

THE
WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Washington State Jail Modernization Task Force
Final Report
December 31, 2025

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About the William D. Ruckelshaus Center

The William D. Ruckelshaus Center (the Center) is an impartial resource for collaborative problem solving in the State of Washington and the Pacific Northwest. The Center is dedicated to assisting public, private, nonprofit, tribal, and other community leaders in their efforts to build consensus and resolve conflicts around difficult public policy issues. The Center is a joint effort of the University of Washington (hosted by the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy and Governance) and Washington State University (hosted and administered by the Office of the Provost). For more information about the Center, please visit: <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/about/>

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Thanks also to the Washington Association of Counties, and participating and interested legislators who gave their time, energy and input to help advance these important issues around improving county jail systems in Washington state.

While this Task Force focused on county jails, the group recognized the importance and connectedness of tribal and city jails and holding centers, the juvenile detention system, and the state prison system.

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Definitions

The Center	William D. Ruckelshaus Center
The Facilitation Team	William D. Ruckelshaus Center Project Team
DOC	Department of Corrections
DSHS	Department of Social and Health Services
CJTC	Criminal Justice Training Commission
DRW	Disability Rights Washington
Lived Experience	Lived Incarceration Experience
WSIPP	Washington State Institute of Public Policy
HCA	Health Care Authority
WSAC	Washington State Association of Counties
WASPC	Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs
SUD	Substance Use Disorder
PSERS	Public Safety Employee's Retirement System
LEOFF	Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters' Retirement System

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Executive Summary

This report represents the final requirement outlined by the 2023 Sixty-Eighth Regular Legislative Session's [Chapter 44.20 RCW Sec. 915](#) and summarizes the final work and recommendations of the [Jail Modernization Task Force](#) (Task Force). It includes the following sections:

- Introduction
- Key Task Force Member's Values and Interests
- Legislative Recommendations
- Local Recommendations
- and Additional Conversations

Introduction

The introduction provides an overview of the initiating Task Force proviso language and explains the general make-up of the Task Force.

Key Task Force Member's Values and Interests

The Key Task Force Member's Values and Interests section details some of the grounding values and perspectives individuals and organizations represented on the Task Force held throughout their time together. These values and perspectives had significant bearing on all conversations and recommendations that unfolded through the Task Force's work and provide context to how the recommendations were formed. The Task Force did not always agree on all these values or perspectives but were productively able to discuss them openly and use these conflicting points as leverage points to think creatively and collaboratively.

Legislative Recommendations

The Legislative Recommendations section outlines all seven recommendation that Task Force was able to fully develop. These recommendations include:

- [Recommendation 1- Legislative Low-barrier Jail Construction Loan](#)- Create a revolving loan fund of 100 million dollars a year, for five years, as part of an upcoming legislative capital budget that provides a pool of funds that counties could access to bring their existing jail facilities up to minimum standards and construct/remodel facilities to provide the needed space for community-based service providers, recidivism reduction programming, and behavioral and physical health treatment.

- [Recommendation 2- Establish Jail Oversight Agency](#)- establish an independent agency to provide ongoing oversight of city, county, and regional jails.
- [Recommendation 3- Updated Retirement System for Correctional Officers](#)- transition correctional officers off their current Public Safety Employee's Retirement System (PSERS) and either establishing a retirement system that mirrors the Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters' Retirement System (LEOFF) or moving them onto LEOFF.
- [Recommendation 4- Bridge Program to Medicare](#)- create a Medicare bridge program for COs to ensure they do not need to put off retirement for healthcare reasons.
- [Recommendation 5- DOC Bridge Certificate Program](#)- explore creating a bridging certificate program that allows Department of Corrections (DOC) correctional officers (CO) hired after July 1, 2021, to more easily transition to local jail CO positions.
- [Recommendation 6- Jail Innovation and Best Practice Hub](#)- create a statewide technical assistance center to spread evidence-based practices; investigate promising practices; provide training and consulting to jail administrators; pilot new technologies and facility design; and partner with universities/colleges and criminal justice organizations.
- [Recommendation 7- Expand Telehealth in Jails](#)- expand telehealth to increase provider access for physical and behavioral health needs to augment in-person services with clinicians, physicians, peer support specialists, legal counsel, and others.

The Task Force was not required to find consensus for the recommendations put forth. As a result, each recommendation was voted on during the December 12, 2025, meeting to illustrate the levels of support each had from Task Force Member. The voting results follow each of the recommendations.

Local Recommendations

The Local Recommendations are recommendations the Task Force developed during their time together that were identified as better suited for local jurisdiction consideration rather than state level action.

Additional Conversations

The report wraps up with highlighting additional conversations the Task Force had that did not end up resulting in fully solidified recommendation given the limited time and the wide array of topics to cover. However, these conversations are important to highlight as potential starting points for future work to consider.

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Introduction

In 1987, the Washington State Corrections Standards Board was sunset along with associated efforts, including the local jail construction program that provided funding for the new construction and remodeling of local jails.¹ Since the elimination of these programs, the state has not provided local jail funding, which has been increasingly felt over the last nearly 50 years as communities struggle to stay on top of necessary maintenance and services. The Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) has received many requests from its constituents to advocate for state jail funding over recent years. However, in association with funding conversations, WSAC also recognized that the perceptions and responsibilities of jails have shifted since the 1980s. Therefore, understanding the best way to invest in jails is necessary before requesting funds. As a result, the Jail Modernization Task Force was created.

Legislation Provisos

During the 2023 Sixty-Eighth Regular Legislative Session, the Washington Legislature used [Chapter 44.20 RCW](#) to establish the Jail Modernization Task Force (Task Force) under section 915. [Appendix A](#) provides the full Section 915 text. Section 915 also established that the Task Force’s initial meeting would be no later than December 1, 2024, with an [initial report](#) due to the governor and appropriate legislative committees by July 1, 2025, and a final report on December 31, 2025 (fulfilled by the completion of this document). In addition, Section 607 of the RCW (item 33) appropriated \$95,000 for fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025) for the William D. Ruckelshaus Center (the Center) to conduct a Task Force “convening assessment and design a facilitated collaborative process and work plan” (the Convening Assessment). A convening assessment is a typical part of the collaborative process to evaluate the overall landscape of an issue, the Task Force members, their related perceptions, their values and belief systems, the history and status of their individual and organizational relationships, and their willingness to engage in a collaborative process in good faith. [Appendix B](#) provides the full text of Section 607 item 33. Section 607 also established that the Center would “provide a convening assessment report that [would] include the overall process design and work plan for the Task Force by June 30, 2025.”

Following publication of the Sixty-Eighth Chapter 44.20 RCW, the Center recognized that the Convening Assessment report due date (June 30, 2025) was expected following the initial group meeting of the Task Force itself (by December 1, 2024) with the funds not

¹ Senate Bill Report SB 5005 (2025). <https://lawfilesexternal.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2025-26/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/Senate/5005%20SBA%20HS%2025.pdf?q=20250117195654>

Washington State Attorney General’s Office (2023). *Joint Legislative Task Force on Jail Standards*. <https://agportal-s3bucket.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploadedfiles/2023%20Jail%20Standards%20Report.pdf>

becoming available until July 1, 2024—five months prior to the initial Task Force meeting. As a result, the Center would not be able to begin the necessary convening assessment until July 1, 2024. Additionally, there were no funds made available for the Center to facilitate the Task Force following the Convening Assessment. To rectify these incongruencies, during the 2024 Regular Session—Section 603, the legislature made the \$95,000 Convening Assessment funds available to the Center at the end of fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024) and added \$215,000 to fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025) for the Center to support the Task Force through its work. Additionally, the initial [Convening Assessment Report](#) deadline was edited to be completed by June 30, 2024. [Appendix C](#) provides the full text for Section 603 of [ESSB 5950.PL](#). Assessment funds became available to the Center in April 2024.

The Ask

Using the proviso language, information gathered during the Convening Assessment, and in partnership with Task Force members (listed in [Appendix D](#)), it became understood that at minimum the Task Force would provide recommendations that included:

- the identification of existing facilities in need of upgrades or remodel,
- any need for building new facilities,
- and potential funding sources or mechanisms to make the recommendations feasible.

Additionally, the Task Force would, at minimum, discuss:

- Employee retention issues and potential solutions;
- the impact of overtime, jail atmosphere, emergency response time, and inexperienced corrections officers, and how to overcome these challenges;
- the type of facility needed to house those with behavioral health needs and associated costs of these facilities;
- available diversion programs and their costs;
- types of existing behavioral health facilities for those involved in the criminal justice system, the costs of building and running these facilities, how these facilities vary by location, the viability of offering facilities in every county, and potential system improvements to the types of service and supports offered and delivered to those with behavioral health needs;
- the types of services and supports provided to those exiting the jail system;
- and what reforms are necessary to create and enhance a seamless transition back to the community following jail confinement.

Task Force Characteristics

While the proviso provided the general representation to be included in the Task Force membership, it is important to highlight additional elements of the specific group members. To start, there were three individuals with lived carceral experience, including both juvenile and adult incarceration as well as both male and female experiences. Furthermore, the Task Force members themselves wanted to illuminate that they represented an array of geographical perspectives from East and West parts of the state as

well as rural and urban communities (without over representation of any specific area, such as the I-5 Corridor). Through conversations held with Task Force members, it became clear that the rural versus urban divide had more significance than that of the East/West divide that the proviso discussed.

The Task Force formation occurred during the state's gubernatorial administration change. This along with the retirement of the authoring WSAC CEO, and other context specific realities impacted the overall representation of the final Task Force membership while simultaneously many of individuals who supported the Task Force left their supportive positions. These realities resulted in many barriers to fully appointing and sustaining Task Force members. For instance, representation from the Caseload Forecasting Commission and the Democratic representative from the Senate were never appointed, while representation from the governor's office was lost without follow up replacement following the 2024 election. Furthermore, the limited availability of Republican representatives (as part of the minority party in Washington) resulted in no consistent Republican representation. Finally, as the Task Force convened, members were lost due to additional turnover in positions. [Appendix E](#) provides the attendance reports of each Task Force member.

With a deeper understanding of the Task Force's responsibilities and representation outlined above, the remainder of this report will focus on Key Task Force Member's Values and Interests, Impactful Discussions that inform recommendations, the Recommendations themselves, Justifying Perspectives associated with the recommendations, and Additional Conversations had by Task Force members that did not become full recommendations but are potential starting points for future work.

If you are interested in the process details that Task Force went through to develop recommendations, see [Appendix F](#) and the [July 1, 2025, Report](#).

Key Task Force Member's Values and Interests

From the beginning, Task Force members came to the discussion forums guided by the interests and intrinsic values of the organizations, groups, and experiences they represented. While some of these interests and values aligned, others did not. The interconnectedness of the represented parties required the Task Force to work through and attempt to balance their diverse interests and values. These efforts had significant impacts on the recommendations put forth in this report and the level of support for each. This section provides an explanation of those perspectives to provide clarity and justification for the recommendations.

Jail Modernization

The Task Force had significant agreement that a 'modern jail' is one that is used less. In a modernized carceral system, other community resources are readily available, and currently incarcerated individuals would have greater access to resources that better align with their mental health and behavioral health needs. The Task Force articulated that through this, there would be more touchpoints for diversion throughout the system,

improved re-entry, and reduced recidivism. This understanding of a ‘modern jail’ was directly linked with perspectives that the current carceral system isn’t working at any level be it for individuals and the larger community, COs and jail staff, or counties.

