



**STATEWIDE FAMILY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES**

Date/Time/ Location: September 15th, 2018 10:00 – 3:00  
Correctional Industries, Tumwater, WA

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**MEETING ATTENDEES**

**Department Co-chair:** Scott Russell  
**Department Secretary:** Steve Sinclair - absent

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**Family Co-Chair:** Loretta Rafay, MCC

**Family secretary:** Yoshikovasha Garcia, AHCC

**State Council Representatives:**

- Melody Simle, CCCC
  - Loretta Rafay, MCC
  - Dora Williams, AHCC
  - Laurie Dawson, WCCW - absent
  - Patti Tilford, WCC
  - Suzanne Cook, WSP
  - Barbara Kaelberer, MCCCW
  - Verna Westman, SCCC
  - Portia Hinton, CRCC
  - Carol Foss, CBCC
  - Jim Jackson, LCC
  - Julie Winkler, OCC
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**Family Participants:**

- Lethaniel Ray – WCCW Alternate
- David and Jody Bullard
- Elizabeth Deleon
- Heather Johnson
- Virginia Parham
- Kehaulani Walker
- Tracie Ramirez
- Kat Richey
- Kendra Wynn
- Joanne Pfeifer
- Dylan Belcher
- Amy Grubaugh
- Michelle Foxx
- M. Marshall
- Byron Coates
- Joanne Todd
- Ron O’Neil
- Frank Sterling
- Diane Sifres

Jennifer Patterson  
 Felix D'Allesandro  
 Carol Welch  
 Larissa Stoudgin  
 Kay Compton  
 Miriam Fry  
 Noreen Light  
 Jason Rice  
 Tonya Tolliver  
 Hether Smythe  
 Lera Dockery  
 April Harris

**DOC guests:**

Dawn Taylor  
 Caroline Melhuish  
 Jim Harms  
 Sarah Sullivan  
 Anmarie Aylward

**AGENDA**

**Welcome and Introductions:** Belinda Stewart, Loretta Rafay

All attendees introduced themselves and told which organization/facility/department they represent.

Topic	Discussion/Key Points	Next Steps/Family Comments
10:00 am – 10:15am <b>Introductions</b>	Welcome and Announcements	
10:15 am – 11:00 am <b>Facilitator</b>	Facilitator Or Focus Group Update  Jan Dwyer unable to join us today, availability pushed out for a bit, she is having scheduling problems. Would <b>group consider second choice?</b> SFC reps vote. Nine in favor, one neutral for <b>reps vote on going with second candidate</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Belinda introduces Secretary Sinclair</u></b></p> Focus group discussions that took place on September 4 <sup>th</sup> at the AHCC visiting room regarded affection & photo station poses. 4 families and visiting sergeants/staff from 4 different visiting facilities worked out new visiting guidelines on these	

**Focus Group Updates**

Scott Russell, Belinda Stewart

issues

**Changes to visiting guidelines:**

Increased support for pro-social marital affection in the VR, plus plans for new photo poses chart

**Questions posed by Families:**

1. Family member asks why evidence-based healthy touch is so severely limited in visiting rooms. DOC cites contraband concern.
2. Families cite inconsistent practices with Family Council badges at local facilities and Belinda wants to sit down with Superintendents to discuss consistent protocols and policy wording
3. Families express frustration with lack of visiting protocols and consistency across facilities. Belinda and Liz use surveys to verify facility practice. For example: CRCC wasn't allowing frozen fruits and vegetables, now will be. Trying to make policies consistent. Family asks how Belinda communicates expectations for consistency with visiting staff. Belinda cites annual training for visiting staff and public access officers, which is delayed this year, given massive changes to visiting policy and guidelines. Belinda's primary communication is with the local facility designated visitor supervisor. (These are associate superintendents, captains, and lieutenants.) Visit training also occurs with visit staff on an annual basis. Family member asks how DOC establishes accountability for visiting staff meeting expectations and following instructions from headquarters. Scott will answer.
4. Family member points out that there are no visiting guidelines for children ages 9 to 18. Belinda says they are currently working on this piece. Families want explicit language on this age group. One family member expresses difficulties getting pre-teen child visiting rights when loved one transfers facilities. Belinda wants to consult best practices and evidence-based research. Guidelines will explicitly allow crafts made at family events to be taken home by children. Photos will be taken in October to create a new guidelines poster.
5. CRCC families ask for assurance from DOC HQ and Belinda that they will ensure policies are properly

