

Improve Public Safety by Positively Changing Lives

iCOACH and Wrap-Around Reentry Services

2021-2023 Biennial Budget Request



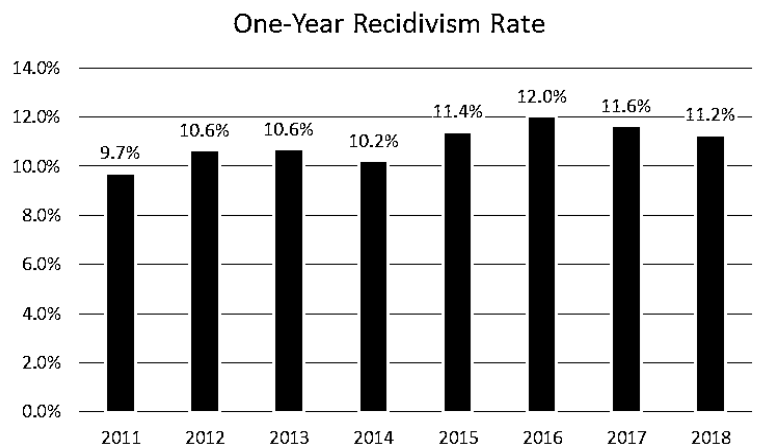
The mission of the Department of Corrections (DOC) is to improve public safety by positively changing lives. The DOC is committed to operating a safe and humane corrections system. Approximately 52 percent of the overall prison admissions are individuals who were previously incarcerated at DOC. Recidivism has significant negative impacts on families, especially children, the victims of crimes, stakeholders within the justice system, the formerly incarcerated individual, and taxpayers of Washington State.

Individuals experiencing incarceration and serving community supervision sentences come from overwhelmingly poor communities (disproportionately communities of color), lacking educational and employment opportunities. They have higher levels of homelessness, substance abuse disorders, and struggle with physical and mental health disorders that are often undiagnosed or untreated. More than 96 percent of these individuals will eventually be released back into those same communities, where barriers will be further exacerbated by their criminal histories. This proposal funds basic services, treatment, and programs meant to not only address those inequities but to ensure success upon reentry to the community, and as a result increase public safety.

Individualized Community Oriented Accountability Collaborative Help (iCOACH)

(\$13.0M/119.3 FTEs in FY 2022 and \$17.7M/163.8 FTEs in FY 2023)

DOC requests funding to implement the iCOACH model, which would refocus our Community Corrections Division (CCD) Supervision model on greater risk, need and responsibility principles, that uses a motivational “coaching” model that based on research is proven more effective in reducing recidivism, than traditional supervision that is focused solely on monitoring and punishing failure. This model front loads reentry services, including cognitive behavioral interventions, educational programming, and an expansion of transition resources. These efforts would be supported through community partnership programs, housing subsidy and supports and an increased focus on health care



coordination both in the community and prior to transition from full incarceration. This funding proposal would allow for the implementation of a Supervision Model that research shows to be far more effective in reducing recidivism rates.

The table below shows the state of Washington has not successfully reduced recidivism rates, in fact rates have increased since 2011.

Based on the SGC report of 2019 Review of Sentencing and Supervision in Washington State, in order to positively impact recidivism rates, the state of Washington needs to refocus its approach to Community Supervision. The DOC’s current level of funding does not allow for the implementation of a successful wrap-around “coaching” style supervision model. This model requires smaller caseloads, greater investment in reentry and community based contracts and purchased services. A decrease in caseload size is necessary within this model to allow Community Corrections Officers to spend more face-to-face time with supervised individuals. This investment would be inclusive of the following: individualized reentry plans, investigations, transports, coaching, community involvement, individual contacts, needs assessments, individual group treatments, and associated administrative costs.

Reentry Investments

(\$7.2M/26.5 FTEs in FY 2022 and \$10.5M/25.0 FTEs in FY 2023)

A critical component of the iCOACH model is to front load increased levels of wrap-around reentry services, including cognitive behavioral interventions, educational programming, and an expansion of transition resources. These efforts would be supported through community partnership programs, education navigation for college, housing support to reduce homelessness, and an increased focus on health care discharge coordination both in the community and prior to transition from full incarceration. A reentry scorecard data solution module is also proposed to track outcomes.

The wrap-around reentry services proposed as a component of the iCOACH model is structured similar to the highly successful Second Chance Act (SCA) program piloted at the Monroe Correctional Complex (MCC) and Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW) for releases to King County. The fundamental components of the SCA pilot program were to provide enhanced individualized reentry planning, integrate community organizations at the pre and post release phases, and emphasize partnerships and data sharing across the agency and among community partners. Participants in the SCA-Continuum of Care programming approach had lower felony reconviction rates (6.7 percent compared to 12 percent for the comparison group). This is a 44 percent reduction in first year felony convictions. These patterns establish that the SCA pilot program increased public safety by preventing the reoccurrence of the most serious form of crime (i.e., felonies).

Education Modernization

(\$1.8M/2.6 FTEs in FY 2022, \$1.5M/3.4 FTEs in FY 2023)

DOC requests funding to fully implement the secure internet plan put forth in the Second Substitute Senate Bill 5433 feasibility report by expanding secure internet at ten more DOC prison facilities. This would require expanded internet services, additional laptops to expand the educational opportunities available, and adding specialized staffing to address the needs of incarcerated individuals with learning disabilities.

As the world has become more digital the world inside our prisons has lagged behind. Each year colleges find it increasingly difficult to prepare students for jobs, careers and further education without the use of secure internet in classrooms and computer labs. Academic and workforce training publishers continue to phase out resources, software, tools and testing services that can be utilized in settings that do not have access to the internet for student use. In order to prepare people for release, Washington prisons need safe access to the same digital information and tools that students on college campuses use. Efforts are focused on helping students, especially low-income, first-generation students and students of color, earn credentials to prepare them for entry into higher-paying, high-demand fields with value in the labor market.

Graduated Reentry Housing Vouchers

(\$149k in FY2022 and FT 2023)

DOC requests funding to sustain current housing transition support for individuals reentering the community in the Graduated Reentry (GRE) program. Currently, the GRE housing assistance program is serving twice the predicted participation that was projected during the formation of this program. Without increased funding, the program will have to reduce the number of program participants. In addition, the housing market has grown increasingly competitive and costly over the last decade, but the voucher ceilings have not been adjusted in relation to the inflation of the market. According to the Office of Financial Management, the median house price has increased 58.9 percent from 2009 to 2019.

Individuals who are released and considered homeless face increased challenges in successfully reentering society and are at a higher risk to be non-compliant with their supervision case plan and return to prison. The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) estimates that the odds of experiencing homelessness in a year are 1 in 200 for the general population. For those being released from prison the odds increase dramatically to 1 in 11. In FY 2020, 555 of 6,605, or 8.4 percent, of individuals released from DOC facilities were considered homeless.