

Cannabis

Cannabis Legalization Evaluation

In November 2012, Washington State voters passed Initiative 502 to regulate and tax the use and sale of cannabis for persons twenty-one years of age and older. As part of I-502, WSIPP was directed to “conduct cost-benefit evaluations of the implementation” of the law. The evaluations must include measures of impacts on public health, public safety, cannabis use, the economy, the criminal justice system, and state and local costs and revenues.

A preliminary report was released in September 2015. The second required report was released in September 2017. Subsequent reports are mandated in 2022 and 2032. In September 2021, the WSIPP Board of Directors voted to extend the 2022 deadline to 2023.

Supplemental to the ongoing benefit-cost evaluation of cannabis legalization authorized by Initiative 502 in 2012, the 2018 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to conduct additional cannabis research. WSIPP was directed to update its inventory of programs for the prevention and treatment of youth cannabis use; examine current data collection methods measuring the use of cannabis by youth and potential ways to improve on these methods; and identify effective methods used to reduce or eliminate the unlicensed cultivation or distribution of marijuana in jurisdictions with existing legal marijuana markets.

Related reports:

Monitoring Trends in Use Prior to Implementation of I-502 and Employment and Wage Earnings in Licensed Marijuana Businesses.

Amani Rashid, (360) 664-9804

Criminal justice

Effectiveness of the drug offender sentencing alternative (DOSA)

The 2020 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to evaluate the effectiveness of the drug offender sentencing alternative (DOSA). DOSA allows individuals to participate in treatment and community supervision in lieu of some (Prison DOSA) or all (Residential DOSA) of their incarceration sentence. This evaluation will examine whether participation in DOSA reduces recidivism and whether those effects vary for prison- and residential-based DOSA programs. The legislature directed WSIPP to repeat these evaluations on a regular schedule to continuously monitor the effects of the program. An introduction to the ongoing report series that describes the development of DOSA can be found here. The initial evaluation report can be found here. Additional evaluation reports are due to the governor and the legislature on November 1, 2028, and every five years thereafter.

Lauren Knoth-Peterson, (360) 664-9805

Creating Prison to Postsecondary Education Pathways

The 2021 Legislature passed 2SHB 1044 expanding the types of postsecondary education programs eligible for state funding in the Department of Corrections’ (DOC) incarceration facilities. The bill directs WSIPP to study recidivism, enrollment, and completion rates of incarcerated persons in the postsecondary education system after release from incarceration. The study will use data from DOC, the Washington Student Achievement Council, and the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges. The study must include the following:

- Patterns and effects on post-release enrollment and participation in the community and technical college sector by individuals who, while incarcerated, participated in postsecondary education;
- Differential outcomes for individuals participating in different types of postsecondary education courses, certificates, and degree programs;
- Changes in enrollment and completion of postsecondary education courses, certificate programs, and degree programs due to the expansion in postsecondary education programming; and
- Recidivism outcomes other than incarceration for those individuals who participated in postsecondary education while incarcerated.

A preliminary report is due to the Legislature on October 1, 2024, and a final report is due October 1, 2027.

Julia Cramer, (360) 664-9073

Evaluation of the Reentry Community Services Program

The 2021 Legislature passed E2SSB 5304 which modified the state's Reentry Community Services (RCS) program. The bill includes an assignment for WSIPP to update its evaluation of the RCS program and to broaden its benefit-cost analysis to include impacts on the use of public services and other factors. In addition, the bill directs WSIPP to examine the potential cost, benefit, and risks involved in expanding or replicating the RCS program. Finally, the bill asks WSIPP to examine what modifications to the program are most likely to improve outcomes associated with program participation based on current knowledge about evidence-based, research-based, and promising programs. WSIPP will consult with the Reentry Services Work Group (administered by the Health Care Association) in 2022 to determine any additional research parameters for the final report.

The preliminary report can be found [here](https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/Publications?reportId=663). A final report is due November 1, 2023.

Lauren Knoth-Peterson, (360) 664-9805

Operation Net Nanny and Other Fictitious Victim Sting Operations

The 2021 Legislature directed WSIPP to examine Washington State's Operation Net Nanny and similar fictitious victim sting operations. Operation Net Nanny is a collaborative undercover operation that includes local, state, and federal law enforcement targeting the arrest and prosecution of individuals involved in child abuse and exploitation using the Internet by using a fictitious victim. The study must include the following:

- A description of the current research on fictitious victim sting operations, including evidence of their effectiveness in deterring or reducing crime, their costs, and potential advantages or drawbacks of their use in crime prevention; and
- A comparison of the characteristics of individuals convicted as a result of Washington's Operation Net Nanny stings with individuals convicted in Washington State of similar offenses who were not a part of Operation Net Nanny.

