
HOUSE BILL 2025

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Representatives Goodman, Klippert, Pettigrew, Hayes, Griffey, Chapman, and Jenkins

Read first time 02/08/17. Referred to Committee on Public Safety.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring the development and implementation
2 of a comprehensive plan to improve offender programs; and adding new
3 sections to chapter 72.09 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 72.09
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 The legislature recognizes the importance of reducing recidivism
8 in the criminal justice system. Most people who are incarcerated will
9 return to the community, yet more than half of people currently being
10 imprisoned have been in prison before. This cycle of crime hinders
11 public safety and is costly to taxpayers. In recent years the
12 legislature has engaged in considerable efforts to reduce recidivism
13 by focusing on reentry planning and programs. The legislature has
14 required a systematic shift towards evidence-based and research-based
15 practices and has continued to focus state resources on effective
16 programs in the field of adult corrections.

17 The legislature intends to expand upon these efforts by requiring
18 the department to assess reentry programs on an ongoing basis, stop
19 funding programs that are not working, and continue and expand upon
20 what is working. The legislature intends for state funds to be
21 prioritized for evidence-based and research-based practices, but not

1 to preclude promising practices. The legislature does not intend to
2 stifle innovation or new development. Instead, the department must
3 use evidence-based and research-based practices as a lens through
4 which to evaluate programs going forward. However, the legislature
5 intends that the department not fund any program that does not reduce
6 recidivism or readmission to prison to a statistically significant
7 degree when evaluated over a reasonable period of time.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 72.09
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 (1) The department shall develop and implement a comprehensive
11 plan for programs. The plan must prioritize funding for and
12 implementation of programs that:

13 (a) Follow the risk needs responsivity model;

14 (b) Focus on high risk offenders, including violent and
15 nonviolent offenders, unless otherwise required by law;

16 (c) Are deemed evidence-based by the institute or Washington
17 State University, or are included in the substance abuse and mental
18 health services administration's national registry of evidence-based
19 programs and practices; and

20 (d) Have measurable outcomes including, but not limited to,
21 reducing recidivism and readmissions to correctional institutions
22 below current levels.

23 (2)(a) The department shall discontinue ineffective programs and
24 practices, and repurpose underspent funds according to the priorities
25 in the plan. The department may not cancel or discontinue a
26 successful program that reduces recidivism in favor of implementing a
27 new program without empirical data showing the same or better
28 outcomes, unless otherwise required by law.

29 (b) Within amounts provided in the operating budget for programs,
30 the department may allocate up to five percent for the piloting and
31 researching of programs deemed research-based or a promising
32 practice.

33 (3) The department shall submit a report by December 1st of each
34 year to the council, the governor, and the appropriate committees of
35 the legislature regarding the department's compliance with this
36 section. The report must: (a) Include a summary of the comprehensive
37 plan; (b) analyze state funds allocated to programs, including
38 percentages and amounts of funds used in evidence-based and research-
39 based practices and the number of people being served; (c) identify

1 discontinued and newly implemented programs, including information
2 used by the department in evaluating the effectiveness of
3 discontinued and implemented programs; and (d) provide
4 recommendations to improve program outcomes, including recommended
5 strategies, deadlines, and funding. The department shall respond to
6 the council's inquiries and requests with respect to programs and
7 consider the council's recommendations when developing and updating
8 the comprehensive plan required under this section.

9 (4) For the purposes of this section:

10 (a) "Council" means the Washington statewide reentry council.

11 (b) "Institute" means the Washington institute for public policy.

12 (c) "Programs" means all offender programs in correctional
13 facilities and community settings using state funds. This term also
14 includes contracted offender programs provided by third-party
15 entities and paid for with state funds.

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