

**RCW 70.48.801 Jail standards task force.** (1) A joint legislative task force on jail standards is established, with members as provided in this subsection.

(a) The president of the senate shall appoint one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

(b) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives.

(c) The president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives jointly shall appoint 13 members representing the interests of: Prosecutors, defense attorneys, law enforcement, counties, cities, jail administrators, superior courts, district and municipal courts, a state designated protection and advocacy agency, medical and mental health service providers, a statewide civil legal aid organization, persons with lived experience, and other entities involved with or interested in the operation of local jails.

(2) The legislative membership shall convene the initial meeting of the task force. The task force shall choose its chair from among its legislative membership.

(3) Staff support for the task force must be provided by the office of the attorney general.

(4) (a) Legislative members of the task force may be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, nonlegislative members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.

(b) Nonlegislative members of the task force who demonstrate financial hardship must be reimbursed for travel expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060, as well as other expenses as needed for each day a nonlegislative task force member attends a task force meeting to provide consultative assistance.

(5) The expenses of the task force must be paid jointly by the senate and the house of representatives. Task force expenditures are subject to approval by the senate facilities and operations committee and the house executive rules committee, or their successor committees.

(6) The task force shall review the following issues:

(a) The adequacy of standards adopted and used by jails including, but not limited to, standards for conditions and operations, inspections, enforcement, and oversight;

(b) Current data on jails in the state including, but not limited to, square footage of living space per individual, jail capacity, average daily population over the previous five years, medical and dental services, mental health services, treatment programming options, accreditation status, use of force incidents over the previous five years, and in-custody deaths and the causes of those deaths;

(c) How the jails in the state compare to jail standards and practices in other states regarding safety and physical conditions; health and welfare; access to medical, mental health, dental care, and substance use disorder treatment; food quality and quantity; use of force; use of solitary confinement; and recreational activities and programming;

(d) The revenue sources and funding mechanisms used by other states to pay for local jails and the kinds of services that are

provided to inmates in jails in other states, including identifying the entity that is responsible for financing those services;

(e) Inmate's access to jail telecommunication, electronic media, and commissary services, including the rates and fees charged by the jail for these services that are often borne by families of incarcerated individuals; and

(f) Other issues the task force deems relevant to the conditions of jails.

(7) The task force shall make recommendations regarding:

(a) Statewide minimum jail standards, oversight, or other policy changes to ensure jail conditions meet state and federal constitutional and statutory standards and include adequate safety and welfare safeguards for incarcerated persons and staff; and

(b) Restoration of a statewide authority to set mandatory minimum jail standards and conduct inspections of jails for compliance and enforcement of those standards.

(8) The task force shall consult with organizations and entities with interest or experience in jail standards and operations including, but not limited to, treatment providers, victims' advocates, inmate advocates, organizations representing jail employees and officers, and other community organizations.

(9) The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs and representatives from county, city, and regional jails must provide any data or information that is requested by the task force to perform its duties under this section.

(10) The task force shall report findings and recommendations to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2023. [2023 c 475 § 935; 2021 c 334 § 957.]

**Effective date—2023 c 475:** See note following RCW 16.76.030.

**Conflict with federal requirements—Effective date—2021 c 334:**  
See notes following RCW 43.79.555.