



**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
TUMWATER, WASHINGTON**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SERVICES TO INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS
IN WASHINGTON STATE**

1. PURPOSE

The Washington State Department of Corrections ("Department" or "DOC") is initiating this Request for Information ("RFI") to obtain information from qualified postsecondary education Institutions ("Institutions") that may be interested in providing education programs to Individuals in the custody of the Department ("Individuals") utilizing Title IV Pell Grant funds and other financial aid assistance (e.g., Washington College Grant).

Institution responses to this RFI may be used by the Department in determining available options to meet the postsecondary education needs of Individuals. The Department may use the information obtained to pursue direct negotiation of a contract or agreement with one or more Institutions.

This RFI is neither an offer nor a request to contract. This RFI does not obligate the Department to contract, issue a competitive solicitation, or take any action toward procuring services. The Department reserves the right to explore all options in its efforts to provide quality postsecondary education programs to Individuals, including but not limited to, options that are brought to its attention through this RFI. This RFI shall not be construed to create an obligation or commitment on behalf of the Department or any Institution.

Postsecondary education programs will be selected based on their demonstrated ability to develop and administer degree or certificate-bearing college courses for Individuals. Factors that will be considered include but are not limited to: anticipated enrollment and graduation rates, anticipated job placement rates, reentry services, and transferability of credits to other postsecondary education providers. The demonstrated ability will be in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's Title IV financial aid for Prison Education Programs (PEPs) and Washington State statutes, rules, and regulations related to postsecondary education.

2. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT INFORMATION

2.1 BACKGROUND

The Washington State Department of Corrections, as a partner in the criminal justice system, enhances public safety, administers criminal sanctions and programs in accordance with the law, and provides leadership for the future of corrections in Washington State.

The mission of Education Services is to provide Individuals with the opportunity to achieve their educational goals including High School Equivalency and postsecondary certificates or degrees, up to a bachelors. The Department is committed to providing access to high-quality education programs for Individuals to include academic support and reentry services that will allow Individuals to continue their education upon release.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 reinstated the ability for incarcerated individuals to access Pell Grants in pursuit of postsecondary education. The Department of Education published its final regulations related to these changes on October 27, 2022.

The final Pell Grant regulations for Prison Education Programs can be accessed here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/10/28/2022-23078/pell-grants-for-prison-education-programs-determining-the-amount-of-federal-education-assistance>.

2.2 DEPARTMENT LOCATIONS WHERE SERVICES MAY BE NEEDED

The Department currently operates 12 correctional centers across the state including two women’s facilities. Because of the geographic considerations related to the location of DOC facilities and the necessity of transferring Individuals based on classification factors, the Department is considering several options for program delivery to include in-person, distance, and hybrid.

Airway Heights Corrections Center: Medium and Minimum Custody	11919 W. Sprague Ave Airway Heights, WA 99001
Cedar Creek Corrections Center: Minimum Custody	12200 Bordeaux Rd. Little Rock, WA 98556
Clallam Bay Corrections Center: Maximum, Close, and Medium Custody	1830 Eagle Crest Way Clallam Bay, WA 98326
Coyote Ridge Corrections Center: Medium and Minimum Custody	1301 N. Ephrata Ave. Connell, WA 99326
Larch Corrections Center: Minimum Custody	15314 NE Dole Valley Rd. Yacolt, WA 98675

Mission Creek Corrections Center: Minimum Custody	3420 NE Sand Hill Rd. Belfair, WA 98528
Monroe Correctional Complex: Maximum, Close, Medium, and Minimum Custody	16550 177 th Ave. SE Monroe, WA 98272
Olympic Corrections Center: Minimum Custody	11235 Hoh Mainline Forks, WA 98331
Stafford Creek Corrections Center: Maximum, Medium, and Minimum Custody	191 Constantine Way Aberdeen, WA 98520
Washington Corrections Center: Maximum, Close, and Medium Custody	2321 West Dayton Airport Rd. Shelton, WA 98584
Washington Corrections Center for Women: Close, Medium, and Minimum Custody	9601 Bujacich Rd. NW Gig Harbor, WA 98332
Washington State Penitentiary: Maximum, Close, Medium, and Minimum Custody	1313 N 13 th Ave Walla Walla, WA 99362