Incarcerated Individuals and the Larger Community

For incarcerated individuals, jails have become a ‘catch all’ institution that are used as the only touchpoint for individuals to gain access to services; do not provide the necessary interventions that foster community safety—including incarcerated individual’s safety needs; and can exacerbate the issues that led to the incarceration. While many of the Task Force members agreed that there are individuals who need to be separated from the larger community to protect themselves and others, current population trends and Task Force perspectives highlight that these individuals are only a small fraction of the jail population across Washington.² Most of this population would be better served by other forms of intervention.

Research, Task Force member, and panelist perspectives highlighted that, during jail incarceration specifically, mental health and behavioral needs are uniquely high.³ Many people become incarcerated due to homelessness or other socio-economic crises. For instance, many jailed individuals are either arrested due to circumstances related to a mental health condition or substance use disorders (SUDs).⁴ Connected, many individuals go through withdrawals while in custody. In these instances, jails are used as a clinical setting which they were not intended to be nor should be (per some Task Force members).

Beyond the state of people as they enter the system, the jail setting can exacerbate the mental and behavioral health challenges individuals face as they do not having access to the outdoors or family and face uncertainty around what their future holds which all

² Peirce, J., Bailey, M., & Elbushra, S. (2022). *Rural Washington State needs: Criminal legal system reform*. Vera Institute of Justice.

<https://www.annualreviews.org/docserver/fulltext/criminol/2/1/annurev-criminol-011518-024601.pdf?expires=1763407663&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=F717E5987826089CDDDBDE2A9ADB933F>

; Washington State Institute for Public Policy (2024). *Jails and Juvenile Detention Centers in Washington State: Population Trends, Survey of Local Facilities, and Availability of CJTC Courses*.

https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1806/Wsipp_Jails-and-Juvenile-Detention-Centers-in-Washington-State-Population-Trends-Survey-of-Local-Facilities-and-Availability-of-CJTC-Courses_Report.pdf

³ Turney, K., & Conner, E. (2019). Jail incarceration: A common and consequential form of criminal justice contact. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 2;

Peirce, J., Bailey, M., & Elbushra, S. (2022). *Rural Washington State needs: Criminal legal system reform*. Vera Institute of Justice. <https://www.annualreviews.org/docserver/fulltext/criminol/2/1/annurev-criminol-011518-024601.pdf?expires=1763407663&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=F717E5987826089CDDDBDE2A9ADB933F>

⁴ Over 60% of people in jail have a mental health disorder, and 65%+ meet criteria for a substance use disorder. Statistics pulled from Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2017). *Indicators of mental health problems reported by prisoners and jail inmates, 2011–12* (NCJ 250612). U.S. Department of Justice.

<https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/indicators-mental-health-problems-reported-prisoners-and-jail-inmates-2011-12>

increases anxiety.⁵ These intense experiences also raised concern for some Task Force members about individuals being able to assist in their own defense and further calls into question the validity of the jail system being able to address clinical needs.

Considering these perspectives, part of the carceral system necessarily needs to include a more robust mental and physical health system that allows for peer, medical, psychological, and behavioral interventions. Services can assist in healing trauma and support struggling community members that do not result in stigmatizing criminal records or further destabilization of livelihoods. This would allow for multiple touchpoints across communities while also providing more opportunities to be diverted from the carceral system.⁶ By ensuring greater community support for individuals, public safety is increased by reducing the risk of future crimes.

Furthermore, according to a study conducted within Washington state rural jails, many individuals are in jails because of “difficulties navigating technical criminal legal system rules [and] the practice of driver’s license suspensions [due] to unpaid fines and failure to appear in court.”⁷ These types of arrest do little for ‘public safety’ and can have detrimental long-term ramifications for individuals, especially those within vulnerable populations. Therefore, reducing such reliance on jail facilities and usher in a more ‘modernized’ system.

CO and Jail Staff

Corrections officers are exposed to the same environment as the incarcerated individuals. For many, the experience of working inside Washington state jails can feel that they are in confinement as well. Long hours, limited access to the outdoors or natural light, and limited movement are stressors that are inherent to working in a jail facility. The physical demands of the position, prolonged walking and standing on concrete for example, can lead to chronic physical conditions like neck, knee, or back pain. Jails can also be a violent place to work, with COs experiencing a higher rate of non-fatal violent incidents than any other occupation, including police officers.⁸ Research shows that working in jail facilities also negatively impacts the mental health of officers. COs have an average life expectancy of about 59 years old, 16 years younger than the national average and suicide rates for officers is 39% higher than the national average.⁹

Despite facing similar dangers as other public safety officers, COs are currently enrolled in the Public Safety Employee’s Retirement System (PSERS), meaning many continue working

⁵ Turney, K., & Conner, E. (2019). Jail incarceration: A common and consequential form of criminal justice contact. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 2

⁶ Additionally, as many in jail experience homelessness prior to incarceration, more robust housing services are a part of this equation.

⁷ Peirce, J., Bailey, M., & Elbushra, S. (2022). *Rural Washington State needs: Criminal legal system reform*. Vera Institute of Justice.

⁸ Brower, J., (2013) *Correctional Officer Wellness and Safety Literature Review*. US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs. <https://perma.cc/7UH5-UV66>.

⁹ Brower, J., (2013) *Correctional Officer Wellness and Safety Literature Review*. US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs. <https://perma.cc/7UH5-UV66>.

in jail facilities longer than it is safe for them to do so. In short, jails are not working for COs or other jail staff either.

The County and Local Resources

Counties bear much of the fiscal responsibility for public safety, typically comprising around 70% of the county's total budget.¹⁰ Similar to other county services, jails heavily rely on revenues from property taxes, their primary funding source, but are limited to annual increases of 1%. Coupled with constituent reluctance to pass proposed tax increases and growing inflation, county budgets have struggled to keep up with rising costs and demands. The trial court system, public defense services, county police and the sheriff's office, juvenile justice facilities, and juvenile justice services are all competing for that same pot of funding. Some Task Force members and panelists even discussed how out of the general funds, jails are often the last to be funded, receiving only what is left. Consolidated funding sources and competing costs has left county budgets unable to address necessary infrastructure improvements nor invest in innovative forms of service delivery.

According to the WSIPP report, employees (67.5%) and facility resident needs (16.8%) accounted for the vast majority of the average facility's operating budget. Throughout this process, WASPC panelists consistently noted that the largest cost increases are being seen in healthcare; specifically, drastic spikes in provider contracts and very few medical providers/contractors that are entering into new contracts with jail facilities.¹¹

It is also important to mention that the Task Force discussed how it is common for jails to seek a judge's permission to release individuals that are held pre-trial and who have high medical needs or costly upcoming procedures to reduce agency expenses. Based on Task Force conversations, these requests are frequently granted. This calls into question if the individual's pre-trial confinement was really a 'public safety' concern.

The State Has a Role

Another conversation held by the Task Force surrounded what role the state should have in jails. A significant number of Task Force members held the perspective that the state views jails as a local or county issue; however, they also agreed that the state still has a role in funding and maintaining jails. This in large part was due to the recognition that many state and federal agencies rely on local jails to house their incarcerated individuals for short periods of time post-conviction or while awaiting trial. Many on the Task Force also agreed that beyond funding and maintaining jails, the state also has a role in ensuring oversight of jails.

¹⁰ Washington Association of Counties (2025). *Investing in Public Safety Where It Matters the Most*. https://wsac.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/25-26_Leg-One-Pager_Funding.pdf

¹¹ Wilson, C., (2025) 'There is no other option' as medical costs in Kitsap and Washington jails soar. Kitsap Sun. <https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2025/10/31/kitsap-county-jail-costs-continue-to-rise-for-healthcare-services/86840702007/>

Jail Footprint and Design

Tied to the idea that jails should be used less, many Task Force members held the belief that while the state has a responsibility to jails, state funds should not be used to increase the footprint of jails through increasing the number of beds. Many argued that when the number of jail beds is increased, local courts have an incentive to fill beds to justify the expansion rather than actively seeking and investing in alternatives to incarceration, especially during pre-trial periods or for those experiencing homelessness and mental and behavioral health crisis (which research supports).¹² In this view, Task Force members advocated that state funds should be used to improve access to alternative interventions and pro-social practices. If local communities do desire to expand the footprint of jails, they should do so using local funds.

To complicate this perspective, it was also recognized that not every jail bed is created equally. Although some beds are strictly for the purpose of detaining individuals, others recognize that beds that provide space for physical, mental, and behavioral health intervention when needed. One example of the variation in beds comes from Clark County where the remodel plan includes beds specified for acute mental health housing and medical housing.¹³ However, this again raises the question of whether jails should be the ‘catch all’ institution and whether they should be clinical setting.

Re-examining the understanding of the different types of jail beds also connects to a larger conversation of other pro-social jail design that moves away from linear models to podular jail designs.¹⁴ In many communities, the desired jail design is podular due to its proposed benefits of improved safety, streamlined operations, smaller footprint, improved classification management, and—perhaps most important for the Task Force’s perspectives—enhanced rehabilitation and improved relations between staff and incarcerated people.¹⁵ Throughout Task Force conversations, enhanced rehabilitation was centered as the desired end goal of jail incarceration. However, the Task Force also discussed the challenges that can come with the podular design related to the increasing “prevalence of mental health disorders.”¹⁶ For example, one Task Force member discussed how their community has a podular design and now struggles to provide enough single person cells for individuals detoxing or struggling with mental health. This was not highlighted as a means of discrediting podular design but instead recognizing the need to

¹² Sawyer, W., and Wagner, P. (2025). Mass incarceration: The whole pie 2025. *Prison Policy Initiative*. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2025.html>

¹³ KMB Architects (2025). *Welcome to the Clark County Jail Renovation and Expansion Project County Council Work Session*. Power Point Presentation. https://clark.wa.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2025-02/021225-jail-renovation_expansion_0.pdf

¹⁴ Thelen, N. (2020). *The benefits of podular jail design vs. linear*. Samuels Group: Design, Construct, Furnish. <https://www.samuelsgroup.net/blog/benefits-of-podular-jail-design-vs.-linear>

¹⁵ Thelen, N. (2020). *The benefits of podular jail design vs. linear*. Samuels Group: Design, Construct, Furnish. <https://www.samuelsgroup.net/blog/benefits-of-podular-jail-design-vs.-linear>

¹⁶ Washington State Institute for Public Policy (2024). *Jails and Juvenile Detention Centers in Washington State: Population Trends, Survey of Local Facilities, and Availability of CJTC Courses*. https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1806/Wsipp_Jails-and-Juvenile-Detention-Centers-in-Washington-State-Population-Trends-Survey-of-Local-Facilities-and-Availability-of-CJTC-Courses_Report.pdf

ensure jails provide space for an array of diverse population needs (including diverse bed models) if jails continue to be used as a “catch all” institution.

