

HB 2184 - DIGEST

Creates the office of the corrections ombuds, which is funded through the office of the state auditor, for the purpose of: (1) Providing information to inmates, family members, and department employees, regarding the rights of inmates;

(2) Providing technical assistance to support inmate self-advocacy, alternative dispute resolution, and individual representation;

(3) Identifying systemic issues, reporting to the legislature, and advocating for systemic reform; and

(4) Monitoring and promoting compliance with statutes, rules, and policies pertaining to conditions of correctional facilities and the rights of inmates.

Requires the governor to convene an ombuds advisory council with several purposes in support of the ombuds function.

Requires the state auditor to designate, by a competitive bidding process, the nonprofit organization that will operate the office.

Requires the department of corrections to: (1) Immediately manually calculate the release date of a prisoner and the release dates of similarly sentenced prisoners if the department has knowledge or reason to believe that a computer calculation error is or has caused an error in the calculation of the release date of a prisoner; and

(2) Develop a mandatory sentencing elements worksheet, in consultation with the administrative office of the courts, superior court judges' association, Washington association of prosecuting attorneys, Washington association of criminal defense lawyers, Washington public defenders' association, and Washington association of county clerks.

Requires the joint legislative audit and review committee to conduct a performance audit of the information technology and records related units at the department of corrections.

Requires the sentencing guidelines commission to contract for the services of an external consultant to evaluate the state's sentencing laws and practices.

Creates the joint legislative task force on criminal sentencing and requires the task force to review sentencing laws after consideration of the consultant's study and recommendations.

Requires the office of financial management, in the contract for the next regularly scheduled performance audit, to require the audit to review relevant documentation regarding the department of corrections early release error, with particular focus on the ability of the department's employees to use the state employee whistleblower program.