reentry will result in much higher costs. Investing in successful reentry and full community reintegration strengthens individuals, families, communities and has the power to interrupt generational poverty and address trauma so that people and communities can thrive.

Appendices

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Appendix A: Additional Agency and Stakeholder Updates and Recommendations

The council invited people in its network, including government entities, community organizations, and currently and formerly incarcerated people for input on this report and received the following feedback and recommendations. Some of the responses received were also incorporated into the body of the report. This input is provided with minimal edits.

1. Focus on reducing the impact of the sex offense registry on registrants. Research does not support the registry success claims, which shows that it leads to higher risks associated with re-offense, including the inability to create community, find safe housing and find work. This higher risk is amplified in Washington for level 2 and 3 registrants who experience stigmatization in their neighborhoods upon release and every time they move.

If there is concern that someone is not yet healthy enough to live in the community, focus on developing evidence-based care by using multiple static and dynamic evaluation models (instead of the current single static model) and Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) based therapy coupled with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), and begin this care as soon as they enter the prison system, to be continued upon release. These changes would further reduce recidivism for a group with the second-lowest recidivism rate in Washington (after murder).

2. Focus on diversion – both pre-booking diversion on the front end and diversion within the system in drug courts and other therapeutic alternatives.
3. Input related to the council's focus areas of the report:
 - a. Racial equity:
 - i. Use data to define successful reentry
 - ii. Commit outright to increase successful reentries among Black and African American community members
 - iii. Require training on allyship, covering privilege and the experience of the Black and African American community
 - b. Housing:
 - i. Create an action plan to address the unique requirements of formerly incarcerated people who become homeless
 1. King County's new Regional Homelessness Authority five-year plan does not yet prioritize reentry
 2. "Required to address at least youth/young adults, families, veterans, single adults, seniors, and those with acute behavioral challenges"
<https://regionalhomelesssystem.org/>
 - ii. Extend the eviction moratorium beyond [Safe Start phase 4](#) until Washington makes a full economic recovery
4. Focus on housing and return to having programs like Pioneer Human Services running the Work Release program in Washington.
5. Every formerly incarcerated individual wants to feel successful, competent, confident and connected, and every professional who serves formerly incarcerated individuals wants to feel successful, competent, confident and connected. It seems that everyone wants the same thing.

It is possible to create a system where everyone feels successful, but it will take a culture shift and a willingness to change our behaviors before trying to change others' behaviors.

Focus on the impact of prison education on recidivism. What if prison education was designed to create "aha, heart and soul," non-religious experiences for students? Currently, the focus is on completing courses, passing tests and acquiring work skills. Reducing recidivism is more than adopting a program; it is about changing hearts and souls, about helping individuals become different persons.

Example: The Future Now project at Bronx Community College was created for young people leaving Rikers Island jail. Many project graduates have gone on to college; some have come back to work in the Future Now system. It has received awards and consistently has higher than average success rates for passing the GED and completing community college after three years. A consultant from Columbia University's Center for Institutional and Social Change is currently writing a report about FN's success.

6. Two Recommendations on Housing and Employment:

- a. The first recommendation relates to one of the key priority areas noted – Housing. Is there a similar law to "Ban the Box" for employment in place that relates to housing applications? Are landlords in Washington allowed to ask rental applicants about their criminal records as part of the application process? If so, could there be a "Ban the Box" effort in the area of housing that would be a statewide requirement? The "Ban the Box" movement gained greater legitimacy and momentum when several large and visible employers got behind this initiative. Would it be possible to identify certain property management firms in Washington that might support a "Ban the Box" for housing applications and work in partnership with state and local government agencies to change laws and practices?
- b. Second recommendation: Develop stakeholder partnerships to pursue new and novel strategies for expanding employment opportunities for individuals being released from incarceration

7. Jail, Pretrial, Prison, and Supervision Reforms

- a. Jail and pretrial reforms
 - i. Increase jail oversight by state and county health departments
 - ii. Dramatically reduce the arrest and prosecution of people for misdemeanor offenses
 - iii. End court fees and fines
 - iv. Eliminate the use of Assault 3 as a charging option for people who were in a behavioral health crisis at the time of the assault
 - v. End the suspension of drivers' licenses for unpaid tickets and other unpaid costs
 - vi. Implement major pretrial detention reform that, among other things, ensures people are not incarcerated because they are too poor to buy their freedom through bail
- b. Prison and Community Supervision Reforms
 - i. Move funding from misdemeanor probation services to community-based social supports
 - ii. End the practice of sending people under DOC supervision back to total confinement for violations that do not present public safety concerns
 - iii. Impose only individualized, risk-specific restrictions on people convicted of sex offenses, including restrictions around access to the internet, which is a basic need for people reentering the community.
 - iv. Increase the amount of money provided through the housing voucher program to reflect the increased costs of living

- v. Establish pre-release agreements with SSA so that people releasing from prisons and jails can receive SSI immediately upon release rather than waiting to apply for these crucial public benefits until months into their reentry.
- vi. Increase the DOC's earned time accrual rate to 33% for all people, regardless of the underlying crime.
- vii. Establish a process for post-conviction review that would allow people who have served more than 15 years in prison to be assessed for potential release by an independent community review board comprised of community stakeholders, including prosecution and defense bar, crime survivors, and people from communities most impacted by mass incarceration
- viii. Pass Emerging Adults legislation that directs resentencing for people convicted when under the age of 25
- ix. Eliminate the use of juvenile points in adult sentencing calculations
- x. Pass legislation banning prolonged use of solitary confinement

