

Washington State Department of Corrections

LICENSE PLATE PRODUCTION



History of License Plate Production at the Department of Corrections: A 100-Year Legacy

- DOL and DOC collaboration began in 1923 with the establishment of the auto tag plant at the Washington State Penitentiary (WSP).
- In the early 1950's DOC invested in new license plate production equipment at WSP.
- In 1975 upgrades and additional equipment were added at WSP, which we used until 2022.



Past Challenges Impacting Production

Impacts to Workforce:

- Pandemic creates supply chain issues and fewer workers and staff on the production floor.
- Multiple resentencing reforms, most notably the Blake decision, result in fewer numbers of eligible workers.
- Post pandemic, increases in programming options reduced workforce.
- Disparities in gratuities and deductions across the prison worker pay structure cause workers to leave Correctional Industries jobs.

Impact of Building a New Factory:

- To address worker shortages, DOC moves the factory to an area with higher custody levels = more eligible workers.
- Relocation comes with a series of inspections and permit requirements that delay the restart of production of the new \$2.5M equipment.
- A power outage in August causes significant equipment malfunctions.

Overcoming Barriers for Future Success

- DOC will be caught up with license plate production by mid-November.
 - Approximately 44,000 plates produced per week by DOC.
 - Three orders (510,000 plates total) to be delivered from vendor Nov. 1-Dec. 30.
 - Materials on hand for vendor to produce 85,000 plates in 4-week turnaround if needed.
- A partnership with DOL and Washington State Patrol transitions Washington state away from embossed plates, significantly increasing plate production.
- DOC will maintain an inventory of 400,000 plates on hand at all times.
- DOC is working with other states to ensure we have a secondary backup for outsourcing production should we need it.



Benefits of Keeping License Plate Production at the Department of Corrections

Creating Successful Paths to Reentry and Better Neighbors

- **The State of Washington is not just buying factory production license plates, DOC is educating incarcerated workers in both technical and soft skills, including:**
 - ✓ Industrial production
 - ✓ Industrial safety
 - ✓ Marketable job skills
 - ✓ Behavior expectations of employers
- **DOC provides workforce development that prepares people for successful employment:**
 - ✓ Personal job readiness portfolio
 - ✓ Real-time community job leads
 - ✓ Job search assistance
 - ✓ Career planning support
 - ✓ Referrals to community partners
 - ✓ Financial literacy

And DOC production is more cost effective. DOC license plate production cost is \$2.76 per plate set. Outside vendor cost is \$3.48 per plate set.