Another important view connected to not expanding jail footprints is that not all Task Force members agreed with the premise of the Task Force itself. Specifically, Disability Rights Washington (DRW) was vocal in their stance that they did not support the proviso/Task Force’s goals or intent but were legislatively required to attend. DRW’s (and other’s) opposition to the Task Force was paired with ideas that ‘modernizing’ jails does not have to mean addressing the physical aspects of facilities but finding ways to use jails less and establishing alternative options to incarceration. It is important to note that although DRW did not agree with the proviso or Task Force, they regularly attended and participated in good faith, even though some of the resulting recommendations are associated with topics they do not see as a part of their scope.¹⁷

Upgrades and Remodels

Identifying existing facilities in need of upgrades or remodels was challenging due to the diversity of needs jails currently face. To start, it was recognized that many jails were built long before the introduction of many technological advances used today. According to the WSIPP Report, the oldest facility still operating is 86 years old (built in 1939) while the average age of facilities is 34.7.¹⁴ The WSIPP Report also highlights that jails on the East side have received far fewer upgrades, remodels, or rebuilds than their counterparts on the West side. As jails are often built with concrete walls, renovation and remodeling projects designed to implement new technology can be expensive. Depending on the extent of upgrades needed, some argue it may be cheaper to build new. In the end, most jails across the state, require some level of upgrades or remodeling for their building’s infrastructure or their internal systems (such as HVAC, plumbing, or fire safety).¹⁸ The WSIPP data (shared with the Task Force by WSIPP) and final report are the most comprehensive information source currently available to understand which jails need attention in which ways.

The WSIPP data that was shared with the Task Force members can be found in [Appendix H](#). What this data did highlight for the Task Force is that the age of the jail should not be the sole factor used to determine which jails receive attention, instead the condition of jail’s internal systems should have significant bearing.

Although the WSIPP data is the most comprehensive information currently available, the Task Force had concerns around using it to make decisions. The first concern was that the data is self-reported which leaves room to question its accuracy. The second concern is the stagnancy of the data. The data was collected in 2023, analyzed throughout 2024, and made available for consideration in December 2024. A lot can change in two years, especially since jails continued to occur ‘wear and tear.’ As we now conclude a third year since the initiation of the WSIPP Survey Data, Grays Harbor County Jail provides one

¹⁷ The perspective that final Task Force recommendations are outside the scope of an organization’s work led to the inclusion of an ‘abstain’ option during voting as is discussed [below](#).

¹⁸ The WSIPP data evaluated the following internal systems: security, fire safety, mechanical (i.e. vent, and fans), plumbing, and electrical systems. The WSIPP Data can be found in [Appendix H](#).

example of the Task Force’s concerns. The jail had a fire in the basement laundry facility in February 2025, shifting their needs in ways that do not match the reported 2023 data.¹⁹

Another challenge to making specific recommendations on which jails need upgrades or remodels was the lack of statewide standards that can be used as metrics to equitably evaluate jails. During conversations, the Task Force continuously recognized the need for statewide jail standards but understood that it was not their responsibility to establish such standards. They instead understood that the [JSTF](#) was tasked making recommendations regarding “statewide jail minimum standards, oversight, or policy changes to ensure jails conditions meet state and federal constitutional and statutory standards...” among other tasks.²⁰ To date, none of the recommendations put forth by the JSTF have been adopted by the state.²¹

Funding

Another discussion had focused on state and local funding. From the start, the Task Force members recognized the state’s current financial situation and used such understandings to think creatively about funding options. The Task Force members also expressed desires to avoid repeating the 1980’s cycle of the state provided a one-time influx of funds that was not followed by continued support, leading to the current jail infrastructure crisis that initiated this Task Force. The combination of these stances in connection with the view that the [state has a responsibility to jails](#) and a desire to have state [funds go towards pro-social interventions](#) had significant influence on the recommendations provided below.

In the end, the Task Force did generally agree that upgrades and remodels that address health concerns should take priority. This would include prioritizing the internal jail system needs—such as fire safety, plumbing, HVAC, and mechanical needs—as well as ensuring appropriate spaces for health-based intervention. The Task Force also had general agreement that while it was not their job to establish state level jail standards, such standards and an oversight board are necessary.

Legislative Recommendations

The following are recommendations the Task Force developed for the state legislature. Although not all recommendations have full consensus (which was not a requirement), there is strong support for each. The voting linked to each recommendation as well as the Key Task Force Member’s Values and Interests, provide insight into why consensus was not achieved. To assist in understanding how much support each recommendation has from individual Task Force representation, the following voting options are provided at the end of the recommendation:

¹⁹ News Staff, (Feb. 23, 2025) [Fire](#) at Grays Harbor County jail prompts evacuation of inmates. *KomoNews*. <https://komonews.com/news/local/county-jail-grays-harbor-sheriff-office-law-enforcement-evacuation-of-inmates-clothing-dryer-district-2-montesano-fire-department-ghso-residents>

²⁰ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=70.48.801&pdf=true>

²¹ Washington State Attorney General’s Office (2023). *Joint Legislative Task Force on Jail Standards*. <https://agportal-s3bucket.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploadedfiles/2023%20Jail%20Standards%20Report.pdf>

- **Support:** Indicate that the Task Force member provides full approval for the implementation of the recommendation
- **Need Further Discussion:** Indicate that clarification is still needed before the Task Force member can provide full support
- **Oppose:** Indicate that the Task Force member does not support the recommendation
- **Abstain:** Indicates that the Task Force member either (1) did not believe the topic related to something that their represented organization would traditionally address, (2) did not feel as though they are informed enough about the issues and no additional conversation would make a significant difference, or (3) viewed the recommendations as being outside of the scope of the Task Force.

It is important to highlight that the Task Force was adamant that the below recommendations need to be supported by state funding to ensure that associated costs of implementation do not fall to local jurisdictions, which would exacerbate their current financial challenges.

Recommendation 1- Legislative Low-barrier Jail Construction Loan

The following recommendation provides a reasonable path forward for jail construction through pairing state and local funding of both the planning for and the remodeling of facilities, and the implementation of evidence-based programs that will reduce the need for jail cells (long-term) while reducing crime and recidivism. The funds discussed would not be sufficient to fully fund projects but would establish a competitive loan system using state funds to reward counties that are willing to invest local dollars.

Legislative Funds

Create a revolving loan fund of 100 million dollars a year, for five years, as part of an upcoming legislative capital budget that would provide a pool of funds that counties could access to bring their existing jail facilities up to minimum standards and construct/remodel facilities to provide the needed space for community-based service providers, recidivism reduction programming, and behavioral and physical health treatment.

Administration

The loan fund would be administered by the Department of Commerce and be distributed annually based on competitive applications. Considering where the WSIPP Report indicated the most critical needs, half the loan funds should be prioritized for jail facilities in Eastern Washington and rural counties in Western Washington,²² the other half would be available to all counties based on aligned criteria. The interest rate on the loans would be

²² In addition to the rural and urban divide, the application process should consider the limited ability of many sparsely populated rural counties to generate significant revenues from the local sales tax options- thus comparing relative local investments based on ability to raise local revenues, not just the volume of any local match.

the lowest possible rate sufficient to pay back the loans along with administrative costs- subject to [loan forgiveness](#) as set out below.²³

The specific points of competition should be set out in the enabling legislation, but would include at a minimum the following criteria:

1. Documented repair and reconfiguration needs of the jail facility sought to be remodeled;²⁴
2. previously attempted mitigation strategies being used to address needs in the meantime,
3. amount (both proportional to taxing authority available and volume of funds) of local tax funds dedicated to the project;
4. age of the jail facility sought to be remodeled;
5. availability of community-based service providers;
6. current program service level and barriers to providing services and healthcare; and
7. facility health, safety, and population concerns.

Funding Requirements

The following requirements would likely make such a program more fiscally responsible and attract legislative support from those who disfavor investment in traditional jail facilities and/or are more fiscally conservative.

- Disallow use of the state loan funds on feasibility study, design and land acquisition costs (reserving those costs to local jurisdiction funds and ensuring that most of the state funds will be used for repairs and remodeling after local jurisdictions have demonstrated their financial commitment by completing preliminary work);
- disallow use of these funds for building new jail cells given the evidence that such cells are the most expensive and least effective interventions to reduce recidivism and rehabilitate those accused of committing crimes;²⁵
 - This limitation doesn't preclude new jail cells; it simply requires local jurisdictions who choose this public policy approach to fund it with their own dollars under the presumption that state funding should be prioritized for interventions that are evidence-based and most effective in reducing crime and saving money in the future.
- allow funds to be used to provide electronic tablets for use by appropriately screened incarcerated individuals to facilitate proven behavioral health treatment

²³ Including loan forgiveness means the fund would not be perpetual once it was initially funded, but if the requirements of increasing pro-social programming and its proven outcomes of reducing recidivism and crime would reduce the need for jail space going forward as compared to not implementing the programming.

²⁴ Even if the same number of beds are preserved, some facilities need to reconfigure the footprint of the jail to allow for either more or less minimum- or maximum-security space and sometimes additional spaces for medical/behavioral health treatment and pro-social programming.

²⁵ "New" is understood to be adding a jail cell to the count of available jail cells operated by the jurisdiction or replacing an existing jail cell in a jurisdiction with a newly constructed cell. This reduces the incentive for jurisdictions to incur the extensive costs of building new facilities rather than utilizing and repurposing existing facilities. Adding beds intended primarily for some type of treatment would not be considered new jail beds and would not be restricted.

interventions, education and communication with family and support team members at no cost to the incarcerated person;²⁶

- This is a relatively low-cost investment that is proven to support rehabilitation and reduce recidivism while non-convicted individuals are awaiting trial.
- designated cap on administrative costs, ensuring that most of the funds will be used for actual critical repairs, improving healthcare delivery, and other rehabilitative programming;
- allow funds to be used for medical equipment and other costs associated with providing healthcare (including providing space for privacy); and
 - This includes but is not limited to biometric monitoring, telemedicine, and durable medical equipment.
- allow funds to be used to increase access to legal counsel and associated privacy.

Loan Forgiveness for Counties

As a further incentive for counties to align themselves with evidence-based recidivism reduction policies, the loan fund would forgive interest and principal payments each year up to the amount that the county dedicates in local tax dollars beyond their previous five year average of spending on alternatives to incarceration programs that are based on interventions that have been demonstrated by WSIPP to be more effective than jail in terms of cost savings and reduced recidivism.²⁷

Benefits

The proposal utilizes low interest loans and loan forgiveness as incentives rather than impose mandates on facilities while recognizing that each county has unique needs. It still holds counties accountable for locally funding a significant portion of the cost of improvements (land, feasibility and design) and incentivizes counties to choose evidence-based programs that will increase safety and reduce crime in their communities while reclaiming the lives of community members who have engaged in criminal behavior.²⁸ Importantly, this proposal may bridge the legislative standoff between those who want to increase reliance on jails and those that want to decrease reliance by providing safer and more humane structures paired with proven rehabilitative programming.

²⁶ Additional guidelines should be developed as part of the funding criteria for tablets to ensure that tablets are used for evidence-based programming that accomplishes treatment and rehabilitation goals.