8. Birth Certificates, Social Security cards, and Earned Release Date (ERD) Recommendations

- a. Birth certificates and Social Security cards – prioritize getting these documents to people before their release.
 - i. The current theory holds that six months before release, a classification counselor will help a releasing individual secure these documents. The reality here at Twin Rivers Unit is that it does not happen – at all. "If it weren't for the REACH Resources Team to provide these forms and then assist with completing them, no one I know would have been released with either of these critical documents."
 - ii. We need to prioritize getting these documents – and front load in securing them. Regardless of time structure, they must be acquired and placed in an individual's central file pending release.
- b. Releasing People on their ERD
 - i. Poor alignment between housing approval and the 35-day notifier processes frequently results in people not being released for several months beyond their ERD. This results in annual incarceration expenses in the millions. More importantly, the inability to plan for release on a certain date undermines the integrity of all release plans.
 - 1. There appear to be two ways to improve on this significantly:
 - a. Begin housing voucher applications 90 days before a person's ERD. This will provide classification counselors the additional time necessary to search for suitable housing, which entails completing applications and phone interviews.
 - b. The most commonly noted delay in the release process is CCO housing approval. Because we know CCO's are burdened with large caseloads, it seems sensible to create dedicated positions within the CCO office that deal strictly with housing approvals.
- c. Establish Standardized Volunteer Training
 - i. Staff from organizations that offer rehabilitation and reentry assistance are required to contact the Community Partnership Program (CPP) to schedule volunteer training. However, aspiring volunteers are frequently unable to access training because the CPP office regularly fails to communicate effectively with applicants or cancel the scheduled training.

- ii. These delays go on for months and even years here at MCC, and eventually, most of the potential volunteers simply give up and stop trying.
- d. Increase Access to Resources
 - i. Access to resources before and after release needs to be substantially improved. This can be done in two key ways:
 - 1. By ensuring that volunteer training occurs consistently, community organizations that specialize in providing transitional assistance will be able to plan and deliver resource events within DOC facilities.
 - 2. Centralizing support services will allow meaningful access before and after release. This includes family, friends, and even classification counselors who struggle to maintain their caseloads while working to identify support services for someone being released.
- 9. WPPC coalition will be working on forming in-prison program/volunteer policy recommendations in the future:
 - a. Problem: organizations doing business behind bars state that communication policies between organizations and students are too restrictive, and with the pandemic, the lack of communication is harmful.
 - b. Is it appropriate to make nonprofits pay for staff overtime when they do an event behind bars?
 - c. The red and yellow badge system does not allow small nonprofits to offer wraparound services, which is an evidence-based best practice. It also makes it hard/impossible to hire formerly incarcerated people on supervision into organizations that work behind bars. In some cases, these are people who helped start the organization.
 - d. The inability to communicate with people when they get out also harms an organization's ability to determine their impact with data and DOC does not have a system in place to help track an organization's impact.
 - e. An organization behind bars should have a say in the next communications system and whether participants should get infractions for not showing up for programming.

Appendix B: Reentry Council Legislative Funding and COVID-19 Emergency Funding Grantee Reports



Grant Report: Statewide Reentry Council Housing Supports

Housing consistently remains the number one resource need reported by our community. Not only do we share the struggle to finding available and affordable housing with the general population, our community, people impacted by mass incarceration, face additional barriers systemic in bias and legalized discrimination when it comes to housing. In addition, many in our community also have to manage specific stipulations of where they can live upon release that further exacerbate finding and securing housing.

With these funds, we were able to support people in our community in ways that they had not been able to be supported before: direct funds for housing. It was imperative that we be able to move quickly to get folks experiencing a lack of shelter off the streets and into a secure setting as the pandemic spread through our communities. Our approach to delivery housing support is anchored in our values of community: because we are *in* the community, *from* the community, and directed *by* the community, we are able to offer support *as* a community.

Community-centered support makes a huge difference in outcomes. Because so many people in our community have experienced so much trauma during our incarceration, that we have a greater propensity to see agencies and authorities as complicit to our experience. Because we have been exposed to so much trauma, we also experience a great deal of distrust from resource providers. Many of us have experienced feeling exploited or not seen for our humanity, when we are seen as a “client” or as a piece of data. Because the people providing the housing resources (our Executive Director, Reentry Director, and Reentry CARE Coordinators) are in relationship with our community, and have lived experience with incarceration and reentry, they understand the challenges and triggers. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, housing is the number one need reported by our community.

This funding enabled us to support a total of 12 people who were experiencing a lack of shelter or housing instability and into transitional or permanent housing. Because we are also in the community and have support staff from the community, we were also able to address other system impacts that were compounded without stable housing. Some highlights include two cases where we were able to help individuals move from homelessness to stable, clean and sober transitional houses. Emergency housing funds got them into a hotel and off the streets right away. Then, combined with additional support from our Reentry CARE Coordinators, we were able to help them begin to address the social challenges and get support navigating through the systems that present so many barriers for people in our community. They went from homelessness to having a state id card, employment, groceries and other basic needs, and then we were able to support him getting into transitional housing.

Another individual was about to lose his transitional housing because his voucher was expiring. So we were able to support him moving into permanent housing in an apartment, where the

FREEDOM PROJECT

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(206) 325-5678



move-in costs are often insurmountable. This individual is also getting support from our Reentry team dealing with the emotional challenges of reentry so that he can make a successful transition.

Another person was released in Spokane and because he was incarcerated on a sex offense (and had certain restrictions placed on him upon release), he was having a very hard time finding any kind of housing. With funds from this grant we were able to support him in being able to rent a permanent stable apartment. Three others had lost their employment due to the pandemic response, so we were able to provide emergency rental assistance so they could stay in their homes. As the invoice shows, funds were distributed between emergency housing (through a negotiated reduced rate at a hotel), transitional housing, move-in costs for permanent housing, and rental assistance.

Reentry CARE Coordinators continue to provide direct support to the individuals supported in through this funding in 2 key areas:

- 1. Trauma intervention** support based on peer and community support: We draw upon holistic frameworks and community development models to hold space for healing from this trauma. Trauma-informed approaches are used to root practices in empathy and connection, understanding that residuals of traumatic experiences can show up in any interaction. Empowerment approaches are applied through group support activities like Inside Out Toastmasters, Family Circles, Reentry Circles, and race-based caucusing. These supports are grounded in both the communities most impacted by incarceration and in connections with people who have been through incarceration and reentry themselves.
- 2. Systems navigation** tailored to the individual: Care Coordinators address needs for resources, help people connect to these resources, and navigate through social service systems. Barriers embedded within these systems can often limit access for those impacted by incarceration, which disproportionately affects communities of color as a result. With this understanding of how the system works on an individual, community, and institutional level, we engage in personalized systems navigation based on a holistic framework. This navigation support can include building relationships with providers, supporting people directly impacted find the right person for the resource that is needed, and responding to phone calls, emails, and letters requesting resources for housing, employment, education, transportation, medical/health care, drivers licensing, legal aid, etc.