A final report was originally due to the Legislature by June 30, 2022. In December 2021, the WSIPP Board of Directors voted to shift the deadline to June 30, 2023.

Corey Whichard, (360) 664-9075

Evaluation of Functional Family Therapy (FFT) Program

In 2022, the Community Juvenile Accountability Act (CJAA) Advisory Committee—tasked with implementing and overseeing evidence-based programs in Washington State—developed research recommendations for both the short and long term. Their recommendations include periodic evaluations of Washington's juvenile justice evidence-based programs, including assessing their effect on recidivism. The first program to be evaluated in such a way will be Functional Family Therapy (FFT). The study will assess the effectiveness of FFT in reducing recidivism and examine the differences across characteristics such as race, sex, age, risk level, and court size. The study may also include a secondary analysis of the impacts on domain change(s) in the risk assessment and sub-group analyses to measure the effect of dosage, completion, and provider adherence.

WSIPP's Board of Directors approved a contract with CJAA within the Department of Children, Youth, and Families for WSIPP to evaluate FFT. The report is due to the Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators (WAJCA) and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) by June 30, 2023.

Morgan Spangler, (360) 664-9807

Exclusive Adult Jurisdiction

The 2018 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to assess the impact of changes to the Juvenile Justice Act (JJA), as outlined in E2SSB 6160. To the extent possible, the study should include impacts to community safety, racial disproportionality, recidivism, state expenditures, and youth rehabilitation.

The 2019 Legislature amended WSIPP's assignment to include an assessment of additional components contained in Sections 2-6 of E2SHB 1646. WSIPP must also conduct a benefit-cost analysis which includes the health impacts and recidivism effects of extending the JJA to include all offenses committed under the age of twenty-one.

A preliminary report is due to the legislature by December 1, 2023 with a final report due December 1, 2031.

Lauren Knoth-Peterson, (360) 664-9805

Evaluation of Washington's Housing Voucher Program

In 2022, the Washington State Legislature passed 2SHB 1818, which expanded the use of rental vouchers for individuals leaving incarceration in state prisons from three to six months. As a part of this bill, the Legislature directed WSIPP to conduct an evaluation and benefit-cost analysis of Washington's Housing Voucher Program, accounting for the new expansion to six months. The assignment directs WSIPP to consider not only recidivism outcomes, but also impacts on homelessness, use of public services, and other factors WSIPP deems relevant. A final report is due to the governor and the Legislature by November 1, 2025.

Lauren Knoth-Peterson, (360) 664-9805

Evaluation of DOC Community Services Experiment

After individuals are transferred out of incarceration to partial confinement or released to the community, case managers refer these individuals to reentry service providers. The Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) is conducting an experiment to examine methods to increase access to community providers to reduce the likelihood of recidivism. WSIPP's Board of Directors approved a contract with DOC for WSIPP to evaluate this experiment. The final report is due December 1, 2025.

Lauren Knoth-Peterson, (360) 664-9805

Employment/Welfare

Underground Economy in the Construction Industry

The 2022 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to undertake a study on the nature and scope of the underground economy. As part of the study, WSIPP will explore policies that may promote "greater cohesion and transparency among state agencies" in regard to the underground economy in the construction industry. Finally, the report will address the extent of and projected costs to the state and workers of the underground economy.

A report was originally due to the legislature by December 1, 2022. In June 2022, the WSIPP Board of Directors voted to shift the deadline to September 30, 2023.

Cory Briar, (360) 664-9801

The Needs of Farmworkers

The 2022 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to conduct a comprehensive study of the needs of farmworkers in the state to help policymakers determine whether those needs are being met by state-administered programs, policies, and statutes. WSIPP must focus on needs related to health and safety in the workplace, payment of wages, and preventing harassment and discrimination of, and retaliation against, farmworkers for asserting their rights regarding health and safety standards, wage and hour laws, and access to services. The information must be based on surveys or interviews conducted by Latino nonprofit agencies with well-established connections to farmworkers.

WSIPP must also examine how relevant state agencies coordinate with each other and federal agencies in enforcing the laws and policies related to farmworkers and review available data and research on programs intended to provide farmworkers access to services and benefits.

A preliminary report to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2023, and a final report by June 30, 2025.