²⁷ Examples include increased spending on drug and other therapeutic courts, supervised and supported pre-trial release, tier I and tier II pre-trial electronic home monitoring, day and night reporting, diversion programs, and operation of the recidivism reduction facilities described above. Increasing spending on these programs will both protect local taxpayers and statewide taxpayers from funding future proposed infrastructure bailouts that could be avoided by implementing increased pro-social criminal justice policies. King, Spokane and Yakima counties have demonstrated remarkable success with this approach, that could be replicated across the State by willing counties.

²⁸ Any loan/loan forgiveness program assumes that the overseeing agency will hold counties accountable to the programmatic terms of the loan and any forgiveness of loan payments granted.

One purpose of this loan program is to build on the success of to-date limited legislative funding for facilities that house people who would otherwise be in jail with programs that better address their behavioral health needs at a substantially lower cost to local and state taxpayers.

Voting

(Out of 14 People)

Support: 13

Need Further Discussion:

Oppose: Disability Rights Washington

Abstain:

Auxiliary Policies that Would Support the Recommendation

While the bullets listed below were not factored into the voting process, they are connected proposals that are not required for the above recommendation to be implemented but would likely increase its effectiveness and are offered as an addendum.

- Require state and federal authorities to pay the actual per day costs for the incarcerated people under their jurisdictions housed in county jails, including a proportional contribution to regular maintenance and long-term capital investment. Currently, federal and state agencies typically pay less than the actual operational cost for utilizing county jail space to incarcerate individuals under their jurisdiction. Enacting a state law that requires full payment would strengthen the bargaining position of counties when they negotiate these contracts, and the Washington Department of Corrections supports this change.
- Require local jurisdictions to establish a long-term jail facility capital investment fund and deposit a minimum amount into that fund for each overnight spent in their jail. This would be paid by both the county hosting the jail facility and other in-county or out-of-county jurisdictions that direct individuals to be held in that facility. By requiring all jail facilities to fund their future repairs and replacement proportional to usage, Washington can likely either avoid or minimize the challenge of delayed infrastructure repairs that it currently faces, and jurisdictions would pay the actual costs of the criminal justice policies they implement.
- Adopt either advisory or required state-wide jail standards that will protect the health and welfare of jail employees and those who are detained. Like the proposal above, voluntary compliance could be paired with state funding for early adopters.
- Continue to support the adoption and extension of the Medicaid Transformation Waiver for medical, mental/behavioral health and substance abuse care in county jails during the first ninety days of incarceration and during re-entry. The implementation of the waiver is ongoing across the state, but it has the potential to provide substantial financial resources for housing, substance abuse treatment, medical care and employment support to go along with robust re-entry planning, which would likely reduce recidivism, and the carousel effect of briefly incarcerating property crime suspects only to have them return to the jail on new charges.

- Implement state revenue sharing for counties that choose to rehabilitate locally non-violent felons instead of prison. This Accelerated Rehabilitation and Community Safety (ARCS)²⁹ initiative would provide 50 percent of the cost of housing a convicted person in a state prison to the local jurisdiction that rehabilitates and supervises the person locally in a therapeutic court. This would have a net positive fiscal impact for both the State and the participating county; and it could be utilized as the county’s funding of local recidivism programs that would result in forgiveness of their facility construction loans.

Recommendation 2-Establish Jail Oversight Agency

The Jail Modernization Task Force recommends establishing an independent agency to provide ongoing oversight of city, county, and regional jails. The Jail Oversight Agency should prioritize and emphasize the humane treatment of people who are incarcerated and reflect current legal requirements related to custodial care and welfare necessary for the operation of healthy, safe, and secure facilities.

The Task Force recommends that the Legislature fully funds the Jail Oversight Agency to ensure that the agency is properly staffed and can remain independent from any facility they are tasked to oversee. The Jail Oversight Agency will be tasked with providing technical assistance, data collection and analysis, auditing monitoring and facilitating multi-agency collaboration.

Voting

(Out of 14 People)

Support: 13

Need Further Discussion:

Oppose: Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (East)

Abstain:

Recommendation 3-Updated Retirement System for Correctional Officers (COs)

The Task Force recommends transitioning correctional officers off their current Public Safety Employee’s Retirement System (PSERS) and either establishing a retirement system that mirrors the Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters’ Retirement System (LEOFF)—which could be a subcategory or extension of PSERS (identified as the more feasible option)—or moving them onto to LEOFF.

Currently, COs in Washington State jails are part of the PSERS, which is specifically designed for public safety employees. Employees contribute 6.91 percent of their salary, which calculates an employee's monthly pension at 2 percent x years of service x Average

²⁹ ARCS has previously been proposed to the Legislature and is currently being studied by the judiciary but has not yet gathered sufficient momentum to get a vote. Copies of the ARCS proposal are available on request.

Final Compensation (AFC).³⁰ Full retirement benefits are available at age 65 with five years of service or at age 53 with twenty years of service. However, every year of retirement earlier than 60 results in a 3 percent benefit deduction to offset the longer timeline of receiving benefits. In comparison, Washington State community police officers are part of the Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters' Retirement System (LEOFF). This is a lifetime pension plan funded by contributions from employees, employers, and the state. Employees contribute 8.53 percent of their salary, which is calculated at 2 percent x years of service – Final Average Salary (FAS).³¹ FAS is the average of the highest 60 consecutive months of service. Full benefits are eligible at age 53 with at least five years of service or at any age with twenty years of service (with the same 3 percent full benefit deduction per year early).

Benefits

By establishing a retirement program for COs, as a subcategory under PSERS, that mirrors LEOFF or moving COs to LEOFF, they would benefit from higher contributions and early retirement potentials. This could ultimately reduce their overall mental and physical health risks by reducing the number of years working in a high-stress environment and ensure continued state investment into COs as the state would contribute to the pension plan. Additionally, this would elevate CO reputations in Washington to be equitable to the representation of other law enforcement entities and position the job as a career rather than a steppingstone to Law Enforcement. This would reduce CO turnover across the state.

Voting

(Out of 14 People)

Support: 10

Need Further Discussion:

Oppose:

Abstain: Disability Rights Washington; Sentencing Guidelines Commission; The Healthcare Authority; Department of Social and Health Services

Recommendation 4- Bridge Program to Medicare

Create a Medicare bridge program for COs to ensure that they do not need to keep working past their 20 years of service (or 53 with 5 years of service) retirement age just to keep medical insurance.

Voting

(Out of 14 People)

Support: 11

Need Further Discussion:

Oppose:

³⁰ PSERS Plan 2. Washington State Department of Retirement Systems. (n.d.). <http://drs.wa.gov/plan/psers2/>

³¹ LEOFF Plan 2. Washington State Department of Retirement Systems. (n.d.). <http://drs.wa.gov/plan/leoff2/>

Abstain: Disability Rights Washington; Sentencing Guidelines Commission;
Department of Social and Health Services

Recommendations 5- DOC Bridge Certificate Program

The state should explore creating a bridging certificate program that allows DOC COs hired after July 1, 2021, to transition to local jail CO positions. This would work to ensure that when local jails hire from DOC, they do not have to send them to the full 10-week CJTC training course and increased value is put on the experience DOC COs bring with them. The objective of this recommendation is to eliminate barriers between state and county/city correctional officer certification systems, thereby improving workforce mobility and recruitment.

Currently, the Washington State DOC does not train its corrections officers at CJTC and are not certified under the state. City and county correctional officers became certified under the state in July 2021. CJTC does provide the Corrections Officers Equivalency Academy (COEA) which is an 80-hour (2 week) alternative to the regular 10-week academy program.³² This allow lateral transfers of correctional officers whether they are in-state or out-of-state applicants; however, after the adoption of certification in 2021, DOC officers are often no longer eligible if their hire date was after July 1, 2021. Therefore, potential applicants with up to 4 years of correctional work experience are unable to attend, a group that will continue to grow with time while the pool of individuals with experience prior to July 1, 2021, will continue to shrink. Exploring options to create additional certificate programs can help ensure continued flexibility in moving from DOC to local Jail facilities that can improve CO recruitment.

Voting

(Out of 14 People)

Support: 9

Need Further Discussion:

Oppose: Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (East)

Abstain: Disability Rights Washington; Sentencing Guidelines Commission;
Washington State Minority and Justice Commission; Department of Social and Health Services

Recommendation 6- Jail Innovation and Best Practice Hub

Creation of a statewide technical assistance center would help spread evidence-based practices; investigate promising practices;³³ provide training and consulting to jail administrators; pilot new technologies and facility design; and partner with

³² Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (n.d.). *Corrections Officer Equivalency Academy*. <https://cjtc.wa.gov/training-education/corrections-officers-equivalency-academy>

³³ This would include looking towards tribal community practices (and other diverse cultural practices) and work to highlight or establish the necessary studies to ensure that such practices are supported under the view of “evidence-based.”

universities/colleges and criminal justice organizations.³⁴ This could also assist in providing Washington specific administrative leadership trainings to jail chiefs, directors, and managers (which some panelists expressed interest in expanding). The Task Force recognized this as a means of getting to statewide standards that could be implemented and connects with recommendation one to help support evidence-based or promising practices to be considered during the loan program.

Voting

(Out of 14 People)

Support: 12

Need Further Discussion:

Oppose: Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (East)

Abstain: Disability Rights Washington

Recommendation 7- Expand Telehealth in Jails

Expand telehealth to increase provider access for physical and behavioral health needs (including evidence-based mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) treatments), to augment in-person services with clinicians, physicians, peer support specialists, legal counselors and others. Most jails face severe shortages of on-site behavioral health providers, particularly in rural or high-turnover regions.

Telehealth can help address space constraints and outside providers who lack jail clearance. In addition, telehealth can expand the number of services that can be provided simultaneously -this may be especially important for Medicaid billing purposes, as all providers may not be able to provide services in person. This is especially important as a lack of timely treatment can lead to higher rates of suicide, violence, and recidivism. The goal is to expand access to licensed community-based providers, mitigate provider shortages, reduce in-jail behavioral incidents, and improve post-release outcomes. It is important to note that Telehealth needs to occur in partnership with, not instead of, in-person services. The Task Force and panelists highlighted that in-person services are favored more by individuals in carceral settings and that many health ailments require physical connection to properly diagnose. Telehealth needs are supplemental not a replacement.

Elements of the Recommendation

- Partner with Community-Based Treatment Providers³⁵

³⁴ This could include partnering with such organizations as The Center for Advancing Correctional Excellence (ACE) or colleges like the University of Washington or Washington State University. These partnerships could be a catalyst for establishing a more robust literature around jail's specific needs separate from the rest of the carceral system.

³⁵ Tele-behavioral health is as effective as in-person treatment in jails and improves access to culturally competent care. See Zhong, S., Senior, M., Yu, R., Perry, A. E., Hawton, K., & Fazel, S. (2021). Psychological therapies for preventing self-harm in adults in correctional settings: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Psychological Medicine*, 51(14), 2321–2330. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S003329172000179>; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2020). *Telebehavioral health care in*

- Establish contracts with local licensed therapists, substance use disorder counselors, and Medication Assisted Treatment prescribers.
- Schedule live video sessions via secure platforms integrated with jail-approved technology.
- Ensure clinical coverage across all housing units through rotation and on-call models.
- Use Validated Screening for Targeted Care³⁶
 - Screen all individuals at intake using evidence-based tools (e.g., BJMHS, TCU Drug Screen).
 - Prioritize high-need individuals for telehealth engagement within first week of booking.
- Deploy Tablet-Based Therapy for Self-Directed Support³⁷
 - Upload on-demand community-based treatment, relapse prevention, and mindfulness programs.
 - Include secure messaging and scheduling for video sessions with providers.
 - Track engagement metrics through the tablet's learning management system.
- Create Post-Release Continuity Plans³⁸
 - Link participants with community providers prior to release for uninterrupted care.
 - Share clinical summaries and consented contact information to reduce care gaps.
 - Incorporate virtual aftercare meetings in reentry planning.