SUMMARY OF SUPPORT PROVIDED:

Person receiving support	Housing funds received	Services utilized
	\$ 5,039.74	emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, systems navigation, trauma intervention
	\$ 672.10	emergency shelter
	\$ 1,786.87	emergency shelter, transitional housing, systems navigation, trauma intervention
	\$ 1,493.54	transitional housing, systems navigation, trauma intervention
	\$ 1,950.00	transitional housing, permanent housing, systems navigation, trauma intervention
	\$ 1,300.00	transitional housing, systems navigation, trauma intervention
	\$ 805.00	transitional housing, systems navigation, trauma intervention
	\$ 500.00	rental assistance, systems navigation, trauma intervention
	\$ 500.00	rental assistance
	\$ 3,665.91	permanent housing, systems navigation, trauma intervention
	\$ 336.84	rental assistance, systems navigation, trauma intervention
\$ 1,950.00	transitional housing, systems navigation, trauma intervention	
TOTAL DISPERSED	\$ 20,000.00	

Statewide Reentry Council Housing Grant		\$ 20,000.00)		Freedom Project	
Balance:		\$ -)			
Expenditures to Date:		\$ 20,000.00	For:		
4/17/2020	Kent Hometowne Suites	\$ 2,429.90	emergency housing	Debit Card	
4/27/2020	Kent Hometowne Suites	\$ 361.90	emergency housing	Debit Card	
5/4/2020	Kent Hometowne Suites	\$ 361.90	emergency housing	Debit Card	
5/11/2020	Kent Hometowne Suites	\$ (51.70)	emergency housing	Debit Card	
5/18/2020	Kent Hometowne Suites	\$ 64.08	emergency housing	Debit Card	
5/18/2020	Kent Hometowne Suites	\$ 229.24	emergency housing	Debit Card	
5/27/2020	[REDACTED] B-Blessed Housing	\$ 1,100.00	transitional housing	check #1154	June, July
5/27/2020	[REDACTED] B-Blessed Housing	\$ 1,100.00	transitional housing	check #1154	un, July
5/27/2020	[REDACTED] B-Blessed Housing	\$ 1,950.00	transitional housing	check #1154	n, July, Aug
5/27/2020	[REDACTED] B-Blessed Housing	\$ 1,950.00	transitional housing	check #1154	n, July, Aug
5/27/2020	[REDACTED] B-Blessed Housing	\$ 1,300.00	transitional housing	check #1154	ly, Aug
5/24/2020	[REDACTED] B-Blessed Housing	\$ 393.55	transitional housing	check #1155	May
5/24/2020	[REDACTED] B-Blessed Housing	\$ 393.54	transitional housing	check #1155	May
5/8/2020	MLK House	\$ 805.00	transitional housing	cashier's check	
6/2/2020	[REDACTED] rental assistance	\$ 500.00	rental assistance	check #1153	
6/4/2020	[REDACTED] rental assistance	\$ 500.00	rental assistance	check #1152	
6/4/2020	Woodcliffe Apartments	\$ 2,273.00	permanent housing	check #2000	
6/4/2020	Kent Hometowne Suites	\$ 336.84	emergency housing	Debit Card	
6/25/2020	[REDACTED] tal assistance	\$ 3,665.91	permanent housing	check #2007	Spokane (split between SF grant)
6/25/2020	[REDACTED] rental assistance	\$ 336.84	rental assistance	Check #2008	Seattle

Dear Washington Statewide Reentry Council,

We were able to serve a total of 25 individuals. The amount we decided to apply to each was changed from the \$600 (which is our current program fee) to \$500 (current voucher amount). We were able to apply \$1000 each to 13 individuals, and then \$500 each to the remaining 12.

Those chosen to receive this money were based on their voucher expiration dates. 13 of whom still had 2 months left, and most of the remaining 12 had only 1 month left. There were a few individuals that we applied the funds to early on, but in a relatively short period of time they became ineligible for these funds due to non-compliance issues. Therefore we allotted the funds to others more deserving.

As of this writing, of the 25 clients were served with this grant money, 1 has transitioned out successfully, and 24 are still active and compliant in our program. And all but 3 are in financial good standing with us. Obviously the problems of employment still remain and we are working with these clients to assist them in finding more stability.

We are confident that this special grant funding played a key role in each of these individual's ability to continue their participation in our program, which provides them better opportunities to become stable and focus on successfully transitioning back into the community when that time comes.

Please feel free to contact me for any follow up or questions you may have.

Thank you,

Barry Dolan
Director of Operations
House of Mercy
PO Box 4204
Federal Way, WA. 98063
Office: 206-651-7840
Cell: 206-551-7022

Participant - Full Name	Participant - DOC#	Payment Date	Amount Received	Reference Number2	Services provided	Continuity plan
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Inactive - transitioned out on 7/12/20.
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$1,000	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		5/12/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		6/24/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		6/24/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		6/24/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
		6/24/2020	\$500	S20-36501 004	Clean & Sober Housing	Currently active
5% Contract Administration fee			\$1,000			
			\$20,000			



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DATE: 8/20/2021

TO: Community Service and Housing Division | Washington State Department of Commerce
1011 Plum Street SE
PO Box 42525

Olympia, WA 98504-2525

FROM: Revive Center for Returning Citizens

SUBJECT: End of Award Report

ATTACHMENT: Allocation of funds spreadsheet

SUMMARY

Revive Center for Returning Citizens (RCRC) was able to utilize funds for 50 individuals who were released from a Washington State jail or prison with-in the last 12 months. Out of the 50 individuals served; 19 were people of color, 13 were females, 1 identified as LBGTQA and 1 identified as a veteran.

