



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1110

July 29, 2021

FROM: Cheryl Strange, Secretary

SUBJECT: Creating the DOC Women's Prison Division

As we have long known, research and experience show us that the needs of incarcerated women are different than those of men. We also know that serving the needs of women in correctional settings pose unique challenges to current practices designed without these gender differences in mind. To strengthen our resources for all individuals under our custody and care, we must align our operations to support the distinct needs of incarcerated women.

I am pleased to announce that the department is creating a separate Women's Division within the Department of Corrections. This move will support the development of a gender responsive focus that will better address the unique needs of our female incarcerated population. The department will conduct an extensive recruitment effort in the weeks ahead and we hope to have its leader in place by mid fall.

I am excited to announce that Jo Wofford, Superintendent of Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW), will assume the role of Gender Responsive Administrator on August 16th and will continue to play an instrumental role in advancing women's issues across the DOC enterprise. Jo's prior experience and leadership as Superintendent of WCCW will be very helpful as the department navigates this new effort.

I am also pleased to share that Jeneva Cotton will assume the role of WCCW Superintendent, also effective August 16, 2021. Jeneva's work on women and transgender issues will be critical in transforming WCCW into a national model. I want to thank Jeneva for the experience and passion she has brought to her position at headquarters as I know she will carry that same passion to WCCW.

With this move I am structuring a Men's Prison Division into two parts; east and west. Tomas Fithian will oversee east side male facilities; Mike Obenland will oversee the west side male facilities.

Tomas Fithian, Deputy Director, Prisons/East

Airway Heights Corrections Center (AHCC)
Coyote Ridge Corrections Center (CRCC)
Larch Corrections Center (LCC)
Washington State Penitentiary (WSP)

**Mike Obenland, Deputy Director,
Prisons/West**

Clallam Bay Corrections Center (CBCC)
Cedar Creek Corrections Center (CCCC)
Monroe Correctional Complex (MCC)
Olympic Corrections Center (OCC)
Stafford Creek Corrections Center (SCCC)
Washington Corrections Center (WCC)

I am hopeful that these changes will result in a stronger, more focused women's program within the DOC.