	<p><b>enforced</b> at their facility. Family member asks if Belinda’s calendar is available to view where she is going to be.</p> <p>6. Scott talks about Teamsters 117 negotiations pertaining to visiting staff. Memorandum of Understanding – last few months Scott has been negotiating with the union, they unilaterally rejected his proposal of making visiting a special post. Worked with John Searcy, secretary of the union, to set MOU standards. Not yet ratified, but key points are (and Scott may join union and Belinda in visiting training to educate staff): Goal is to improve visiting programs while maintain security. Ensure visits are conducted in professional, consistent, safe manner. Establish work group with union and DOC to meet and establish objectives, vision, mission, values, create multi-stakeholder work group, state performance objectives and clear standards of conduct, establish timelines to manage and monitor performance objectives. Update visiting policy annually to adapt to changing needs. Scott will bring final ratified standards back to this group.</p> <p>7. Family member requests that a visiting sergeant from each facility be at an SFC meeting to discuss this.</p> <p>8. Family member asks Scott to address <b><u>statewide problems with retaliation in visiting room.</u></b> Scott agrees that visiting staff cannot be acting in a way that is personal, needs to be professional.</p>	
<p>11:00 am – 12:00 pm</p> <p><b>Incarcerated Veterans Benefits</b></p> <p>Jim Harms (DOC), Sarah Sullivan (DOC), Louis Ihrig (formerly incarcerated veteran), Colonel Byron Coates (father of incarcerated man), Frank Sterling (American Legion)</p>	<p>Veterans Benefits for Incarcerated Individuals</p> <p>Jim Harms/Sarah Sullivan</p> <p>VA benefits - working with American legion to get info to vets. Vet benefits need to be decreased to 10%, (to avoid potentially having to repay when they are released) rest of money can be sent to qualified families and does not need to be paid back please contact VA for help or American legion.</p> <p><a href="https://www.benefits.va.gov/persona/veteran-incarcerated.asp">https://www.benefits.va.gov/persona/veteran-incarcerated.asp</a></p> <p><b>While incarcerated, veterans can only get up to 10% of disability money, but the rest can go to their spouse and children.</b></p>	

**If remaining 90% is not apportioned to family, then you just lose it.**

<https://www.dd214.us>

<http://www.doc.wa.gov/corrections/community/resources.htm>

1. Trying to establish an American legion post inside the prisons for incarcerated people. Byron says, “Everything they are finding in the efforts to advocate for incarcerated veterans, they are discovering that the issues encountered are spilling over into all aspects of the criminal justice system
2. DOC has had somewhere between 7 - 10% of formerly incarcerated veterans. Individuals are asked at intake to self-report veterans’ status, and DOC proactively match against Veterans Re Entry Search Service to identify individuals through their military records, as well as through WDVA and DSHS records. Helps identify benefits and services for them. Helps reduce cost burden on DOC and taxpayers. Only about ¼ of the incarcerated veterans are in special vet “pod” units. They have a **policy 310.140** that allows them to establish vet pods. Also, to have a designated CO who manages veterans’ issues.

**Vet Pods offer:**

Themed murals. Incarcerated veterans at SCCC planted the seed for the idea. They have motto and mission, with codes of conduct for their unit. (See slide.) Veteran pod infractions rates are lower than general population and must be major infraction free to live in unit. Goal is reentry prep. Any discharge status eligible, except dishonorable. Veterans themselves wrote the Core Values. Have color and honor guard, special prisoner uniforms. Quiet, clean living unit. Sense of camaraderie, like minded thinking. They have PT program three times per week, keeps veterans in shape. Yoga for Veterans. Veteran counseling – individualized PTSD (mental health counseling) treatment, also has a Traumatic Brain Injury expert who comes monthly to meet with vets. But can’t do actual treatment, can just do information systems. They get specific tags on their doors to identify what programs they are part of. Lots of positive incentives and rewards-based programs.

