



Meet Cheryl Strange

Cheryl Strange was appointed Secretary of the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) by Governor Jay Inslee on May 15, 2021.

Prior to her appointment as Secretary of Corrections, Strange served as secretary of Washington's Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the state's largest human service agency, where she was appointed to the position by Inslee in 2017. She is a respected and proven leader who has cultivated a humane, progressive and equitable institutional culture.

Strange has dedicated her life to public service, serving more than 40 years in government, non-profit or labor organizations, holding leadership positions in those organizations for over half of that time. She served as DOC deputy secretary from 2008 to 2011. She has also served as vice president for Pioneer Human Services where she worked on the important issues of reentry, work release, and behavioral health. Prior to serving as DSHS secretary, she served as CEO of Western State Hospital, and director of Health Benefits Trust for SEIU 775. Strange was also assistant director for the DSHS Mental Health Division, where she managed the state's public mental health system, including the state's three hospitals, and community outpatient mental health services.

Strange earned her bachelor's from the Evergreen State College, her Master of Public Administration from Seattle University, completed the executive management program certification at the University of Washington's Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, and a certificate in healthcare policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.