

RCW 72.09.465 Postsecondary degree education programs. (1) (a)

The department may implement postsecondary degree or certificate education programs at state correctional institutions.

(b) The department may consider for inclusion in any postsecondary degree or certificate education program, any education program from an accredited community or technical college, college, or university that is limited to no more than a bachelor's degree. Washington state-recognized preapprenticeship programs may also be included as appropriate postsecondary education programs.

(2) Incarcerated individuals not meeting the department's priority criteria for the postsecondary degree education program offered by the department or its contracted providers shall be required to pay the costs for participation in a postsecondary education degree program if they elect to participate through self-pay, including costs of books, fees, tuition, or any other appropriate ancillary costs, by one or more of the following means:

(a) For a postsecondary degree education program that is eligible for financial aid, the incarcerated individual who is participating in the program may, during confinement, provide the required payment or payments to the school;

(b) For a postsecondary degree education program that is not eligible for financial aid, the incarcerated individual who is participating in the program may, during confinement, provide the required payment or payments to the department; or

(c) A third party may provide the required payment or payments directly to the department on behalf of an incarcerated individual, and such payments shall not be subject to any of the deductions as provided in this chapter.

(3) The department may accept any and all donations and grants of money, equipment, supplies, materials, and services from any third party, including but not limited to nonprofit entities, and may receive, utilize, and dispose of same to provide postsecondary education to incarcerated individuals.

(4) An incarcerated individual may be selected to participate in a state-funded postsecondary degree or certificate education program, based on priority criteria determined by the department, in which the following conditions may be considered:

(a) Priority should be given to incarcerated individuals who do not already possess a postsecondary education degree; and

(b) Incarcerated individuals with individual reentry plans that include participation in a postsecondary degree or certificate education program that is:

(i) Offered at the incarcerated individual's state correctional institution;

(ii) Approved by the department as an eligible and effective postsecondary education degree program; and

(iii) Limited to a postsecondary degree or certificate program.

(5) The department shall work with the college board as defined in RCW 28B.50.030 to develop a plan to assist incarcerated individuals selected to participate in postsecondary degree or certificate programs with filing a free application for federal student aid or the Washington application for state financial aid.

(6) Any funds collected by the department under this section shall be used solely for the creation, maintenance, or expansion of postsecondary education degree programs for incarcerated individuals. [2024 c 272 s 2; 2021 c 200 s 5; 2017 c 120 s 4; 2016 sp.s. c 36 s 946; 2007 c 483 s 403.]

Findings—Intent—2021 c 200; 2019 c 397; 2017 c 120: See note following RCW 28B.50.815.

Effective date—2016 sp.s. c 36: See note following RCW 18.20.430.

Findings—Intent—2007 c 483: See note following RCW 72.09.460.

Findings—2007 c 483: See RCW 72.78.005.