2.3 REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICES PROVIDED AT DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

Institutions that perform services at DOC facilities must abide by certain requirements, including, but not limited to, the following:

- All Institution faculty and staff providing services within a DOC facility must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as required by Department policy.
- Institution will comply with all Department policies, Information Standards Board requirements, IT Security Requirements, Operational Memorandums, and the facility Superintendent's direction.
- Institution faculty and staff providing services in a DOC facility must abide by Department health and safety protocols and undergo orientation and training, including, but not limited to, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) orientation.
- Institution faculty and staff providing services in a DOC facility must certify that they have not engaged in any sexual misconduct in a prison, jail, lockup, community confinement facility, or other Institution as defined in 42 U.S.C. 1997.
- Institution faculty and staff providing services in a DOC facility must submit to a criminal background check and reverification at a frequency designated by the Department.

2.4 DEFINITIONS

A Prison Education Program (PEP) is an education program that is eligible for Title IV financial aid, to be delivered to Individuals under the jurisdiction of the DOC and complies with the requirements of 34 CFR § 668.236

A postsecondary education provider is a public or private nonprofit Institution of higher education that is accredited and authorized to operate in the state of Washington and meets the eligibility requirements of 34 CFR §600.

3. PROJECT SCOPE

Institution shall develop degree or certificate pathway(s) that are eligible for Title IV financial aid, up to a baccalaureate degree, to be delivered to Individuals. The Institution shall be responsible for course development, providing faculty and other program support staff, education delivery, and student support services to include academic counseling and financial aid support. State. Institutions should consider how they will support students who reenter the community prior to completion such as enrollment or transfer support.

Institutions shall be previously approved by the ED as a Title IV participant, be accredited by a certified and appropriate accrediting agency. Must have no sanction or adverse action filed against the institution within the last twelve (12) months. The Department will verify your accreditation status prior to entering into any agreement or contract for services.

4. INFORMATION REQUESTED FROM INSTITUTIONS

1. Please provide a brief statement describing why your Institution is interested in providing education to Individuals in Washington State prisons.
2. **Background and Experience:** Please describe the Institution's experience in the following areas:
 - a. Providing Education Programs to Justice-Involved Individuals
 - b. Providing Education Programs Within a Carceral Setting
 - c. Education Program Development
 - d. Student Financial Aid Support
 - e. Reentry Counseling
 - f. Data Collection
 - g. Academic and Career Advising
 - h. Providing Distance Education
 - i. Recruiting and Retaining Students of Historically Marginalized Groups

3. Management Approach:

- a. How will your Institution provide oversight of an education program offered at an alternative location?
- b. Describe how your Institution will select/recruit instructors for a PEP.
- c. What is your Institution's process for ensuring that any staff dedicated to delivering a PEP will be eligible to work in a DOC facility including applicable background check considerations and required DOC training for personnel working inside of a prison facility?

4. Project Approach:

- a. Describe how your Institution will collaborate with the Department to include: DOC Education Services, Institution leadership (Superintendents, Association Superintendents), existing education programs, and other programs for Individuals?
- b. Describe how your Institution will recruit students to enroll in your PEP.
- c. How will your Institution support students who return to the community before completing their education program/graduation?

5. Service Location: DOC operates 12 correctional facilities across the State. Please indicate at which facility(s) your Institution would be interested in providing services.

6. Space and Equipment: Education programs must be provided within the confines of a carceral environment. The Department has dedicated certain buildings for the delivery of education programs. The Department may provide access to limited information technology infrastructure for program support and delivery. Institutions would be responsible for providing all other education materials to include but not limited to: textbooks, instructor guides, classroom supplies, and instructional software. In your response, please address the questions below:

- a. How many concurrent classes does your Institution intend to run?
- b. Will your Institution's curriculum include a mandatory IT component to include: student use of computers for completing assignments, conducting research, and/or distance/hybrid delivery?
- c. Would your Institution's program require the use of any other specialized equipment? If so, please describe.