\$14,835.10 was allocated to secure housing for 26 individuals spanning over five different transitional housing options, private landlords or apartment complexes. Another \$4,480.00 was allocated to 18 individuals for work attire to obtain jobs or maintain employment, buy essential hygiene products, clothing, food, and bus passes. Additionally, \$576.45 was distributed to a car payment, phone services, and pay a student loan debt to secure school registration for an individual pursuing school in the fall of 2020.

Lastly, by having the ability to distribute funds to reentry specific individuals, RCRC was able to meet a myriad of needs associated with meeting various milestones in the reentry process. Moreover, our partnership with Revive Counseling Spokane (RCS) assures follow along supports for the majority of individuals served from this grant for the next 3 to 6 months. Anyone that was not able to connect with RCS will be contacted 90 days after distribution of funds to maintain continuity of care and ensure accessibility to further supports as needed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

Traci Hudson/ Grants Committee Chairman
Revive Center for Returning Citizens
2222 N Monroe
Spokane, WA 99205
509-413-2950

August 26, 2020

Reentry Council Grant Funds

The Tacoma Urban League was able to reach out to the Department of Corrections Community Justice Center in Tacoma, Washington and speak with Nannette Borders, who provides resources to reentry clients, to inform her of funds that we had available for reentry clients. We were able to connect to six probation officers who had clients in need of housing, rental assistance, employment needs, and basic essential needs.

Some rental needs, we could not meet due to re-entry clients violating their probationary terms, not following through with required document to secure funds such as a rental agreement or approval of home site by the probation officer. Due to COVID-19, some re-entry clients assigned to a work release facility, were restricted in movement and needed approval to do work search or seek housing options.

We had a total of 12 clients who either reached out to our organization or was referred to us by their probation officer and had been out of incarceration for under 4 months. Although some reentry clients reached out to us in preparation of release or by the probation officer, their release time would fall after the expiration of fund availability.

For the month of June, the Tacoma Urban League supported three individuals with rental assistance funds. Two of the three was able to find housing with Na Na's World Clean and Sober Living, located in Tacoma, Washington- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Our organization was able to provide the deposit and first month's rent for both of them. We also provided a care package such as toothbrush, deodorant, shampoo, razors, shaving gel, socks, towels/rags, body soap, and hand lotion.

We also connected them to employment resources as well and an offer of Lyft transportation if they needed to get to medical appointments, check-in with their probation officer, grocery, or employment interviews. The third individual- [REDACTED] was released and approved to reside with his grandmother in Pierce County however, he had to find permanent housing elsewhere.

He reached out to our organization to seek rental funds for an apartment that he was able to find in Kent, Washington that would rent to him. His rental fees were twice the amount that we allotted for reentry clients seeking funds. I was able to connect him with Catholic Community Services to see if they could provide the rest of the funding and the Tacoma Urban League cover the remaining balance of our allowable funds. Catholic Community Services was able to cover a portion and the Tacoma Urban League allocated funds for the remainder of the balance.

Appendix C: Reentry Council Strategic Planning Session Areas of Interest Document

Statewide Reentry Council

Strategic priorities 2020-2023

The council recognizes that the cycle of recidivism warrants a closer examination of our criminal legal system, correctional systems, and community services in Washington. To do this and improve outcomes for impacted people, the council will develop collaborative and cooperative relationships between the criminal legal system, victims and their families, impacted individuals and their families, and service providers, to improve public safety and outcomes for people reentering the community from incarceration.

Our mission is changing Washington's laws, investments, and attitudes to end mass incarceration, improve well-being and welcome people home.

We strive to apply a race and gender equity lens to every policy we consider.

Our strategic priorities include:

Equity

- Consider race and gender equity training for Statewide Reentry Council members.
- Utilize a race and gender equity toolkit.
- Identify and implement best practices on race and gender equity policy development.
- Identify disproportionate criminal justice outcomes and take intentional action to improve.
- Institutionalize culturally responsive and humane treatment.

"Successful reentry occurs when internal healing and change is met with external opportunity"

-**Christopher Poulos**
Executive Director

Christopher.Poulos@commerce.wa.gov
Phone: 360.725.2852
www.commerce.wa.gov/reentry/

Washington Statewide Reentry Council
PO Box 42525
Olympia, WA 98504-2525



We strengthen communities

Housing

- Address housing discrimination against people with criminal records.
- Expand the Department of Corrections (DOC) housing voucher program.
- Consider landlord incentives.
- Enforce housing discrimination laws and policies.
- Consider utilizing public lands for affordable house for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Community

- Expand community and family involvement in the reentry process.
- Expand access to credible messengers/mentors.
- Implement community operated work release.
- Expand and fund community organization involvement in prison and reentry.
- Reform DOC volunteer policy.

Education

- Increase access to secure, high-speed internet.
- House education students together.
- Reform laws and policies related to access to education.
- Provide tribal college education information.
- Increase access to post-secondary education while incarcerated.

Employment

- Prepare individuals for meaningful employment in living wage jobs while incarcerated
- Identify and engage employment sectors in need of skilled labor.
- Pay living wages to incarcerated employees.

Communication

- Engage public relations firm to build public awareness on the importance and benefit to community of successful reentry.
- Engage traditional and social media to reduce the stigma and discrimination.
- Consider consulting with professional lobbyist.
- Develop organized legislative campaign strategy.
- Develop/update/utilize a comprehensive reentry resource directory.

