AN ACT Relating to reentry services and supports; amending RCW 72.02.100 and 72.09.270; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature finds that successful rehabilitation and reentry has a positive impact on reduced recidivism rates and increased community safety. The legislature further finds that the success of individuals releasing from confinement in correctional institutions can be increased through access to supportive services, medical assistance, and other necessities. The legislature recognizes that the mortality rate in the first 72 hours following release from confinement is on average 18 times higher than the general population. The legislature further finds that access to basic human needs like food, medication, clothing, transportation, and shelter are necessary supports for most individuals exiting confinement. Therefore, the legislature resolves to enhance recovery, reduce recidivism, and improve public safety by providing increased access to supportive services and assistance following release from confinement.

Sec. 2. RCW 72.02.100 and 2022 c 29 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:
(1) Any person serving a sentence for a term of confinement in a state correctional facility for convicted felons, pursuant to court commitment, who is thereafter released upon an order of parole of the indeterminate sentence review board, or who is discharged from custody upon expiration of sentence, or who is ordered discharged from custody by a court of appropriate jurisdiction, shall be entitled to retain his or her earnings from labor or employment while in confinement and shall be supplied by the superintendent of the state correctional facility with suitable and presentable clothing, the sum of $(\$40)$ no less than $\$300$ as adjusted for inflation for subsistence, and transportation by the least expensive method of public transportation not to exceed the cost of $\$100$ to his or her place of residence or the place designated in his or her parole plan, or to the place from which committed if such person is being discharged on expiration of sentence, or discharged from custody by a court of appropriate jurisdiction: PROVIDED, That up to $(\$60$ additional dollars) an additional $\$60$ may be made available to the parolee for necessary personal and living expenses upon application to and approval by such person's community corrections officer. If in the opinion of the superintendent suitable arrangements have been made to provide the person to be released with suitable clothing and/or the expenses of transportation, the superintendent may consent to such arrangement. If the superintendent has reasonable cause to believe that the person to be released has ample funds, with the exception of earnings from labor or employment while in confinement, to assume the expenses of clothing, transportation, or the expenses for which payments made pursuant to this section or RCW 72.02.110 or any one or more of such expenses, the person released shall be required to assume such expenses.

(2)(a) The department of corrections may provide temporary housing assistance for a person being released from any state correctional facility through the use of rental vouchers, for a period not to exceed six months, if the department finds that such assistance will support the person's release into the community by preventing housing instability or homelessness. The department's authority to provide vouchers under this section is independent of its authority under RCW 9.94A.729; however, a person may not receive a combined total of rental vouchers in excess of six months for each release from a state correctional facility.
(b) The department shall establish policies for prioritizing funds available for housing vouchers under this section for persons at risk of releasing homeless or becoming homeless without assistance while taking into account risk to reoffend.

(3) The minimum subsistence amount in subsection (1) of this section must be adjusted for inflation annually beginning July 1, 2024, based upon changes in the consumer price index during the past year. "Consumer price index" means, for any calendar year, that year's annual average consumer price index, for Washington state, for urban wage earners and clerical workers, all items, compiled by the bureau of labor statistics, United States department of labor. If the bureau of labor statistics develops more than one consumer price index for areas within the state, the index covering the greatest number of people, covering areas exclusively within the boundaries of the state, and including all items shall be used for the adjustments for inflation in this section.

Sec. 3. RCW 72.09.270 and 2021 c 200 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department of corrections shall develop an individual reentry plan as defined in RCW 72.09.015 for every incarcerated individual who is committed to the jurisdiction of the department except:

(a) Incarcerated individuals who are sentenced to life without the possibility of release or sentenced to death under chapter 10.95 RCW; and

(b) Incarcerated individuals who are subject to the provisions of 8 U.S.C. Sec. 1227.

(2) The individual reentry plan may be one document, or may be a series of individual plans that combine to meet the requirements of this section.

(3) In developing individual reentry plans, the department shall assess all incarcerated individuals using standardized and comprehensive tools to identify the criminogenic risks, programmatic needs, and educational and vocational skill levels for each incarcerated individual. The assessment tool should take into account demographic biases, such as culture, age, and gender, as well as the needs of the incarcerated individual, including any learning disabilities, substance abuse or mental health issues, and social or behavior challenges.
(4)(a) The initial assessment shall be conducted as early as sentencing, but, whenever possible, no later than forty-five days of being sentenced to the jurisdiction of the department of corrections.