Needed Implementation Elements

- Live telehealth sessions with community-based providers
- Self-directed therapeutic modules accessible via tablets
- Private telehealth spaces for sensitive sessions (where tablets are not feasible)

correctional settings. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/telebehavioral-health-correctional-settings.pdf>

³⁶ Early identification leads to fewer suicide attempts and in-custody incidents. See Steadman, H. J., Osher, F. C., Robbins, P. C., Case, B., & Samuels, S. (2009). Prevalence of serious mental illness among jail inmates. *Psychiatric Services*, 60(6), 761–765. <https://doi.org/10.1176/ps.2009.60.6.761>

³⁷ Tablet use increases treatment engagement and helps build coping skills, especially among first-time and young inmates. See Miller, J., Renn, T., & Barnes, A. (2022). The potential of tablet-based programming to support mental health and rehabilitation in U.S. jails. *Journal of Correctional Health Care*, 28(1), 21–32. <https://doi.org/10.1089/jchc.2021.0017>

³⁸ Jail-based MAT programs with coordinated handoff post-release reduce opioid-related deaths by over 60 percent. See Green, T. C., Clarke, J., Brinkley-Rubinstein, L., Marshall, B. D. L., Alexander-Scott, N., Boss, R., & Rich, J. D. (2018). Post-incarceration fatal overdoses after implementing medications for addiction treatment in a statewide correctional system. *JAMA Psychiatry*, 75(4), 405–407. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2017.4614>; RAND Corporation. (2018). *Evaluating the effectiveness of correctional education: A meta-analysis of programs that provide education to incarcerated adults*.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html

- Post-release continuity of care planning with provider handoff

Anticipated Outcomes

Anticipated outcomes include increased access to behavioral health, reduction in number of suicide attempts, less violence and disciplinary incidents, and lower recidivism and post-release overdoses.

Providing virtual behavioral health care through jail-based telehealth and tablets is a strategic, scalable solution to a longstanding care gap. It improves public health, enhances safety, and offers meaningful support to individuals with complex behavioral needs—while reducing reliance on punitive, ineffective responses.

An additional outcome of establishing the necessary infrastructure for telehealth is the potential to use it to increase access to legal counsel as well.

Potential Next Steps

- Stakeholder Review & Approval
- Technology Assessment & Vendor Selection
- Pilot Program Rollout (1–2 housing units in a few jails)
- Training for Jail Staff and Community Providers
- Evaluation and Outcome Tracking

Voting

(Out of 14 People)

Support: 14

Need Further Discussion:

Oppose:

Abstain:

Local Recommendations

In this section the Task Force outlines additional recommendations that surfaced but were recognized as being more of a local control issue. Therefore, these are recommendations local community jails—CO's, staff, or jail/county administrators and boards—can consider. Furthermore, some of these recommendations can be used to increase pro-social practices that may help in loan forgiveness associated with Legislative [Recommendation 1](#).

Local Recommendation 1- Updated Staffing Models and Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Staffing Models

As one of the guest panelists acknowledged, many staffing models jails use were established 30-50 years ago and therefore do not align with the needs of jails today.

Conducting comprehensive staffing analyses to determine an optimal staffing model, including accounting for staff on leave or training could be beneficial.

The current standard of using staff-to-incarcerated ratios is based on the current facility population and does not account for population increase or the need for specialized resources. Ideally, staffing models should be based on operational capacity and account for relief staffing to accommodate vacations, sick leave, and training. The establishment of this model could include appropriate staffing to meet medical and behavioral health treatment and counseling. Staffing should be sufficient to ensure 24/7 care in a 365-day operation without relying heavily (as is currently the case) on either voluntary or required overtime that increases stress and burn out and decreased mental health and retention.

Recruitment and Retention Committee

A robust recruitment and retention committee in each jail is key to improving staff shortages. Membership could be a diverse representation of the workforce, including representatives from human resources, management, and staff to consider varied perspectives and expertise, as well as developing metrics and feedback to identify areas for improvement and measure initiative success. Providing competitive salaries and benefits to retain staff is an obvious and recurring need, as well as consideration of bonuses for long-term service or exceptional performance and re-evaluating shift structures.

While the corrections field has limited professional development opportunities, creating opportunities for training, certifications, and career development are key retention tools. Addressing issues like overcrowding and outdated facilities are important workplace factors, as well as enhancing safety measures and providing modern equipment and technology. Support of employees could include implementation of programs to recognize and reward contributions.

Exploring programs to support staff with mental health services and stress management increases the overall health of employees and validates their value. Incorporating a flexible schedule for employees or shift options to accommodate personal needs fosters a sense of belonging. Peer supports, mental health days, and telehealth options could help build a better support structure to retain staff. Identifying team-building activities and open communication demonstrates value and comradery. These strategies require commitment from leadership and collaboration with staff to ensure needs are met. All of these and the following proposed trainings, supports and relational improvements between staff and those incarcerated will help reach the goal of reducing recidivism, as well as the need for jails over the longer-term.

Other Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Other recruitment strategies to consider or are in process in some counties include:

- Offer hiring bonuses, or bonuses based on milestones. (3 months, one year, or 5 years). Several facilities are currently offering \$3000 to \$5000.
- Provide hiring bonuses to specialty trained staff, or mental health staff.
- Award staff bonuses for referrals.

- Allow different work shifts, including 12-hour shifts, 4-10s, 9-8's or rotating shifts.
- Create positions within existing personnel that include a part time focus on hiring and onboarding to communicate hiring practices and position descriptions.
- Identify ways to reduce the retirement age for correctional officers

Other retentions strategies to consider or are in process in some counties include:

- Use funds slated for vacant FTEs to provide raises for existing personnel.
- Allow different work shifts, including 12-hour shifts, 4-10s, 9-8's or rotating shifts.
- Allow staff to trade shifts as needed.
- Provide a break room for staff outside of the jail. Break time needs to remove employees from jail duties.
- Create incident debriefing, Critical Incident Stress Management teams, offering administrative time off following a critical incident, and routine staff check-ins.
- Provide a complete fitness facility, shooting range, or gym membership to a local fitness club.
- Start a wellness program.
- Offer continual training to enhance professional development.
- Conduct cultural audits in jails.
- Create a clear facility Vision, Mission and Values.

Local Recommendation 2- Expand Opportunities for Formally Incarcerated Individuals

This is primarily a local issue and could encourage counties to increase pay and benefits proportional to the degree that they adopt policies that emphasize rehabilitation over incarceration. The State could support counties by considering the benefits of hiring previously incarcerated people – for correctional officer duties, other staff and for peer supports.

Local Recommendation 3- Public University Collaboration

Partnerships between public universities and correctional facilities have been established to address recruitment needs and enhance educational opportunities. Universities partner with jails to offer internships for criminal justice or social work students. These internships provide hands-on experience in correctional settings, which can lead to recruitment opportunities for the facility.³⁹

Jails can also establish collaborations with public universities for research projects to improve correctional practices and policies. These programs can create recruitment pipelines by working with jails to encourage graduates to consider careers in corrections through job fairs, workshops, and informal sessions. Partnerships with higher education could help to bring educated young people back into their smaller communities.

³⁹ Rand Corporation – What corrections officials need to know to partner with colleges to implement college programs in prison.

Some correctional facilities and law enforcement agencies offer student loan forgiveness or Educational Assistance Program Plans (pursuant to section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code which allows employers to directly pay student loan payments up to \$5,250/year⁴⁰) to assistance programs to attract and retain staff. Public Service Loan Forgiveness identifies employees working in government-run correctional facilities; if qualified, federal student loans may be forgiven after 120 qualifying payments while working in public service³¹. Some states have loan repayment assistance programs for law enforcement personnel, which may include correctional staff, while some agencies provide direct student loan repayment assistance as part of their benefits package. This was viewed by the Task Force as an additional means of increasing correctional officer retention.

Local Recommendation 4- Expanding Peer Support Services

Expand the use of Certified Peer Support Specialist—leveraging individuals with a lived experience of incarceration, recovery, and/or successfully managing their mental health—to address the lack of adequate mental health and substance use treatment inside facilities.⁴¹

Jails across Washington face a critical shortage of licensed behavioral health providers (especially in rural communities), leaving many incarcerated individuals without adequate access to mental health and/or substance use treatment. Traditional provider models alone are insufficient to meet the behavioral health needs of the jail population. According to the evidence, this recommendation will likely improve engagement and provide culturally responsive support during and after incarceration.

Recent Washington State legislation allows certified peer support specialists (CPSS) to be recognized as behavioral health providers and reimbursed through Medicaid for eligible services.⁴² Utilizing trained peers is an evidence-based, cost-effective, and scalable solution for jails looking to provide better, more effective behavioral health support.

Certified Peer Support Specialists can:

- Deliver individual and group support
- Facilitate psychoeducation and relapse prevention groups

⁴⁰ 26 U.S. Code § 127- Educational Assistance Program. Cornell Law School Legal Information Institute. (n.d.). <http://law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/26/127>.

⁴¹ Peer support is associated with higher engagement, lower rates of recidivism, and improved mental health outcomes in justice-involved populations. See Bassuk, E. L., Hanson, J., Greene, R. N., Richard, M., & Laudet, A. (2016). Peer-delivered recovery support services for addictions in the United States: A systematic review. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 63, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2016.01.003>; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2020). *Value of peers*. <https://www.samhsa.gov/brss-tacs/recovery-support-tools/peers>

⁴² Under Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1547 (2023), Washington law expanded the scope of practice for peer support specialists, recognizing them as behavioral health professionals. As of July 1, 2024, certified peer specialists may bill Medicaid under the supervision of licensed clinicians for a range of behavioral health services (RCW 71.24). The Washington Health Care Authority now maintains a registry of peer-certified providers qualified to deliver services in a variety of settings, including correctional environments.

- Provide motivational interviewing and recovery planning
- Help de-escalate behavioral health crises before they require use of force or solitary confinement (this is now being done inside DCYF facilities and in other states like Pennsylvania)
- Serve as reentry navigators, connecting individuals to housing, treatment, and employment supports
- Provide warm handoffs to community providers and peer networks post-release

Needed Action

- Recruit CPSS professionals to work alongside existing mental health and SUD staff or contract with peer service providers in the community.
- Take steps to ensure successful implementation and fidelity by developing partnerships with peer certification programs (e.g., through community colleges or HCA-endorsed trainers) to recruit peers, including formerly incarcerated individuals who meet eligibility criteria.
- Ensure supervisors understand how to:
 - Integrate peers into treatment planning teams
 - Provide support so peers can successfully carry out their role
 - Maintain fidelity to evidence-based, rehabilitative models
- Use Peers to Support Crisis Intervention, Re-Entry and Continuity of Care⁸
- Monitor Outcomes and Establish Metrics for Success.⁴³ Track measurable outcomes such as:
 - Reduction in behavioral incidents and grievances
 - Increased participation in SUD and mental health treatment
 - Successful transitions to community care with reduced re-arrest rates
 - Conduct quarterly reviews and incorporate peer feedback to improve program design.