Appendix D: Council Race Equity Statement and Action Plan



State of Washington

STATEWIDE REENTRY COUNCIL

1011 Plum Street SE - PO Box 42525 - Olympia, Washington 98504-2525 - (360) 725-4000

A CALL TO COMMITMENT AND ACTION

The Washington Statewide Reentry Council acknowledges that our country's legal system has contributed to racism and racial disparities against Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) communities. BIPOC communities are overrepresented in our jails and prisons. The necessity of the council's work proves that the system is not working for a large part of our population. The fact that the COVID-19 relief enacted by Congress expressly excludes people with felony convictions is further proof. We wonder then why the raging diseases of racism and COVID-19 disparately impact BIPOC. To acknowledge these disparities, the council centered race equity in our reentry policy analyses, programs, and execution. Racism, discrimination and intolerance of any kind are unacceptable. This moment calls for sober reflections by all agencies and organizations that work in public and private corrections and reentry services. We need to examine why COVID-19 and violent racism disparately impact BIPOC in our prison and jail systems. The toxic racial disparities that exist across all of our systems, including the legal system, inevitably extend to many reentry policies in our federal and state policy decisions. As the Washington State Supreme Court recently acknowledged, "[o]ur institutions remain affected by the vestiges of slavery: Jim Crow laws that were never dismantled and racist court decisions that were never disavowed."¹

Since the council's establishment, we have always sounded this alarm of racism and racial disparities in our recommendations to the Washington State Legislature, Judicial and Executive branches. This is a task we have committed ourselves to in every way through policy, programs, training and outreach. Our commitment to eradicating racism and its vestiges extends to every aspect of reentry, including but not limited to housing, employment, education, and community-based culturally responsive services. We must dismantle structures that advantage white people at the cost of dehumanizing BIPOC and resist habits and practices that uphold white privilege. We must squarely address barriers that continue to prevent communities of color from accessing meaningful reentry relief. We urge practitioners in our legal systems to examine their ways and desist from policies and actions that amplify harm for communities of color.

¹ Letter from the Washington State Supreme Court: "As judges, we must recognize the role we have played in devaluing black lives."

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/content/publicupload/eclips/2020%2006%2005%20Letter%20from%20state%20Supreme%20Court%20As%20judges,%20we%20must%20recognize%20the%20role%20we%20have%20played%20in%20devaluing%20black%20lives.pdf>

We join others who have raised their voices across our country and worldwide to take active steps to confront racism. To ensure we do more than say words, we, as members of the council:

1. Commit to convene a symposium before the beginning of the upcoming legislative session and every year after that, to make recommendations to the Legislature on steps they can take to combat racism in reentry policies, programs and activities. This symposium would elevate the voice of the council members, racial justice movement leaders and representatives of communities who are most harmed by racism within our intersecting legal systems.
2. Ask members of the public and communities of color, in particular, to hold us accountable in our policy and actions that distract from the primary goal of eradication of racism in reentry policy in our state.
3. Commit to continue our support for culturally appropriate civil legal aid that will help advance the cause of justice and eradicate racism in our state reentry programs and policy.

Racism must have no place in reentry policy, programs and activities in our state. We commit to working with all branches of government to eradicate structural racism in government, the criminal legal system, and in reentry policies. We hope people reentering after incarceration and communities across Washington will join the council in providing other ways we can eradicate racism.

This statement and plan has been adopted through consensus by all members of the Washington Statewide Reentry Council.

Appendix E: Department of Corrections Training

I. Education/Vocational Training

Construction Trades Apprenticeship Preparation Program (CTAP)

In October 2019, the Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council (WSATC), governed by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries (LNI), approved the Construction Trades Apprenticeship Preparation (CTAP) program as a registered pre-apprenticeship program. WSATC recognizes CTAP as an education based preparatory program that supports linking participants to registered apprenticeship opportunities. **Current MOUs are with the Laborers, Cement Masons and Carpenters Unions for preferred applications.**

- Stafford Creek Corrections Center – Grays Harbor College
- Olympic Corrections Center - Peninsula College ** (considering move to CBCC)
- Washington State Reformatory - Edmonds Community College
- Monroe Minimum Security Unit – Edmonds Community College
- Washington State Penitentiary - Walla Walla Community College
- Cedar Creek Corrections Center - Centralia College
- Washington Corrections Center - Centralia College

CTAP curriculum consists of classroom and hands-on training in the areas of Construction Basics, Introduction to Electrical, Introduction to Plumbing, Construction Trades Tool Training, Construction Trades Industry Awareness, Work Readiness, Health and Safety for the Trades, Blueprint Reading & Drawing, Math for the Trades and culminates in a Capstone work project. **Recently the curriculum was adjusted and students who complete CTAP earn 20 college credits over a 10-11 week period.**

Apprenticeship Working Group (AWG) Updates

The Apprenticeship Working Group (AWG) continues to meet monthly. AWG recently began working with WA Juvenile Division. A program similar to CTAP/TRAC is being planned to deliver at Green Hill with more being looked at potentially at Echo Glenn.

Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) has developed a great outline for a pilot Industrial Manufacturing Technician program that could be modified and run at WCCW or somewhere else. Once the facilities open back up to visitors, AWG will find out the feasibility of bringing in some equipment to try a test run of some sort. Also being considered is a pre-apprenticeship for **Licensed Trades Apprenticeship Preparation (LTAP)** that would focus on electrical, plumbing, HVAC, etc.

Secure-Internet Pilot (SSB 5433)

In Fall 2019, the secure-internet pilot under SSB 5433 was completed and the **Computer Programming (Coding) classroom was set up with secure-internet at WCCW**. Results from the proof of concept were extremely positive and DOC Cybersecurity has reported that there were **no security breaches during the proof of concept**. They also identified ways to streamline a future rollout.

DOC Executive Staff and Legislators met with the WCCW Coding class and were able to hear directly from students and faculty about the many advantages of having secure-internet in the classroom. Students were able to collaborate on builds, see their code work, and experience para programming (where the whole class simulates a real world experience of having a group working together on the same project). Additionally, direct access to approved coding sites give students access to relevant and up-to-date information on language for trouble shooting, self-corrections, and editing. The students are excited to see how their work mimics what people do in the coding industry, while getting hands-on experience working in similar environments.

FY21 Budget Proviso to Expand Secure-Internet

\$1,156,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021 is provided solely for costs relating to a pilot program for expanding educational programming to include postsecondary degrees and secure internet connections at up to three correctional institutions. The institutions chosen must be participating in the federal Second Chance Pell program. A report shall be submitted to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2021.

