
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5131

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senate Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators C. Wilson, Chapman, Dhingra, Frame, Hasegawa, Nobles, Orwall, Saldaña, Stanford, and Wellman)

READ FIRST TIME 01/23/25.

1 AN ACT Relating to accommodating religious celebrations in state
2 correctional facilities; adding a new section to chapter 72.09 RCW;
3 and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes the
6 constitutionally protected rights of incarcerated persons to believe,
7 express, and exercise the religion of their choice. The legislature
8 further recognizes the positive benefit of religious practice in the
9 form of positive behavior in institutions and in the community. The
10 legislature intends to affirm and support religious practices for
11 faith and cultural groups by providing opportunities to celebrate
12 practices and events. The legislature therefore resolves to codify
13 the opportunity for religious celebrations in state correctional
14 facilities.

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

17 (1) The department shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate
18 religious celebrations in state correctional facilities.

19 (2) Reasonable efforts under this section include but are not
20 limited to coordination and arrangements with a partnering nonprofit

1 organization in the provision and delivery of a religious celebration
2 meal, including meal enhancements and donated foods. The department
3 may establish reasonable guidelines and deadlines for sponsorship and
4 contribution of meal enhancements and donated foods, but no deadline
5 may exceed 45 days in advance of a religious celebration, barring any
6 supply chain issues.

7 (3) Provision of a religious celebration meal must be made at no
8 cost to the incarcerated person, excluding the religious celebration
9 meal enhancement.

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