Anticipated Outcomes

Through supplementing behavioral health interventions with Certified Peer Support Specialists can increase the use of SUD/mental health services; reduce suicides; reduced violence and behavioral issues; better re-entry outcomes; reduced use of solitary confinement and restraints; provide smoother community transitions; reduced numbers of post-release overdoses, and lower recidivism.

Additional Conversations

In addition to the recommendations above the Task Force had numerous conversations that resulted in proposals for further discussion but did not solidify into full

⁴³ Jail programs using peers report increased trust in staff, higher program completion rates, and decreased disciplinary infractions. See Reingle Gonzalez, J. M., & Boppre, B. L. (2020). The role of peer support in the treatment of incarcerated individuals with mental illness. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 59(6), 375–392. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10509674.2020.1772555>

recommendations. However, these proposals are important to highlight as they were discussed at length and can be a good starting point for future work around jails.

As healthcare was a significant talking point throughout the Task Force's two proposals related to the topic are specifically important to acknowledge. One proposal addresses [leveraging the Medicaid 1115 Waiver Program](#) and the other relates to [ensuring continuity of health insurance for the entire duration of a jail stay](#). These proposals were heavily discussed up until the last Task Force meeting, but in the end are still in need of further discussion before becoming solidified recommendations.

Proposal 1-Leveraging the Medicaid 1115 Waiver Programs

The *1115 Medicaid waiver* is a federal mechanism that allows states to test innovative approaches in Medicaid that go beyond standard program rules. Washington state has used its 1115 waiver to expand access to health services, including initiatives that support individuals moving from pre-trial incarceration into treatment programs that reduce recidivism and those reentering society after serving a sentence.

The *Washington State Reentry Initiative* builds on this by focusing on continuity of care and support for people transitioning from carceral facilities back into the community by evaluating their criminogenic needs and getting them into pro-social programming.⁴⁴ Its goal is to reduce recidivism, improve health outcomes, and strengthen reintegration by ensuring that medical, behavioral, and social needs are addressed before pre- or post-trial release.

Aligning carceral facility practices with these initiatives is critical. If facilities pre-plan discharge and care coordination to coincide with the waiver and reentry framework, individuals leaving custody are more likely to access timely health services, stabilize in the community, and avoid gaps that contribute to poor outcomes. In fact, individuals held pre-trial can safely be released while awaiting trial if they have been evaluated and are placed in appropriate, accountable, and safe programming. This proactive alignment strengthens public health and public safety and makes it less likely that the person will re-offend.

The Task Force recommends that early discharge planning be embedded into jail protocols. Specifically:

- Standardized physical and behavioral health assessments should be completed within 72 hours of booking.
- Urgent behavioral health issues should be assessed within 24 hours of booking.

⁴⁴ Determining why the individual is likely committing crimes (mental health, substance abuse, housing, employment, literacy, trauma, etc.) and tailoring programs for them that will reduce the likelihood of future criminal acts.

- Discharge planning should begin at intake, not at release, so that needs are addressed during incarceration and preparations are made for transfer to prison or community release.

These actions also allow for a reduction in pre-trial populations because evaluated individuals can be transferred to sober housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment, employment and other programming where they remain accountable to the courts while awaiting a final disposition.

Proposal 2- Ensuring Continuity of Health Insurance for Entire Duration of a Jail Stay

The state should ensure that all individuals who are incarcerated continue to have access to health insurance during their entire jail stay.

Lack of access to behavioral health and medical care are substantial complaints of incarcerated people. Appropriate medications and management, physical health services (including dental, vision, and access to durable medical equipment) are often lacking. Many people in jail are at a low point in their lives and are experiencing multiple crises, including drug withdrawal and mental and physical health crises. A jail stay could be an opportunity to access quality healthcare, but instead the people with the greatest need get the least access to care. Currently, people lose their access to state insurance such as Apple Health, once they become incarcerated. They are then eligible for these programs again either 90-days prior to release (under the current Medicaid waiver) or once released. The state should ensure that individuals accessing these insurance programs have continuous access to these benefits throughout their time in jail. The Medicaid 1115 Waiver can help pay for part of this care but does not cover all people in jail. Without state support, counties bear the burden of paying for this care, and many of them opt to provide minimal care or use medical issues as a reason to release people from custody to avoid the expense.

While broader discussions of universal health care may not be taken up by the Washington Legislature at this time, the Task Force recognizes the urgent need for consistency in health service delivery across all county jails. Currently, counties are pursuing their own approaches, resulting in uneven access and quality of care. Some facilities provide strong services, while others fall short. The state should work to ensure that all individuals maintain access to quality healthcare throughout their entire involvement within the judicial and carceral systems.

Proposals on Pre-Trial Service, Diversion, and Re-entry

Beyond the health care proposals, the Task Force also developed proposals regarding pre-trial services, diversion, and re-entry. These proposals also provide a starting point for future work and can be found in the [July 1, 2025 Interim Report](#) (as can interim voting results indicating levels of support in June 2025).

Conclusion

This final report details the grounding perspectives, legislative recommendations, and identifies areas of potential agreements among Task Force members and completes the final requirement of the Sixty-Eighth Chapter 44.20 RCW Sec. 915. The proviso asked the Task Force to, at minimum, identify existing facilities in need of upgrades or remodel; any need for building new facilities; and potential funding sources or mechanisms to make their recommendations feasible. It also directed the group to discuss an array of other topics related to COs and staffing, re-entry, and diversion. The group met between October 2024 and December 2025. During that time, the Task Force worked to establish shared understanding of diverse perspectives and collaboratively identify recommendations.

The recommendations and discussions that inform this report are largely informed by areas of agreement in which the Task Force members generally agreed that modern jails are used less, provide more access to needed services, and ensure a healthy environment or individuals being detained, jail staff, correctional officers, and the larger community. While the recommendations or general agreements were not necessarily unanimous, they illustrate the impressive collaborative work of the Task Force tasked with addressing multiple complex issues in a relatively short amount of time. Given proper funding, the Task Force generally views these recommendations as a good place for the state legislature to begin working towards modernizing Washington's jails and drawing closer to the goal of promoting public safety for everyone. The Task Force acknowledges that there is still significant work needed to address numerous topics, including rising healthcare costs, pretrial services, diversion, and reentry services and that the recommendations in this report are interconnected with such topics.

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Appendix A- Chapter 44.20 RCW Sec. 915

NEW SECTION. Sec. 915.

- (1) The jail modernization task force is established, to be composed of the following members:
 - (a) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate;
 - (b) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;
 - (c) A representative from the caseload forecast council, as an advisory member;
 - (d) One member appointed by and representing each of the following:
 - (i) The governor;
 - (ii) The department of corrections;
 - (iii) The sentencing guidelines commission;
 - (iv) The department of social and health services, representing the behavioral health administration's state hospitals;
 - (v) The health care authority;
 - (vi) The criminal justice training commission;
 - (vii) The superior court judges association;
 - (viii) The district and municipal court judges association;
 - (ix) The Washington association of criminal defense attorneys or the Washington defender association;
 - (x) The Washington association of prosecuting attorneys;
 - (xi) The Washington state minority and justice commission;
 - (xii) Disability rights Washington;
 - (xiii) A behavioral health administrative service organization; and
 - (xiv) An individual with lived experience; and
 - (e) Two members appointed by and representing each of the following:
 - (i) The Washington state association of counties, with one representative from east of the crest of the Cascades and one representative from west of the crest of the Cascades; and
 - (ii) The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs, with one representative from east of the crest of the Cascades and one representative from west of the crest of the Cascades.
- (2) Any additions or modifications to the membership provided in subsection (1) of this section will be informed by the analysis performed by the Washington state institute for public policy and the convening assessment performed by the William D. Ruckelshaus center.
- (3) The initial meeting of the task force must be no later than December 1, 2024.
- (4) The task force shall review the Washington state institute for public policy's report on jail characteristics, any resulting legislation from the criminal sentencing task force, and any resulting legislation from the Washington state joint legislative task force on jail standards. At a minimum, the task force shall also discuss the following:
 - (a) Employee retention issues and potential solutions;
 - (b) The impact of overtime, jail atmosphere, emergency response time, and inexperienced corrections officers, and how to overcome these challenges;
 - (c) The type of facility needed to house those with behavioral health needs and associated costs of these facilities;
 - (d) Available diversion programs and their costs;
 - (e) Types of existing behavioral health facilities for those involved in the criminal justice system, the costs of building and running these facilities, how these facilities vary by location, the viability of offering facilities in every county, and potential system improvements to the types of services and supports offered and delivered to those with behavioral health needs;
 - (f) The types of services and supports provided to those exiting the jail system; and
 - (g) What reforms are necessary to create and enhance a seamless transition back to the community following jail confinement.

- (5) The task force shall develop a set of statewide jail modernization recommendations to include, at a minimum, identifying existing facilities in need of upgrades or remodel and any need for building new facilities, and potential funding sources or mechanisms to make the recommendations feasible.
- (6) Legislative members of the task force are reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.
- (7) The task force shall submit an initial report, including findings and recommendations, to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by July 1, 2025. The task force shall submit a final report by December 31, 2025.

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Appendix B- Sec 607

(33)(a) \$95,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 is provided solely for the William D. Ruckelshaus center to conduct a jail modernization task force convening assessment and design a facilitated collaborative process and work plan for the jail modernization task force created in section 915 of this act. The assessment shall include, but not be limited to:

- (i) Gathering and reviewing additional background information relevant to the project;
- (ii) Meeting and consulting with the Washington state association of counties to gather background on issues, confirm the list of members to interview, and provide updates throughout the duration of the work; and meeting and consulting with the Washington state institute for public policy to coordinate, inform, and share information and findings gathered; and
- (iii) Setting up individual conversations with task force members, and others as needed, to assess their goals, expectations, interests, and desired outcomes for the task force. The purpose of these conversations will also be to gather insights and perspectives from members about, but not limited to, the following:
 - (A) What key components and issues should be included in a statewide jail modernization plan, what existing facilities are in need of upgrades or remodel, and any need for building new facilities;
 - (B) Identifying any additional key stakeholders;
 - (C) Employee retention issues and potential solutions;
 - (D) The impact of overtime, jail atmosphere, emergency response time, inexperienced corrections officers, and how to overcome these challenges;
 - (E) The type of and design of facilities needed to house those with behavioral health needs and associated costs of these facilities;
 - (F) Available diversion programs and their costs;
 - (G) Types of existing behavioral health facilities for those involved in the criminal justice system, the costs of building and running these facilities, how these facilities vary by location, the viability of offering facilities in every county, and potential system improvements to the types of services and supports offered and delivered to those with behavioral health needs;
 - (H) The types of services and supports provided to those exiting the jail system; and
 - (I) Reforms necessary to create and enhance a seamless transition back to the community following jail confinement.

(b) Center staff will provide a convening assessment report that will include the overall process design and work plan for the task force by June 30, 2025.