Second Chance Pell sites are MCC, CCCC, WCC, CRCC, WSP. **A work group will be forming to look at expanding the internet to MCC, CRCC, WCC.**

Work Release Internet

Secure-internet was piloted at Reynolds and Peninsula Work Releases. Currently, there is a work group established to prioritize implementation of getting secure-internet at all other work releases as well. **During the pandemic, most work release sites gained access through local internet providers in order for residents to be able to continue school since all colleges and universities moved to online classes only and to allow residents the ability to do job searches during the statewide stay-home order.**

Education During Pandemic

In Spring Quarter all contracted and privately funded education programs moved to distance learning classes. Most programs delivered coursework via weekly paper packets. The contracted colleges were able to expand their use of student off-line laptops, doubling their use of student laptops by the end of spring quarter. Currently there are approximately 700 student laptops in use.

In Summer Quarter all contracted colleges went back to face-to-face instruction with reduced sizes to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Privately funded classes continue to deliver distance learning classes via packets and most of their classes were canceled. In order to continue to serve more students, most programs are delivering a hybrid-model where students attend class half-time and are given supplemental material in the form of student laptops, books or packets.

There is a great need for advanced technology in educational services, including use for our volunteer education providers (FEPPS, UBB, BPC-TEACH, Defy Ventures) and Second Chance Pell sites. Expanding secure-internet will help to inform future use. In order to get more use out of the off-line laptops in prison settings, there is a need for more contracted college IT support services to maintain those.

II. Reentry Services

July 2019 – December 2020

With the passage of 2018 House Bill 2638 Graduated Reentry (GRE) came the development of the newly defined Reentry Navigation Team to include a Corrections Specialist 3 (CS3) and Reentry Navigators (formerly known as Transition Specialists) working cohesively together to assist individuals reentering the community and to increase chances of successful transition.

Reentry Restructuring

- Re-defining Reentry Navigators roles and responsibilities
- Shift in leadership and expectations
- Staff training and policy updates
- Collaborative efforts between CS3 and Reentry Navigators
- Drafting of standardized GRE Reentry Navigators process maps and forms
- Cross divisional information sharing efforts between GRE/Reentry Navigators/Work Training Release (WR)
- Statewide Reentry Navigation Fidelity
- Statewide Community Resource Sharing

Planning

Target Population/Phased Approach

- GRE WR Population (introduction of WR Reentry Transition Meeting (RTM), Transition Plan, 72 hour plans & stabilization Plans)
- GRE Institution to Electronic Home Monitoring (EHM) (Institution RTM & Stabilization Plan)
- Statewide Navigator area of range and WR assignment established (*see attachment: "DOC Navigator Area of Range (AOR)"*)
- Monthly WR Meet & Greets within 30 days of arrival to WR
- Cross divisional weekly check ins with CS3/Navigator leads

January 2020 – July 2020

Implementing Phase 1

Reentry Navigator Reclassification

- Reentry Navigator and CS3 shared responsibilities and workloads
- Implementation of 3 phased IRPs (Individual Release Plans) titled Institution, Transition, and Stabilization
- Development of shared caseload capacity tool & information sharing in SharePoint

Finalization of Reentry System Implementation Model Prison/Work Release/Electronic Home Monitoring (*see attachment: "DOC Reentry Systems Implementation Model"*)

- Implementation of Transition and Stabilization IRPs for those transitioning from WR to EHM and those transitioning from institution to EHM
- Reentry Transition Meeting (RTM) for those in the institution and WR
- Continued cross divisional information sharing efforts between GRE/Reentry Navigators/WR and institution counselors
- Draft GRE quick reference guide and process manual for Reentry Navigators (*see attachment: "Graduated Reentry – A quick reference guide and process manual for Reentry Navigators" – DRAFT. *Please note that this a draft document only.*)
- 5 Reentry Navigators, 2 Reentry Navigator leads and 1 pending Snohomish Navigator
- Pandemic emergency hygiene/food kits
- Pandemic navigator DSHS pre-enrollment assistance

Reevaluate & Modify

- Review feedback on 3 phase IRPs from staff & participant
- Begin planning of phase 2 and implementation
- Distribution of IRP 1

- Finalize GRE quick reference guide and GRE draft forms
- Update & SharePoint case management tool
- Identify missing data entry points

Room and Board Waiver

Department of Corrections room and board charges at Work Training Releases (WTR) started out at \$12.50/day for an incarcerated individual's rent. Within the last 10 years, room and board increased to \$13.50/day where it remains now. RCW requires an incarcerated individual to pay rent as part of their work release obligation. When DOC had to absorb closures of work releases, specifically Rap/Lincoln, where mentally ill and work challenged individuals were housed who didn't pay rent, these individuals participated in programming as part of their responsibility. Facilities have also adjusted allow a resident at WTR to have an educational waiver for rent so that they can attend school.

Department of Corrections has now progressed to the ability to suspend room and board in real time for those incarcerated individuals who have other needs than just working. DOC is working on a process for consideration that will be part of the incarcerated individual's case plan moving forward. This will enhance the preparation for incarcerated individual to have a real sense of budgeting and preparedness for community living.

III. Veterans Services

Statewide Facility Veterans Point(s) of Contact Quarterly Meetings

In April 2020, the Department of Corrections hosted the first quarterly statewide Veterans meeting via Skype. This meeting allows for facility Point of Contacts to network and hear what other facilities are doing, as well as share department and veteran's updates, resources available to incarcerated veterans, and work that is going on in the community. Connecting Point of Contacts at facilities has allowed veterans who transfer facilities to continue veteran services that are being established.

Veteran Services Manager Position

The Washington State Department of Corrections and Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs (WDVA) are continuing conversation around a shared Veteran Service Manager/Benefit Specialist Position. This position would assist in identifying incarcerated veterans arriving at Washington Corrections Center (WCC) who are receiving benefits such as disability or pension. If an incarcerated veteran is a recipient of such benefits, their incarceration must be reported to the VA to avoid or reduce the chance of overpayment. As a shared position, this staff would have access to pull DD-214 Certificate of Release of Discharge from Active Duty through the WDVA. This position would also be able to provide information regarding apportionment of a beneficiary's award and assisting with the appropriate forms that incarcerated individuals have

limited access to. With current state budget constraints, this position may temporarily be put on hold.