(b) The incarcerated individual's individual reentry plan shall be developed as soon as possible after the initial assessment is conducted, but, whenever possible, no later than sixty days after completion of the assessment, and shall be periodically reviewed and updated as appropriate.

(5) The individual reentry plan shall, at a minimum, include:

(a) A plan to maintain contact with the incarcerated individual's children and family, if appropriate. The plan should determine whether parenting classes, or other services, are appropriate to facilitate successful reunification with the incarcerated individual's children and family;

(b) An individualized portfolio for each incarcerated individual that includes the incarcerated individual's education achievements, certifications, employment, work experience, skills, and any training received prior to and during incarceration; and

(c) A plan for the incarcerated individual during the period of incarceration through reentry into the community that addresses the needs of the incarcerated individual including education, employment, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, family reunification, and other areas which are needed to facilitate a successful reintegration into the community.

(6)(a) Prior to discharge of any incarcerated individual, the department shall develop an individual discharge plan and provide reentry linkage case management services as follows:

(i) No later than one year before release, or as early as practicable during the incarcerated individual's sentence if the individual's term of confinement is less than one year:

(A) Evaluate the incarcerated individual's behavioral health and physical health needs and, to the extent possible, connect the incarcerated individual with (existing services and resources that meet those needs) relevant services, treatment programs, medication-assisted treatment, tribal and urban health clinics, and behavioral health services, and other resources based on the individual's evaluated needs; and

(B) Assist the incarcerated individual with obtaining identification upon release;
(ii) No later than 30 days before release, or as early as practicable during the incarcerated individual's sentence if the individual's term of confinement is less than 30 days:

(A) Assist the incarcerated individual with submitting applications for applicable state and federal government assistance and benefits programs on behalf of the incarcerated individual; and

(B) Prepare a 90-day supply of any necessary prescribed medications to be provided upon release, through a combination of a 30-day supply of in-hand medications and 60-day supply of prescriptions, to ensure continuity of care and that medications are readily available for the incarcerated individual upon release; and

((iii)) (iii) Connect the incarcerated individual with a community justice center and/or community transition coordination network in the area in which the incarcerated individual will be residing once released from the correctional system if one exists.

(b) If the department recommends partial confinement in an incarcerated individual's individual reentry plan, the department shall maximize the period of partial confinement for the incarcerated individual as allowed pursuant to RCW 9.94A.728 to facilitate the incarcerated individual's transition to the community.

(7) The department shall establish mechanisms for sharing information from individual reentry plans to those persons involved with the incarcerated individual's treatment, programming, and reentry, when deemed appropriate. When feasible, this information shall be shared electronically.

(8)(a) In determining the county of discharge for an incarcerated individual released to community custody, the department may approve a residence location that is not in the incarcerated individual's county of origin if the department determines that the residence location would be appropriate based on any court-ordered condition of the incarcerated individual's sentence, victim safety concerns, and factors that increase opportunities for successful reentry and long-term support including, but not limited to, location of family or other sponsoring persons or organizations that will support the incarcerated individual, ability to complete an educational program that the incarcerated individual is enrolled in, availability of appropriate programming or treatment, and access to housing, employment, and prosocial influences on the person in the community.
(b) In implementing the provisions of this subsection, the department shall approve residence locations in a manner that will not cause any one county to be disproportionately impacted.

(c) If the incarcerated individual is not returned to his or her county of origin, the department shall provide the law and justice council of the county in which the incarcerated individual is placed with a written explanation.

(d)(i) For purposes of this section, except as provided in (d)(ii) of this subsection, the incarcerated individual's county of origin means the county of the incarcerated individual's residence at the time of the incarcerated individual's first felony conviction in Washington state.

(ii) If the incarcerated individual is a homeless person as defined in RCW 43.185C.010, or the incarcerated individual's residence is unknown, then the incarcerated individual's county of origin means the county of the incarcerated individual's first felony conviction in Washington state.

(9) Nothing in this section creates a vested right in programming, education, or other services.

--- END ---