7. Cost for Services: Please provide an estimate of costs related to the PEP to include:

- a. One-time startup costs to develop a PEP
- b. Administrative expenses
- c. Tuition rate per credits/class, books, and fees that may be charged to students
- d. Equipment, tools, and supplies

e. Travel

5. **GENERAL INFORMATION FOR INSTITUTIONS**

5.1 RFI COORDINATOR

The Education Services Administrator is the Department’s primary point of contact for this RFI. Upon receipt of this RFI, all communication between Institutions and DOC shall be with the following Department representative:

Name:	Kristen N. Morgan
E-MAIL Address	kristen.morgan@doc1.wa.gov

Institutions may rely only written statements issued by the Education Services Administrator.

5.2 SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

The dates listed below represent the projected initial schedule of activities. All times are local at Tumwater, Washington.

The Department reserves the right to change the timeline. Any changes to the schedule prior to the Response due date will be communicated to all Institutions via email.

RFI issued by posting on the DOC’s site https://doc.wa.gov/corrections/programs/education.htm . The RFI will also be emailed to Institutes of Higher Education in Washington State.	February 6, 2023
Deadline for RFI coordinator to receive Institutions’ emailed questions about RFI	5:00PM February 24, 2023
Date by which Institutions’ written questions will be posted on the DOC website as an Amendment to RFI.	March 10, 2023
Institutions’ Responses are due by email to RFI Coordinator for first consideration.	5:00PM March 31, 2023
DOC priority response to responsive Institutions requesting initial meeting.	April 7, 2023

While the Department considers this to be an ongoing implementation project, due to limited space and resources, priority consideration will be given to those responses received by the dates set forth in the schedule of activities.

5.3 INSTITUTION QUESTIONS

Institutions may submit written questions and requests for clarification about the RFI to the RFI Coordinator by the date set forth in the Schedule of Activities. Questions must be sent via email and include "RFI Postsecondary Education Services" in the subject line. Responses to Institution's written questions will be updated as an addendum to this RFI by the date set forth in the Schedule of Activities.

5.4 INSTITUTION RESPONSES TO RFI

5.4.1 Submitting a Response

Responses are voluntary and do not create obligations on behalf of Institution or the Department. Interested Institutions should submit a response to this RFI to the RFI Coordinator via email on or before the date set forth in the schedule of activities for first consideration. Please include "RFI Postsecondary Education Services" in the email's subject line.

5.4.2 Content of Response

Interested Institutions should include the following information in their response:

1. Legal name and address of the Institution
2. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses of Institution's key contact persons.
3. Responses to the information requested in *Section 3 Information Requested from Institutions*

5.4.3 Department Response

The Department intends to contact all responsive Institutions directly to schedule a meeting to discuss the proposed education program(s). This meeting will not constitute an obligation or promise on the part of the Department or Institution to enter into any agreement or contract for services.

5.5 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION/PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Materials submitted in response to this RFI shall become the property of DOC. The Department is subject to the Public Records Act (Chapter 42.56 RCW). Any information contained in the Response that is proprietary or confidential must be clearly designated. Each page claimed to be exempt from disclosure must reference the specific basis claimed under Chapter 42.56 RCW, the Public Records Act, or other state or federal law that provides for the nondisclosure of your Response information. Any portion Institution

claims to be proprietary, confidential, or exempt from disclosure must be clearly identified by the word "Proprietary" or "confidential" printed on the lower right-hand corner of the page.

To the extent consistent with Chapter 42.56 RCW, the Public Records Act, DOC shall maintain the confidentiality of Institution's information marked and accepted as confidential or proprietary. If a request is made to view the Institutions confidential or proprietary information, DOC will notify Institution of the request and of the date that the records will be released to the requester unless Institution obtains a court order enjoining disclosure or the requester and Institution reach an agreement on the extent of such disclosure, which agreement will be forwarded to DOC by the requester prior to DOC's date for the proposed disclosure. If Institution fails to obtain the requester agreement or court order enjoining disclosure, DOC will release the requested information on the date specified.

5.6 RIGHT TO CANCEL

The Department reserves the right to cancel or reissue this RFI, in whole or in part, at any time and without obligation or liability.

5.7 COST TO RESPOND

The Department will not be liable for any costs incurred by Institution in preparing a response to this RFI or any activities related to this RFI.

5.8 NO OBLIGATION TO CONTRACT

This RFI does not obligate the State of Washington or DOC to contract for the goods or services specified herein.