Veteran Services SharePoint Site

A subsite titled “Veterans Services” has been added to the Reentry SharePoint Site which will provide monthly reports to the facility Veterans Point of Contacts (POC) on local incarcerated veteran population including all veterans identified through federal and state sources, as well as through self-report. The site will also provide access to upload facility and quarterly veterans meeting notes and up-to-date facility statewide veteran POC information. Veterans “Behind the Wire” guides are available to staff and include forms for assisting with requests pertaining to military records, waivers, apportionment of beneficiary awards, and statements in support of claims.

Department of Veterans Affairs’ Public Assistance Reporting System (PARIS)

Department of Corrections and Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) continue to meet to review the award status codes received quarterly through the Public Assistance Reporting System (PARIS) to identify those codes that verify that an incarcerated individual is receiving a disability or pension that will need to be reported to the VA to avoid overpayment.

Stafford Creek Corrections Center Launches First Prison-Based American Legion Post

The American Legion granted Stafford Creek Corrections Center a permanent charter in October 2019 to form a post inside the correctional facility. Veterans meetings are held once a month. Incarcerated veterans practice American Legion rituals like posting of colors, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and setting up a POW/MIA table to honor fallen veterans. They discuss current events and follow congressional bills related to veteran’s issues. The American Legion also has a couple Veterans Service Officers (VSO) in the community who come to the facility monthly to help veterans with their benefit claims.

IV. Identocard Program

Beginning in April 2019, the Identocard program was implemented in DOC’s correctional facilities. Through a partnership between DOC, DSHS, and DOL, the Identocard program ensures that incarcerated individuals can receive valid forms of identification prior to release into the community. Having valid identification is especially important to securing employment, housing, and banking. Providing the means necessary to increase incarcerated individuals’ chances of stability after release can help streamline their reentry into the community and reduce recidivism. Since the Identocard program was implemented, over 3,000 identification cards have been issued.

Appendix F: Department of Children, Youth and Families Juvenile Rehabilitation Progress

The Department of Children, Youth & Families: Juvenile Rehabilitation Progress

Reentry Matters

Over the last several years, Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) has focused a great deal of attention on how to best plan and prepare young people for their return back to their home communities following incarceration. In fiscal year 2020 (FY20), JR served 852 youth with an average length of stay of 11.1 months. Four hundred and thirty-three individuals returned home to their community. The average age upon return was 17.5 years old. Historically, youth of color are overrepresented in the justice system compared to Washington State's general population.

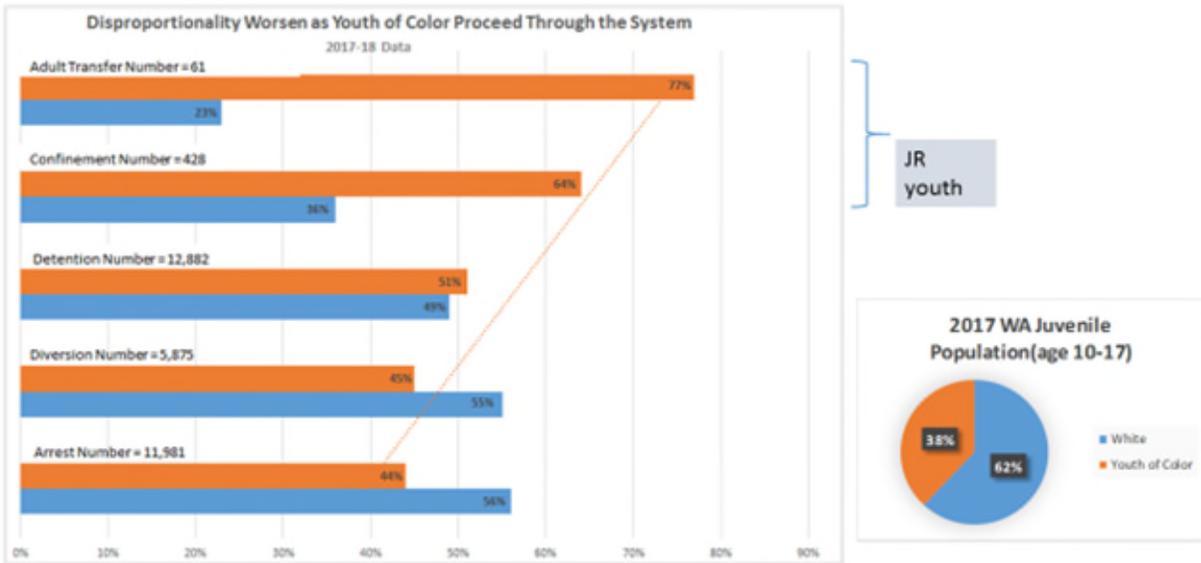
Successful reentry is based on a strong, culturally responsive continuum of care and support, effective treatment services and case management practices, comprehensive education, vocation and employment programs, inclusion of family, community-based connections and venues for meaningful youth voice (*Executive Order 16-05: Building Safe and Strong Communities through Successful Reentry*).

Focusing on youths' successful reentry to their home communities while offering effective rehabilitation programs and service is JR's top priority. The goal is to support young people in building a positive future using guiding principles that are grounded in research. These principles will help create healthy outcomes and communities where young people thrive physically, emotionally, educationally and vocationally. JR youth experience multiple barriers to a successful transition home. Many individuals have complex needs, including the following:

- 36% unstable housing or homelessness situation
- 50% requiring special education assistance
- 85% needing support with their behavioral health

Racial and Ethnic Disparities

As indicated in the chart below, disproportionality is prevalent and increases at every decision point in the juvenile justice system. Young people who enter JR have already experienced an increased level of disparity. Youth of color make up a significant majority while white youth are the minority in comparison to the general population (Office of Innovation, Alignment and Accountability, 2020). The need for ongoing disaggregated data by race and ethnicity at all levels and decision points is critical to inform equitable policy and practice and to avoid further disparate actions while increasing opportunities for continuous quality improvement.



Legislative Reform

In 2019, the passing of **E2SHB 1646** accelerated shifts already underway in JR population and services. Individuals convicted in adult court of a crime committed while under age 18 will now be placed in the initial custody of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) instead of first going to the Department of Corrections (DOC). The bill states that individuals convicted in adult court of a crime committed while under the age of 18 may remain in the custody of DCYF until the individual reaches the age of 25. This legislation was successful with strong support from the voice and leadership of young people.