Cory Briar, (360) 664-9801

Higher education

Evaluation of the Guided Pathways Model

The 2021 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to evaluate the guided pathways model. Guided pathways is a community and technical college reform which aims to improve student experience and outcomes through changes to academic program structure, advising, instruction and progress monitoring.

WSIPP's preliminary report will review the implementation of the guided pathways model in Washington and any available evidence of the effectiveness of the guided pathways model. If possible, this report will also evaluate the effect of the guided pathways model on early student outcomes including, but not limited to, student retention and persistence, college level English and math within the first year, graduation and transfer rates. The preliminary report is due in December 2023.

A final report will evaluate the effect of the guided pathways on longer-term student outcomes including, but not limited to, degree completion, time to degree, transfer to four-year institutions, employment, and earnings, to the extent possible. The final report is due in December 2029.

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Mental health

The Effect of Integration on the Involuntary Treatment Systems for Substance Abuse and Mental Health

The 2016 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to evaluate the effect of the integration of the involuntary treatment systems for substance use disorders and mental health. WSIPP's report must include whether the integrated system:

- Increases efficiency of evaluation and treatment of persons involuntarily detained for substance use disorders;
- Is cost-effective, including impacts on health care, housing, employment, and criminal justice costs;
- Results in better outcomes for persons involuntarily detained;
- Increases the effectiveness of the crisis response system statewide;
- Impacts commitment based on mental disorders;
- Is sufficiently resourced with enough involuntary treatment beds, less restrictive treatment options, and state funds to provide timely and appropriate treatment for all individuals interacting with the integrated involuntary treatment system; and
- Diverted a significant number of individuals from the mental health involuntary treatment system whose risk results from substance abuse, including an estimate of the net savings from serving these clients into the appropriate substance abuse treatment system.

WSIPP's first preliminary report was published in December 2020, the second report was published in June 2021, and a final report is due June 30, 2023.

Nathan Adams, (360) 664-9070

Pre-K-12 education

Analysis of Transitional Kindergarten Programs

The 2022 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to conduct an analysis of transitional kindergarten programs offered by school districts in Washington State and to evaluate student participation in transitional kindergarten programs. The study must, to the extent feasible given available data, include the following information:

- The identification of why school districts offer transitional kindergarten, ECEAP, and other early learning programs, such as traditional or developmental pre-kindergarten; and what funding sources are used.

Additionally, the study must compare the use of transitional kindergarten in Washington State to use in other states, and review any outcome evaluation data available from other states.

A final report is due to the governor, the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families, and the Legislature by December 31, 2023.

Rebecca Goodvin, (360) 664-9077

COVID-19's Impact on Student Learning

WSIPP receives ongoing funds from the legislature to support K-12 education research that is relevant to Washington State and informs policymakers' decisions. Nationwide, there is interest in understanding how pandemic-induced school closures have impacted students' learning and how to best support students going forward. With this in mind, WSIPP will conduct a study including the following:

- Examine how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced students' achievement in mathematics and English language arts (ELA) in Washington State,
- Estimate how changes in math and ELA standardized test scores impact students' future outcomes including earnings, and
- Identify interventions that can support students' academic achievement in the post-pandemic period.

To the extent that data allows, we will consider how impacts on learning vary by student, school, and district characteristics. WSIPP will publish a report by August 1, 2023.

Julia Cramer, (360) 664-9073

LAP Inventory: Effective Practices to Assist Struggling Students

The 2013 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to prepare an inventory of evidence- and research-based practices, strategies, and activities for school districts to use in the Learning Assistance Program (LAP).

The state program provides supplemental academic support to eligible K-12 students achieving below grade level or not on track to meet local or state graduation requirements. LAP funds may support programs in reading, writing, mathematics, and readiness, as well as programs to reduce disruptive behavior.

An [initial report](#) was released in July 2014. Updates were published in [July 2015](#), [July 2016](#), [June 2018](#), and [July 2020](http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/Publications?reportId=640). The inventory will be updated every two years thereafter. WSIPP was scheduled to update the inventory in 2022. Instead of an updated, WSIPP assessed the use of the inventory. In the absence of the regular update, WSIPP published a [historical review of the LAP inventory](https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/Publications?reportId=657), describing potential changes resulting from 2021 legislation, and offering a discussion of options regarding the future of the inventory.

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Washington State Institute for Public Policy

The Washington State Legislature created the Washington State Institute for Public Policy in 1983. A Board of Directors—representing the legislature, the governor, and public universities—governs WSIPP and guides the development of all activities. WSIPP's mission is to carry out practical research, at legislative direction, on issues of importance to Washington State.