Should be model for all of DOC. The incarcerated are finding their peers in the vet pods are more considerate and helpful than peers in other units were. Occasionally must let non-vets into unit due to logistics of housing. Brigadoon dogs – are being trained by vets to be service dogs for people with disabilities. Is funded by both TBI fund (WDVA) or DOC’s general fund. Can be a comfort to incarcerated veterans with PTSD. Dogs are in unit for about a year, start as puppies.

3. Jim Harms says there are housing voucher programs (Earned Release Date voucher program)  
<http://www.doc.wa.gov/corrections/community/resources.htm> Vets have to be “homeless” to qualify for Section 8 housing programs, so this makes it hard for DOC to transition them into these programs. DOC must first work with missions to get them temporary beds and then can get them into the **HUD VASH? BASH? Programs**. WDVA now has Spokane office, will improve reentry support for veterans upon release.
4. **Guest: Louis Ihrig** was a service dog trainer while incarcerated. Lived in both vet pods and regular living units. At first, he was reluctant to join vet pod, thought it would be just another institutionalized program aiming to control prisoners from the inside. Felt good to contribute to society after being down so long, felt like opportunity to show he was changing. Also, could feel himself changing as he participated in the veterans’ program. Dogs ultimately go to veterans, children with disabilities, deaf people, etc. Can train dogs to notify owner if fire alarm is going off, etc. Was participant in hobby shop, was able to make woodwork items for community fundraisers. Ex. Gold star mother’s boxes, which are given to mothers who lose children to war. Sold for \$500 at auction.

He later transferred to another institution (TRU) that lacked a vet pod. Vets’ program is small and lacks the core values of CRCC and SCCC pods. Lacks proper guidance from designated veterans’ issues DOC staff. CRCC and SCCC are the only facilities with vet pods.

“What destroyed me was seeing my family suffer.” – Louis. “There’s so much the VA can offer in those situations that is not being utilized.” Seeing his wife

and three kids suffer was the hardest thing. It's hard for a veteran to admit certain disabilities. Pride, dignity. **While incarcerated, can only get up to 10% of disability money, but the rest can go to their spouse and children.** If incarcerated vet is getting disability benefits, and they are receiving 100% that must be apportioned down to 10%, they must pay back upon release. Becomes another LFO (Legal Financial Obligation)

[https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/files/C9D2EA3F-0350-D9AF-ACAE-BF37E9BC9FFA/attachments/391CF18C-CE76-A252-E7CA-](https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/files/C9D2EA3F-0350-D9AF-ACAE-BF37E9BC9FFA/attachments/391CF18C-CE76-A252-E7CA-E57F02225472/472551SULFOBrochure.pdf)

[E57F02225472/472551SULFOBrochure.pdf](https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/files/C9D2EA3F-0350-D9AF-ACAE-BF37E9BC9FFA/attachments/391CF18C-CE76-A252-E7CA-E57F02225472/472551SULFOBrochure.pdf) but to the Federal system. **If remaining 90% is not apportioned to family, then you just lose it.** There is a form that must be filled out by DOC to let Fed. Government know the veteran has become incarcerated. There is a disconnect between DOC and these resources which means families are not getting that. <http://www.waappleseed.org>

5. **DD214** number (discharge paper that summarizes services, is key to federal services) – if vet doesn't know, can't get benefits. Surviving child of veteran can also get these benefits (has to be recognized dependent of the veteran prior to death). <https://www.dd214.us/> Any veteran who passes away is entitled to a military funeral, even if incarcerated. Jim Harms is working on getting info to vets during orientation when first incarcerated? DOC has an MOU with WVA and Westcare for Veterans' services. Generate reports of all current Vets. Incarcerated Veterans Officers are established by policy. Form for military burial might not allow those with felony records to be buried in a national cemetery.