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Appendix C- ESSB 5950. PL Sec 603

~~((a))~~ \$95,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year ~~((2025 is))~~ 2024 and \$215,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the William D. Ruckelshaus center to ~~((conduct a jail modernization task force convening assessment and design a facilitated collaborative process and work plan for))~~ support the jail modernization task force created in section 915 ~~((of this act))~~, chapter 475, Laws of 2023.

(a) Of the amounts provided in this subsection, \$95,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 is provided solely for the center to conduct a jail modernization task force convening assessment and design a facilitated collaborative process and work plan for the jail modernization task force created in section 915, chapter 475, Laws of 2023.

(b) Of the amounts provided in this subsection, \$215,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 is provided solely for the center to provide staff support, facilitation, and development of the task force's initial report of findings and recommendations described in section 915, chapter 475, Laws of 2023.

(c) The convening assessment shall include, but not be limited to:

- (i) Gathering and reviewing additional background information relevant to the project;
- (ii) Meeting and consulting with the Washington state association of counties to gather background on issues, confirm the list of members to interview, and provide updates throughout the duration of the work; and meeting and consulting with the Washington state institute for public policy to coordinate, inform, and share information and findings gathered; and
- (iii) Setting up individual conversations with task force members, and others as needed, to assess their goals, expectations, interests, and desired outcomes for the task force. The purpose of these conversations will also be to gather insights and perspectives from members about, but not limited to, the following:

- (A) What key components and issues should be included in a statewide jail modernization plan, what existing facilities are in need of upgrades or remodel, and any need for building new facilities;
- (B) Identifying any additional key stakeholders;
- (C) Employee retention issues and potential solutions;
- (D) The impact of overtime, jail atmosphere, emergency response time, inexperienced corrections officers, and how to overcome these challenges;
- (E) The type of and design of facilities needed to house those with behavioral health needs and associated costs of these facilities;
- (F) Available diversion programs and their costs;
- (G) Types of existing behavioral health facilities for those involved in the criminal justice system, the costs of building and running these facilities, how these facilities vary by location, the viability of offering facilities in every county, and potential system improvements to the types of services and supports offered and delivered to those with behavioral health needs;
- (H) The types of services and supports provided to those exiting the jail system; and
- (I) Reforms necessary to create and enhance a seamless transition back to the community following jail confinement.

~~((b))~~ (d) Center staff will provide a convening assessment report that will include the overall process design and work plan for the task force by June 30, ((2025)) 2024.

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Appendix D – Task Force Members

First Name	Last Name	Title	Organization
Amber	Leaders	Senior Policy Advisor, Behavior Health, Aging and Disability	Governor's Office
Barbara	Serrano	Senior Policy Advisor, Public Safety	Governor's Office
Dan	Griffey	Representative, 35th Legislative District	Washington State House of Representatives (R)
Lauren	Davis	Representative, 32nd Legislative District	Washington State House of Representatives (D)
Matt	Boehnke	Senator, 8th Legislative District	Senate (R)
			Senate (D)
Bob	Long	Director of Security & Emergency Management	Department of Corrections
Esther	Matthews	Assistant Professor - Academic Member of Commission	Sentencing Guidelines Commission
Samantha (Sam)	Anderson	Deputy Director - Office of Forensic Mental Health	Department of Social and Health Services
Tyron	Nixon	Program Manager	The Healthcare Authority
Christine	Rickert	Assistant Commander of Corrections and Basic Training Division Administration	Criminal Justice Training Commission
Breean	Beggs	Spokane County Superior Court Judge	The Superior Court Judges Association
Pamella	Nogueira	Olympia Municipal Court Judge	District and Municipal Court Judges Association
Paula	Olsen	Attorney	Washington Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers/Washington Defender Association
Jon	Beltran	Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor, Grays Harbor County Prosecuting Attorney's Office	Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys
André	Peñalver	Superior Court Judge, Department 23	Washington State Minority and Justice Commission
Heather	McKimmie	Attorney, Director of AVID Program	Disability Rights Washington
JanRose	Ottaway Martin	Executive Director	North Sound BH-ASO
Cathy	Mulhall	Chelan County Administrator	Washington State Association of Counties East
Wayne	Fournier	Thurston County Commissioner	Washington State Association of Counties West
Eric	Peter	Sheriff - San Juan County	Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs West
Jeff	Barnsley	Sheriff - Kittitas County	Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs East
			Case Load Forecasting Council
Norrie	Gregoire	Director of Corrections and Juvenile Court Administrator	WA Association of Juvenile Court Administrators
David	Lund	Criminal Justice Specialist, Civic Engagement Program, Office of the Secretary of State	An individual with lived experience

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Appendix E- Task Force Member Attendance

Appendix E shows the attendance for the Task Force members from August 8, 2025, to December 12, 2025 (the last Task Force meeting). These are the meetings that were held following the publication of the July 1, 2025, [interim report](#). The [interim report](#)'s appendix B provides attendance records for all meetings held from October 29, 2024 (the first Task Force meeting) through June 13, 2025.

Task Force	Members	8/8/25	9/5/205	10/17/25	11/21/25	12/12/25
First Name	Last Name					
Samantha (Sam)	Anderson	X	X	X	X	X
Jeff	Barnsley		X	X	X	
Breean	Beggs	X	X	X	X	X
Jon	Beltran	X	X	X		X
Lauren	Davis	X	X	X	X	X
Wayne	Fournier					X
Bob	Long	X				
David	Lund	X	X	X	X	X
Esther	Matthews	X	X	X		X
Heather	McKimmie			X	X	X
Cathy	Mulhall	X	X	X		X
Tyron	Nixon	X	X	X		X
Pamella	Nogueira		X	X		X
Paula	Olsen	X		X		X
JanRose	Ottaway Martin		X			
André	Peñalver	X	X		X	X
Christine	Rickert	X	X			

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Appendix F- Task Force Process

Starting the Convening Assessment in April of 2024, the Center's Project Team (the Facilitation Team) began with researching the overall landscape of the Washington State Jail System, identifying Task Force members, and scheduled initial interviews with identified Task Force members. By the time the [June 30, 2024, Convening Report](#) was due, not all Task Force members had been appointed by their associated committees (outlined in [Appendix A](#)). As a result, from July 2024 to October 2024, the Facilitation Team continued to identify Task Force members and conduct additional interviews. A full explanation of this work is outlined in the [Washington State Jail Modernization Task Force June 30, 2025, Interim Status Report](#). During this timeframe, the Facilitation Team also toured three carceral facilities to gain further insight into the infrastructure and atmosphere of Washington jails (recognizing that each jail is unique). These facilities included the Walla Walla County Corrections and Juvenile Justice Center and the Kittitas County Correctional Facility.

On October 29, 2024, the Task Force had its initial meeting. During this meeting, the Task Force agreed to meet monthly through December 2025 (July 2025 excluded to allow for re-evaluation/alignment of the process following the interim report). These meetings included 2 virtual meetings, 7 in-person meetings, and 5 hybrid meetings (14 total). Virtual meetings lasted 2-3 hours, while in-person and hybrid meetings lasted between 5-6 hours. [Appendix E](#) provides a full list of meetings and attendees. Meeting topics evolved on an iterative basis connected to the evolving needs that immersed.

The Facilitation Team organized conversations with additional parties to provide further input for the Task Force's consideration. These parties included representatives from the [Washington State Institute of Public Policy \(WSIPP\)](#), representatives from the [Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs \(WASPC\)](#), individuals with lived incarceration experience (in collaboration with [Revive Counseling Spokane](#) and [Weld King County](#)), Correction Officer Chiefs and Directors, and healthcare professionals who work with jail populations across Washington.

The Facilitation Team also worked with Task Force members and other entities to provide various forms of research and additional information to Task Force members for consideration. This included the [Jails and Juvenile Detention Centers in Washington State: Population Trends, Survey of Local Facilities, and Availability of CJTC Courses](#) WSIPP Report (the WSIPP Report), WSIPP survey data (WSIPP Survey Data), the [2023 Jail Standards Task Force \(JSTF\) Report](#), and various resources from across that country such as funding models used in Ohio and Colorado.

Focus Areas

Using the minimum recommendation and discussion requirements outlined in the legislative provisos, the Task Force identified seven focus areas of conversation (with strong emphasis on the first two listed):

- Funding
- Infrastructural Needs
- Correctional Officer and Staff Needs
- Behavioral and Physical Health Needs
- Pre-Trial
- Diversion
- Re-Entry

These topic areas allowed the Task Force to organize conversations into more manageable categories of conversation and develop proposals to be refined into recommendations.³² The recommendations provided in the report are presented in alignment with these categories.

Process Phases

While discussions were not linear, the structure of the Task Force's progress can roughly be organized into four phases, including: (1) developing deeper understanding and connection between Task Force members, the proviso, the issues, and the parameters of the Task Force ([Deeper Understanding](#)); (2) learning from the expertise of Task Force members and others brought in to provide additional insights ([Learning](#)); (3) developing proposals for further discussion ([Developing Proposals](#)); and (4) fine tuning proposals with the goal of providing solidified recommendations to the state ([Refining Recommendations](#)). During each phase, the Project Team documented conversations to highlight areas needing further discussion and to track overall progress.

Deeper Understanding

During this phase, the Facilitation Team structured progressively interactive, participatory exercises and learning sessions which allowed the Task Force to make remarkable progress and bond with one another in a short time. The result of these efforts was noted by the group in later phases with remarks that highlighted that the Task Force enjoyed working with one another. The bond was also witnessed in their development of proposals as their initial drafts illustrated a commitment to factor in diverse perspectives of fellow Task Force members.

Learning

Through developing deeper understanding it became clear that people are often limited within their professional silos with few opportunities to look at the entire carceral system from broader perspectives. The Facilitation Team used this recognition as an opportunity to work with the Task Force to develop a model (presented in [Appendix G](#)) to gain a broader perspective of the carceral system and establish where within the system the boundaries of the Task Force's responsibility lied.³³ Through these conversations, the Task Force recognized that their role was not to overhaul the entire carceral system; however, the

interconnectedness of all aspects could not be productively isolated. As a result, conversations routinely moved between specific aspects of the system and the broader, more expansive issues.

