

**Washington State Criminal Sentencing Task Force**  
**Reentry & Reducing Recidivism Work Group**  
**Meeting Summary: March 5, 2020**  
Digital Conferencing Technology

**Attendees:**

- Nick Allen, *Interests of Incarcerated Persons*
- Suzanne Cook, *Statewide Family Council*
- Mac Pevey (alt. for Secretary Sinclair),  
*Washington State Department of Corrections*
- Chief Rafael Padilla, *Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs*
- Chris Poulos (alt. for Lydia Flora Barlow),  
*Statewide Reentry Council*
- Secretary Steve Sinclair, *Washington State Department of Corrections*
- Clela Steelhammer (research/data support),  
*Caseload Forecast Council*

**Facilitation Team:** Amanda Murphy, Chris Page, and Molly Stenovec

**WELCOME & AGENDA REVIEW**

Molly Stenovec welcomed Working Group members to the second Reentry & Reducing Recidivism call and reviewed the agenda.

**FEBRUARY MEETING SUMMARY**

Members reviewed the draft meeting summary from the Working Group's previous call and agreed that the meeting summary (aka Action Items) looked accurate for the January 28<sup>th</sup> phone meeting.

*Action Item: All members present accepted the 1/28 Working Group meeting summary as final.*

**SUMMARY TABLE FOR TRACKING POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Molly reviewed the draft summary table that members will use to organize and assess potential recommendations. Since the last call, the Facilitation team has incorporated Task Force consensus recommendations and Sentencing Guidelines Commission (SGC) for various recommendations. Molly invited workgroup members to consider the suggested Categories or "buckets" of policy changes:

1. Community Supervision
2. Diversion & Alternatives to Incarceration
3. Legal Financial Obligations (LFOs)
4. Right to Vote
5. Resources, Rehabilitative Programs/Services
6. Credible Messenger Programs
7. Community Tort Reforms

A working group member pointed out that the consensus recommendations would not need to stay in the summary table if they successfully pass through the Legislature, as they appear likely to do.

Another group member suggested expanding Credible Messenger Programs to something like "increasing ownership and involvement by community-based organizations in the reentry process." Examples of these organizations include Reentry Service Providers, or Divine Alternatives.

Would LFOs fit better under Sentencing Effectiveness Working Group issue set? One member agreed; another asked why. While some issues with LFOs (e.g., most get established at the time of sentencing) fit the Sentencing Effectiveness subject matter more, encouraging use of available tools for financial relief during and after incarceration aids Reentry and Reducing Recidivism.

Suggestion: can this Working Group's recommendations for the Task Force to consider include having the term "Offender" be replaced in statute, with something more people-centered (non-dehumanizing) like "incarcerated person"? A Group member noted that the Legislature had considered a proposal for this recently, and that it did not appear likely to pass this legislative session but would likely get reintroduced next session.

A couple Group members suggested Diversion & Alternatives to Incarceration is more applicable to pre-incarceration, rather than reentry, so fits better with the Sentencing Effectiveness Working Group topics. Another member asked if we might consider alternatives to incarceration as better for integrating people who haven't had strong community connections into a healthy and productive life in society.

Another Group member encouraged folks to focus on discrete, distinct, achievable steps. The facilitation team suggested capturing the idea of diversion and alternatives to incarceration as worthy of future conversations around reentry and reducing recidivism. Another encouraged the Task Force to prioritize specific recommendations to increase diversion and alternatives to incarceration.

Comment: #5. Resources, Rehabilitative Programs & Services has some overlap with increasing involvement by community organizations in easing the reentry process.

**Q.** How does Community Custody Tort Reforms help with reentry and reducing recidivism? **R.** Only one other state (besides Washington) has no tort limits on community custody issues. That means Department of Corrections (DOC) community custody officers always take the most lawsuit-averse approach, which often leads to more punitive actions toward individuals in community custody.

**Q.** Does the upcoming DOC trip to Norway present opportunities to bring back potential recommendations toward reentry and reducing recidivism? **R.** The trip is a first step to learn how that country transformed their entire approach to criminal justice; we don't necessarily anticipate specific actions toward reentry that we could bring back to the Task Force.

Molly asked Group members to discuss who is best positioned to complete the Summary Table cells for any one or multiple categories or individual policy change ideas. A Group member said DOC could provide info on some of the SGC recommendations (1c through 1f). Chief Padilla asked the Group to think about who a Subject Matter Expert for each category might be. The following denotes which Working Group member/s volunteered to populate the Summary Table with draft verbiage:

- DOC will provide info on 1c through 1f:
  - 1c: Supervision should be based on an individual's Risk Needs Responsivity (RNR) and not solely on their conviction(s).
  - 1d: Front-load reentry services for all individuals being released from confinement associated with felony convictions.
  - 1e: Encourage motivational-focused supervision.
  - 1f: Simplify tolling of supervision terms by limiting tolling to absconders.

- #2 Diversion & Alternatives to Incarceration: transferred to Sentencing Effectiveness Working Group.
- 3. LFOs: Suzanne Cook & Nick Allen
- 4. Right to Vote: Suzanne & Nick
- 5. Resources, Rehabilitative Programs/Services (overlaps with #6): Chris Poulos
- 6. (Formerly Credible Messenger Programs, now Increasing the Use of Community Organizations): Chris Poulos
- 7. Community Custody Tort Reform: Mac and DOC

Organized interagency workgroup on reentry, involving the Governor's office, Employment Security Department, Results Washington, Department of Social & Health Services, the Statewide Reentry Council, and DOC.

**NEXT STEPS & ACITON ITEMS:**

- **RWG members** should begin thinking about, and populating, the summary table ahead of the March Task Force meeting