“Veterans are ineligible if they are convicted of federal or state capital offenses and sentenced to life imprisonment without parole or receive the death penalty. They are also ineligible if they were discharged from the military under dishonorable conditions.” - <https://www.dd214.us>

Women Vets program at WCCW. Monthly theme. Also, small group at MCCCW. Will also allow women

	<p>with military veteran romantic partners attend. “The incarcerated troops are a forgotten community” – Byron, reminding us of the standard, “Support Our Troops” motto. His goal is to Support Our Forgotten Troops. Help them get the federal benefits they have earned, including federal tuition money.</p>	
<p>12:00 pm – 12:30 pm</p>	<p>Lunch</p>	
<p>12:30 pm – 1:15 pm</p> <p><b>Anmarie Aylward</b> <b>DSHS</b></p>	<p>Access to Services and Benefits for Incarcerated Individuals</p> <p>Anmarie Aylward</p> <p>Education: families can now pay to have families complete higher education, GI Bill can be utilized but must meet criteria</p> <p>Important Access services: <a href="http://washingtonconnection.org">http://washingtonconnection.org</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.waappleseed.org">http://www.waappleseed.org</a></p> <p><a href="https://win211.org">https://win211.org</a></p> <p>Ms. Aylward: Access to services and benefits for incarcerated individuals. Used to work in WA DOC prison and Community Corrections, now at DSHS. Economics Services Administration (ESA). Aylward realized there were many ESA services families of the incarcerated might not be aware of, resources for families and formerly incarcerated (eligible to apply upon entering community corrections). Is working on coming to the LFCs to spread awareness</p> <p>CHECK OUT APPLESEED: <a href="http://www.waappleseed.org">http://www.waappleseed.org</a></p> <p><u>Mission of ESA</u> is to decrease poverty by 50% by 2025 without any disparities.</p> <p>Ms. Aylward will also be educating staff on poverty resources. She has started programs at Shelton intake center and another prison, to have DSHS staff meet with the newly incarcerated to work on modifying child support to reduce arrears developing during incarceration. Working on draft legislation that would make it automatic, upon incarceration,</p>	

	<p>to modify child support. <b>Would not cover pre-trial confinement in jail.</b></p> <p>Family, “Can those on pretrial confinement request a reduction in arrears?” The incarcerated person could proactively apply to get it modified in jail.</p> <p>Would reduce burden of legal paperwork and additional stresses upon incarceration.</p> <p><b><u>By Federal Law, can’t enroll a currently incarcerated person in these programs,</u></b> but can start getting information for loved ones prior to release</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· HCA will be linking into this WA Connections program</li> <li>· Washington 211, Alternative Solutions – Additional programs, but funding models are fragmented.</li> </ul> <p>Families express concern about people who release to extremely rural areas.</p>	
<p>1:15 pm – 1:30 pm</p> <p>Food Update</p> <p><b>Loretta Rafay, Scott Russell, Belinda Stewart</b></p>	<p>Food Update</p> <p>Loretta Rafay</p> <p>Food update: 2 year from Walla Walla strike plan is still to have all facilities rid of breakfast boats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <u>DOH got the CDC State Physical Activity and Nutrition grant.</u> Will provide technical support to help DOC and CI improve nutritional standards. Herzog is still committed to 2-year plan for getting rid of the breakfast boats. Scott will get more information on plan for time stages</li> </ul> <p>Family Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· CRCC has eliminated regular water from their VR vending, only has sparkling water WSP has a water filtration system with paper cups for guests. All facilities need to have this, so that low-income visitors can at least have water at their table. SCCC has boxed water. Water purchases get expensive. OCC has not had entrée food for months, just snack food in their machines. Belinda will look into this issue.</li> </ul> <p>Belinda surveyed staff about what is and isn’t allowed in VR vending machines. DOC trying to get rid of plastics</p>	