Developing Proposals

As the interim report deadline grew closer the Facilitation Team had each Task Force member develop individual proposals that aligned with the aforementioned seven [focus areas](#). These proposals were then presented to the Task Force for discussion, refinement, and voting. A full list of these proposals can be found in the [July 2025 interim report](#). When voting the Task Force members decided to provide four options to help gauge the level of support for each proposal. The four options for voting were:

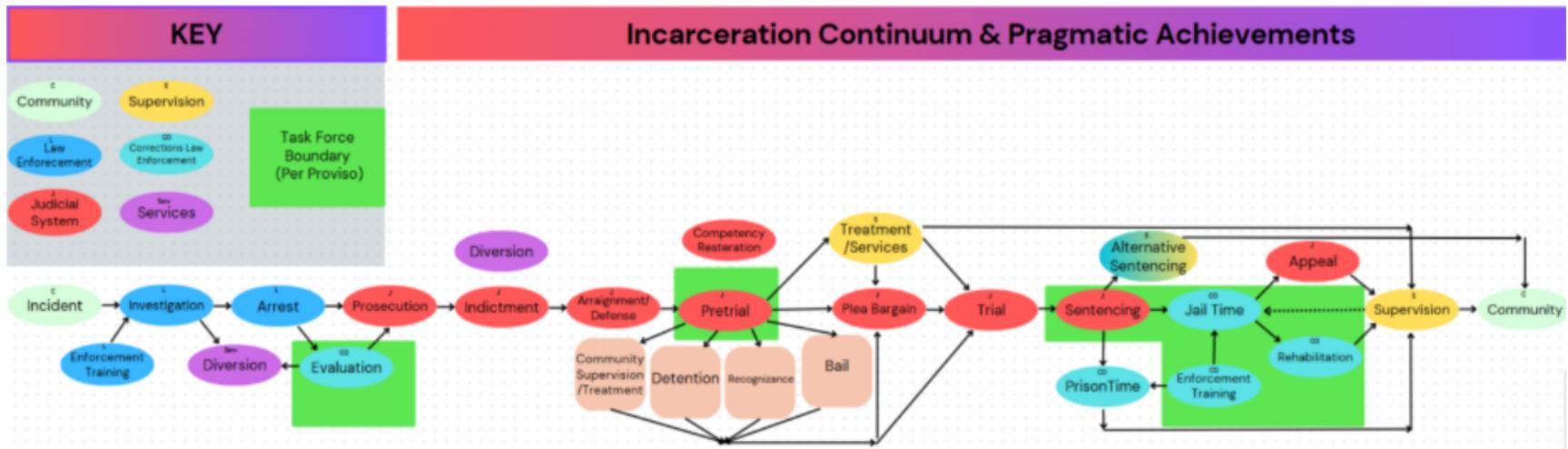
- **Support**
- **Need Further Discussion**
- **Oppose**
- **Abstain**

Refining Recommendations

Using the results of the voting from the [July 2025 interim report](#), in conjunction with the minimum requirements drawn from the proviso discussion, the Facilitation Team identified which proposals would be most useful for the Task Force to focus on in the final months of convening. In August, the Project Team worked with the Task Force to develop an updated work plan through December and identify which topics would be the focus of each. This resulted in the plan to use the September meeting to focus on funding and infrastructural needs, October to focus on correctional officer (CO) and staffing needs, November on physical and behavioral health, and December to finalize the report and do another round of voting. Voting again illustrates how much support each finalized recommendation has from each Task Force member, recognizing that consensus is not a requirement of the Task Force.

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Appendix G- Incarceration Continuum



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Appendix H- WSIPP Data

Institution Name	Year Facility Opened	Facility Age (At time of Survey)	Overall Quality Score	Quality Rating: Structural elements	Quality Rating: Systems and Fixtures	Quality Rating: Furniture and Equipment	Age of Fire Safety System	Quality Rating: Fire Safety System	Age of Security System	Quality Rating: Security System	Age of Plumbing System	Quality Rating: Plumbing System	Age of Electrical System	Quality Rating: Electrical System	Age of Mechanical System	Quality Rating: Mechanical System
Pierce County Jail	1984	39	2	2. Okay	2. Okay	2. Okay	39	3. Good	39	2. Okay	39	1. Bad	39	2. Okay	39	2. Okay
Pierce County Jail	2003	20	2.63	2. Okay	2. Okay	2. Okay	20	3. Good	20	3. Good	20	3. Good	20	3. Good	20	3. Good
Spokane County Detention Services - Downtown Jail	1952	71	0.13	0. Terrible	0. Terrible	0. Terrible	44	0. Terrible	44	1. Bad	71	0. Terrible	71	0. Terrible	71	0. Terrible
Spokane County Detention Services - Downtown Jail	1986	37	0.88	1. Bad	1. Bad	0. Terrible	17	1. Bad	17	2. Okay	37	0. Terrible	37	2. Okay	37	0. Terrible
Adult Secure - King County Dept of Adult and Juvenile Detention	1997	26	2.38	3. Good	2. Okay	2. Okay	26	3. Good	26	3. Good	26	2. Okay	26	2. Okay	26	2. Okay
Adult Secure - King County Dept of Adult and Juvenile Detention	1986	37	1.88	2. Okay	1. Bad	2. Okay	2	3. Good	17	3. Good	3	2. Okay	37	1. Bad	4	1. Bad
Snohomish County Jail	2005	18	3	4. Excellent	4. Excellent	2. Okay	18	3. Good	18	1. Bad	18	2. Okay	18	4. Excellent	6	4. Excellent

Snohomish County Jail	1985	38	2.63	3. Good	2. Okay	3. Good	38	2. Okay	9	3. Good	18	1. Bad	6	3. Good	6	4. Excellent
Clark County Department of Jail Services	1984	39	1.38	2. Okay	0. Terrible	1. Bad	23	4. Excellent	39	2. Okay	39	0. Terrible	39	1. Bad	39	1. Bad
Clark County Department of Jail Services	2000	23	3.63	3. Good	4. Excellent	3. Good	23	4. Excellent	23	3. Good	23	4. Excellent	23	4. Excellent	23	4. Excellent
Kittitas County Jail	2012	11	2.63	3. Good	3. Good	3. Good	11	2. Okay	11	3. Good	11	2. Okay	11	3. Good	11	2. Okay
Kittitas County Jail	1980	43	2	1. Bad	2. Okay	3. Good	43	2. Okay	43	2. Okay	13	1. Bad	43	3. Good	13	2. Okay
Whatcom County Jail	1984	39	1.13	1. Bad	0. Terrible	0. Terrible	9	2. Okay	5	2. Okay	3	1. Bad	5	1. Bad	5	2. Okay
Whatcom County Jail	2006	17	2.75	3. Good	2. Okay	2. Okay	17	4. Excellent	4	3. Good	17	3. Good	3	2. Okay	17	3. Good
Kitsap County Sheriff's Office Jail	2004	19	3	3. Good	2. Okay	3. Good	0	4. Excellent	19	3. Good	19	3. Good	19	3. Good	19	3. Good
Kitsap County Sheriff's Office Jail	1986	37	2.75	2. Okay	2. Okay	3. Good	0	4. Excellent	37	3. Good	37	3. Good	37	3. Good	37	2. Okay
Ferry County Jail	1939	84	1.63	1. Bad	0. Terrible	2. Okay	32	4. Excellent	23	2. Okay	84	0. Terrible	32	2. Okay	84	2. Okay
Island County Jail	1983	40	1.38	1. Bad	1. Bad	2. Okay	40	2. Okay	1	2. Okay	40	1. Bad	40	1. Bad	40	1. Bad
Jefferson County Jail	1986	37	2.75	2. Okay	2. Okay	2. Okay	7	4. Excellent	4	3. Good	37	3. Good	37	3. Good	37	3. Good
Whitman County Jail	1984	39	2.75	2. Okay	3. Good	2. Okay	39	4. Excellent	15	2. Okay	1	3. Good	1	3. Good	3	3. Good
Clallam County Correction Facility	1980	43	2	0. Terrible	2. Okay	2. Okay	5	3. Good	7	3. Good	43	2. Okay	43	2. Okay	43	2. Okay
Cowlitz County Corrections	2006	17	3	3. Good	2. Okay	3. Good	17	4. Excellent	3	3. Good	17	2. Okay	17	4. Excellent	17	3. Good
Pend Oreille County Corrections	1979	44	1.88	2. Okay	1. Bad	2. Okay	44	3. Good	44	2. Okay	44	1. Bad	44	3. Good	44	1. Bad

Grays Harbor County Jail	1972	51	0.88	2. Okay	1. Bad	2. Okay	51	0. Terrible	51	0. Terrible	51	1. Bad	51	1. Bad	51	0. Terrible
Yakima County DOC	1983	40	1.5	2. Okay	0. Terrible	2. Okay	40	2. Okay	8	2. Okay	40	0. Terrible	40	2. Okay	40	2. Okay
Asotin County Jail	1984	39	0.5	0. Terrible	0. Terrible	0. Terrible	39	1. Bad	39	0. Terrible	39	0. Terrible	39	1. Bad	0	2. Okay
Adam's County Sheriff's Office Jail	1941	82	1.38	1. Bad	0. Terrible	2. Okay	82	3. Good	82	2. Okay	82	1. Bad	82	2. Okay	82	0. Terrible
Lincoln County Sheriff's Office Jail	1988	35	2	2. Okay	2. Okay	2. Okay	35	2. Okay	35	2. Okay	35	2. Okay	35	2. Okay	35	2. Okay
Walla Walla County Corrections	1982	41	1.75	2. Okay	1. Bad	2. Okay	41	2. Okay	13	1. Bad	41	2. Okay	41	2. Okay	41	2. Okay
Skamania County Jail	2001	22	3.38	3. Good	3. Good	3. Good	22	4. Excellent	22	4. Excellent	22	3. Good	22	4. Excellent	22	3. Good
Benton County Corrections Department	1979	44	3.25	3. Good	3. Good	3. Good	44	4. Excellent	20	4. Excellent	4	3. Good	44	3. Good	44	3. Good
Thurston County Jail	2015	8	2.63	3. Good	3. Good	3. Good	8	4. Excellent	8	0. Terrible	8	2. Okay	8	3. Good	8	3. Good
Chelan County Regional Justice Center	1984	39	1.88	2. Okay	1. Bad	3. Good	8	3. Good	4	3. Good	39	0. Terrible	39	2. Okay	13	1. Bad
Wahkiakum County Jail	1994	29	2.13	2. Okay	2. Okay	2. Okay	29	2. Okay	9	3. Good	29	2. Okay	29	2. Okay	29	2. Okay
Stevens County Jail	1972	51	0.88	1. Bad	0. Terrible	0. Terrible	51	1. Bad	51	1. Bad	51	0. Terrible	51	2. Okay	51	2. Okay
Lewis County Jail	1985	38	3.38	2. Okay	3. Good	2. Okay	0	4. Excellent	0	4. Excellent	38	4. Excellent	38	4. Excellent	0	4. Excellent
Skagit County Community Justice Center	2017	6	3.63	4. Excellent	3. Good	3. Good	6	4. Excellent	6	3. Good	6	4. Excellent	6	4. Excellent	6	4. Excellent
Grant County Jail	1986	37	2.13	2. Okay	2. Okay	3. Good	7	2. Okay	21	2. Okay	37	2. Okay	37	2. Okay	37	2. Okay

Pacific County Jail	1985	38	0.88	1. Bad	1. Bad	1. Bad	38	2. Okay	38	1. Bad	38	0. Terrible	38	1. Bad	38	0. Terrible
Klickitat County Jail	1981	42	2.13	2. Okay	1. Bad	1. Bad	42	4. Excellent	2	3. Good	42	1. Bad	42	3. Good	42	2. Okay
Franklin County Corrections Center	1986	37	2.5	2. Okay	2. Okay	2. Okay	8	3. Good	8	3. Good	8	2. Okay	8	3. Good	8	3. Good
Okanogan County Jail	1983	40	1.13	1. Bad	1. Bad	0. Terrible	40	2. Okay	17	1. Bad	40	1. Bad	40	2. Okay	40	1. Bad
Mason County Jail	1985	38	2.25	2. Okay	2. Okay	3. Good	38	3. Good	8	1. Bad	38	2. Okay	38	3. Good	11	2. Okay