The following deliverables were identified to address the population increase:

- Capacity plan, including placement rule changes
- Operational infrastructure supports
- Safe and therapeutic environment
- Rehabilitative menu of program and services
- Education and employment pathways



A panel of JR staff, DOC staff and community partners conducted a multidisciplinary team review of all eligible individuals in the custody of the DOC on the effective date of the bill. These individuals were convicted in an adult court for a crime that was committed while under the age of 18, who had not reached the maximum age of JR confinement. This resulted in 31 individuals transferring from DOC to JR. The transfers began in June 2020 and will be completed in October 2020.

In 2018, Representative Noel Frame, in collaboration with Senator Patty Kuderer, Senator Jeannie Darneille and Representative Roger Goodman, tasked community partners together with JR to assess

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and recommend essential programs and services for young people ages 18 – 25 years old to fulfill the intent of the HB 1646/SB 6160, otherwise known as JR to 25. A workshop was designed to explore effective strategies, programs and services to support young people with developmentally appropriate rehabilitation. The workshop membership was comprised of agency partners, community-based organizations, current and former JR young adults, individuals with lived experience and family members. Participants outlined a comprehensive report: **Workshop Recommendations Programs and Services Designed for Juvenile Rehabilitation Young Adults Ages 18-25 Years Old.**

Current programs and service in progress include:

- Secure internet access and laptops
- Work-based learning Opportunities
- Construction and manufacturing pre-apprenticeships
- Postsecondary education
- Community facilities transition reviews
- Transformational mentorship

JR anticipates future needs as the population of young adults up to age 25 continues to grow and expand. To fulfill the intent of the legislation and provide all young people with effective and developmentally appropriate rehabilitation, JR will continue to focus on improvements to programs and services. These improvements include:

- An enhanced focus on the JR to 25 workshop recommendations
- Response to the Integrated Treatment Model (ITM) Assessment recommendations
- Community facility capacity
- Electronic home monitoring in lieu of incarceration
- A trauma-informed approach
- Parenting classes
- Independent living skills
- Addressing staffing ratios and caseloads
- Further expansion of virtual learning

Homeless Prevention Strategies

Passed in 2018, **SSB 6560** ensures that no youth discharge from a public system of care into homelessness. DCYF and the Office of Homeless Youth were required to jointly develop a plan, with specific state agency actions and any legislative recommendations, to ensure that by December 31, 2020, no unaccompanied youth is discharged from a publicly-funded system of care into homelessness. As part of this work, the Office of Homeless Youth issued the **Improving Stability for Youth Exiting Systems of Care** report. Recommendations include the need for adequate transition planning, independent living skills, the critical role of community partnerships and a diversity of housing and services.

As a result of this legislation, JR received funding from the Legislature to provide homeless prevention support to youth exiting JR's Homeless Prevention Program, including:

- Dedicated staff
- Development of an internal referral and tracking system

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- Statewide training for staff
- Community partnerships for collaboration and housing resource support
- Housing vendors – relationships, education about JR population and streamlined payment process

This legislation also supports the issuance of state identification for all youth prior to exiting a JR facility. To date, JR has been able to ensure that 100% of eligible youth exit with a Washington State identification card.

JR Youth and Young Adult Reentry Planning

Prior to 2016, JR had a process that planned for transition 60 days prior to an individual’s earned release date. The planning was JR staff driven and was completed approximately 50% of the time. In consultation with national experts (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Council of State Governments), JR learned that meaningful and successful reentry required a youth- and family-centered approach. From a review of national best practice; statewide staff, youth and family surveys were developed along with a community taskforce and a Reentry Strategic plan.

Reentry Team Meetings (RTMs)

Reentry planning starts at entry to JR and includes family supports and community partners



In 2016, JR implemented a change to transition planning and as a part of that change, Reentry Team Meetings (RTM) began. Facilitated RTMs target intake and release, resulting in the creation of a youth-driven reentry plan that outlines key activities in core life domains. Current RTMs begin with youth, family and other supports as the core team. Examples of supports include social workers, education advocates and mentors. As reflected in the above chart, JR completed initial RTMs at 82%, release RTMs at 97%, and reentry plans at 96% in FY20. The ongoing review of disaggregated data by race, ethnicity and participant surveys helps to ensure equity in practice and continuous quality improvement.

Reentry is a work in progress as we continue to enhance and improve policy, practice and planning; enhance community in-reach; and reinforce how young people “see and own” their next steps forward and plans for the future.

September 22, 2020

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Appendix G: Reentry Council Letter to Governor Inslee



State of Washington
STATEWIDE REENTRY COUNCIL

1011 Plum Street SE - PO Box 42525 - Olympia, Washington 98504-2525 - (360) 725-4000

April 7, 2020

Honorable Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

cc: Secretary Stephen Sinclair, Washington Department of Corrections

Dear Governor Inslee:

Thank you for your leadership during this challenging time. We are writing on behalf of the Statewide Reentry Council (Council) to reaffirm our shared knowledge that the state must help people meet their basic needs upon release from our jails and prisons. This support includes but is not limited to attaining stable housing, healthcare, and some form of sustainable income. This support is particularly vital during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whether or not the state releases additional people from the Department of Correction's custody and county jails as a direct result of COVID-19 concerns, increased community-focused release planning and funding is vital during this time. We have the opportunity to save lives by working together to prepare for currently planned releases and the potential prospect for increased releases soon. Some groups that people are discussing and requesting the release of include members of vulnerable populations such as elderly incarcerated individuals and people with underlying health conditions. It is particularly vital that the state release these individuals to stable environments.

The Council offers to work with your office, state agencies, the legislature, local and county officials, and community and incarcerated stakeholders and their families to support this planning process and determine what additional resources are needed. We offer to report back to you and the state legislature with our recommendations, including what concrete steps the state can take to minimize the harm to reentering people, their families, and our communities during this crisis.

Thank you again for your leadership and consideration. We are at your service.

Sincerely,

Christopher Poulos

Executive Director

Hon. Dan Satterberg

Co-Chair

Tarra Simmons

Co-Chair