	<p>Families are asking for commissary order forms to be made available online or to us somehow.</p>	
<p>1:30 pm – 2:30 pm</p> <p>EFV Policy Belinda Stewart</p>	<p>EFV Policy Belinda Stewart</p> <p>EFV: policy updates (( please email any suggestions you would like made to EFV’s to <a href="mailto:loretta.fisher@gmail.com">loretta.fisher@gmail.com</a> )) these will be put together so we can present changes we would like made to the current policy. Suggestions due 9/26/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Belinda states that very few changes are currently slated for the EFV policy</li> <li>· Any changes to EFV policy have to be submitted to two legislative groups: House Corrections Committee and another legislative group. These groups get 60 days to respond, and DOC must list all the changes made. If the legislative group doesn’t respond, then policy changes are auto-approved</li> </ul> <p><b><u>EFV feedback:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. EFV eligibility should not be based on a decades’ old conviction, but rather on actual evidence-based assessment of history of rehabilitation and behavior during incarceration.</li> <li>2. If DOC has reservations about eligibility, it can require incarcerated person to go through domestic violence and anger management counseling with the family members who will have EFVs. If DOC has no funding for this counseling, it can be like pre-marriage counseling, where the family is responsible for paying the expense.</li> <li>3. DOC is not using rationally sound methods when assessing like relationships for EFV eligibility. A relationship with one’s mother is not a like relationship to a relationship with one’s spouse. An immature relationship with a youthful romantic partner is not a like relationship to a mature marriage of many years two decades later.</li> <li>4. EFV amenities (mattresses, children’s toys, cooking utensils, etc.) at some facilities are in poor condition and need to be better maintained</li> <li>5. CEtyl Alcohol in makeup is interpreted at some</li> </ol>	

facilities as “containing forbidden alcohol”

6. Concerns about whether the incarcerated are getting second opportunity for U/A test if a positive result on first one. Need to have second test, send out to lab. Some incarcerated afraid to have an EFV and if test happens at start of U/A and comes back positive, should EFV be terminated right then without second test?
7. Family member suggests introducing program that would not necessarily be EFVs but would allow families to have a BBQ, not necessarily stay overnight.
8. Concerned Family member it means that legislature will trust DOC on how to interpret the RCW on EFVs. In general, the legislature and other public officials defer to correctional administrators, so if DOC shows commitment and avid support for this program, it is hard to imagine the legislature would ever want to eliminate it.
9. Families need an educational pamphlet on EFV program. What RCW governs, why certain policies exist, what process it would actually take to eliminate or expand the EFV program, so that families don't get scared and panic every time there is a rumor that EFVs will be eliminated.
10. Families must learn to live together when loved one will be coming home.
11. Per policy, 10 days to submit paperwork. (For appeal?) See application process part of policy. Counselors need to follow the 10 days.
12. SCCC has had gradual success after a couple of years of working on EFV issues with their LFC.
13. EFVs need to support normalcy, maximize normalcy
14. Allowable items list has been ongoing challenge, will probably require another focus group with EFV staff
15. Belinda will address word offender in the term “sex offender” in EFV policy
16. Concern of 3-year wait for marriage after incarceration as opposed to 1-year wait prior to incarceration
17. Concern of U/As – false positive risk makes the incarcerated hesitant to go to EFV

Major EFV policy changes happened around 1995? There was a serious assault that led to more stringent guidelines in the policy. Scott states that reason for conservative criteria is to prevent some tragedy from happening that could get program

to terminate.

- Give recommendations to Belinda and she will start the conversation with Herzog and Sinclair. Some changes will require legislation.
- Points out that DV charges never disappear, yet things like escape charges disappear after 10 years.
- Only 717 individuals of our incarcerated individuals get EFVs (Ask Kendra for data source)  
There's is no formal cap, though on people applying for EFV's and not everyone is applying for them.
- Belinda has requested to centralize the EFV process.

