

RCW 7.68.380 Commercially sexually exploited children receiving center programs. (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of children, youth, and families shall administer funding for two receiving center programs for commercially sexually exploited children. One of these programs must be located west of the crest of the Cascade mountains and one of these programs must be located east of the crest of the Cascade mountains. Law enforcement and service providers may refer children to these programs or children may self-refer into these programs.

(2) The receiving center programs established under this section shall:

- (a) Begin providing services by January 1, 2021;
- (b) Utilize existing facilities and not require the construction of new facilities; and
- (c) Provide ongoing case management for all children who are being served or were served by the programs.

(3) The receiving centers established under this section shall:

- (a) Include a short-term evaluation function that is accessible twenty-four hours per day seven days per week that has the capacity to evaluate the immediate needs of commercially sexually exploited children ages twelve through seventeen and either meet those immediate needs or refer those children to the appropriate services;
- (b) Assess children for mental health and substance use disorder needs and provide appropriate referrals as needed; and
- (c) Provide individual and group counseling focused on developing and strengthening coping skills, and improving self-esteem and dignity.

(4) The department of children, youth, and families shall:

- (a) Collect nonidentifiable demographic data of the children served by the programs established under this section;
- (b) Collect data regarding the locations that children exit to after being served by the programs; and
- (c) Report the data described in this subsection along with recommendations for modification or expansion of these programs to the relevant committees of the legislature by December 1, 2022.

(5) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

- (a) "Receiving center" means a trauma-informed, secure location that meets the multidisciplinary needs of commercially sexually exploited children ages twelve through seventeen located in a behavioral health agency licensed or certified under RCW 71.24.037 to provide inpatient or residential treatment services; and
- (b) "Short-term evaluation function" means a short-term emergency shelter that is accessible twenty-four hours per day seven days per week that has the capacity to evaluate the immediate needs of commercially sexually exploited children under age eighteen and either meet those immediate needs or refer those children to the appropriate services.

(6) (a) The department of children, youth, and families, the department of health, and the division of behavioral health and recovery, shall meet to coordinate the implementation of receiving centers as provided for in this section, including developing eligibility criteria for serving commercially sexually exploited children that allows referral from service providers and prioritizes referral from law enforcement.

(b) By December 1, 2020, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the department of children, youth, and families shall submit a report to the governor and legislature summarizing the implementation plan and eligibility criteria as described in (a) of this subsection, and provide any additional policy recommendations regarding receiving centers as it deems necessary. [2020 c 331 § 2.]

Finding—2020 c 331: "The legislature finds that commercial sexual exploitation of children is a severe form of human trafficking and a severe human rights and public health issue, leaving children at substantial risk of physical harm, substantial physical and emotional pain, and trauma. This trauma has a long-term impact on the social, emotional, and economic future of these children. The state shall provide a victim-centered, trauma-informed response to children who are exploited in this manner rather than treating them as criminals. The state shall also hold accountable the buyers and traffickers who exploit children." [2020 c 331 § 1.]