#### Family Testimonies:

1. "Love and affection will stop when he turns nine in December in the visiting room... and for us to have wait three years for EFVs. We need to establish that togetherness as soon as possible."
2. Staff at CRCC refused to process an EFV application due to active legal appeals, headquarters had to override it. counselor told prisoner, "Tell your mother to stop calling headquarters." She applied over a year ago. Counselor said, "I will backdate your job application if you tell your mom to stop calling HQ"
3. **Multiple families** cite local staff telling their loved ones to, "Stop calling headquarters for all kinds of things." Another example of why Belinda wants to centralize the process. She has had similar issues before with local facility blocking
4. During a sex conviction, if case is under active appeal, don't qualify for treatment programs that are required before person can be eligible for EFVs.
5. Family member from CRCC cites her loved one being given 21 days of seg as retaliation for her advocacy concerning how local facility applies policy
6. Family member was told that because she owed DOC, she was denied visiting rights to her two incarcerated sons
7. Request for EFV expanded access to those with LWOP, teenage violence, crime against not-actually like relationship
8. Facilities that have washers and dryers are required to wash sheets on last day of EFV

9. Family request that facilities buy the spices.
  10. MCC – Toys donated by families not making it to trailers
  11. Minimum of two weeks notification for families when they will receive an EFV, so they can arrange their work schedules. No notice given if EFV is denied. Limit of 3 requested dates allowed at AHCC. Needs to be written into policy to give 2-week min. notice, notification in a timely manner to the incarcerated if dates requested were denied, Is there a limit to the number of dates that can be requested for an upcoming EFV? Can we request dates in advanced? what is the limit?
  12. “Being able to sit down with my son and have coffee at a breakfast table during an EFV was absolutely priceless. He waited 12 years to apply due to limited space and availability, and he wanted to allow people with wives to have that access.” – Mother of incarcerated son,
  13. policy director for state education agency, cites being treated with white privilege when she came into facilities as professional, when came in as a visitor, was humiliated, made to pin shirt collar to hide collar bone, during her son’s wedding ceremony at CRCC. Her soon to be daughter in law gave rings to chaplain, and when she was about to give the rings during ceremony, CO intervened and said, “If you give the rings, they will be considered contraband.”
- A. EFV program began about 30 years ago. Ask Belinda for [first version of policy]. The policies must be obtained thru Public Disclosure Request.
  - B. Where does RCW governing EFVs end and DOC’s policy begins? Which issues are restricted by which?
  - C. NY currently has legislation on the table to eliminate their EFV program
  - D. Opportunity at women’s corrections center for incarcerated women to stay with their babies allowed important bond to form.
  - E. Provide Belinda a list of staples for EFV trailers.

Additional focus group of families EFV requested...

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm	Elections for Family Co-Chair and Secretary	
2:45 pm – 3:00 pm <b>Additional Business and Future Agenda Items</b>	<p>Wrap-up September Agenda Items Scott Russell</p> <p><i>Agenda Items for May 19, 2018 meeting:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. HSR &amp; Medical issues – ALMOST EVERYONE</li> <li>2. How DOC budgets work - 10</li> <li>3. <b>Ombuds – Definitely on the budget</b></li> <li>4. Graduated Reentry plus clela? - 11</li> </ol> <p><i>Additional requests that didn't have majority votes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· State Board for Technical Community Colleges</li> <li>· Classification - 8</li> <li>· Seattle Clemency Project</li> <li>· ICE</li> <li>· BPC</li> <li>· Juvenile Declination</li> <li>· SFC Elections</li> <li>· <u>Potluck – Thanksgiving</u></li> <li>· WA Appleseed - 11</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Thanks to everyone for participating!</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Next Meeting Date: November 17, 2018</b></p>	

Future Agenda Items:

New Ombudsman

Washington Appleseed – Christopher Poulos/Angeline Thomas

Graduated Reentry – Danielle Armbruster

State Board for Community and Technical Colleges – Patricia Love

Classification – John Campbell