

## 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.

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Nathan Adams, (360) 664-9070

### 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.

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Julia Cramer, (360) 664-9073

### Jail and Juvenile Facility Study

The 2023 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to conduct a study of the Washington jail system and county juvenile justice facilities. As part of the study, WSIPP will contract with the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) to survey Washington jail and juvenile detention facilities. For more information on the elements that must be included in the survey, please see the study assignment language in the legislation linked below.

To the extent possible, the report should include the following:

- An examination of the availability of criminal justice training commission classes for corrections officers.

The report is due to the governor and the legislature by December 1, 2024.

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Corey Whichard, (360) 664-9075

## 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 was originally due to the legislature by December 1, 2023. In September 2023, the WSIPP Board of Directors voted to shift the deadlines to June 30, 2024. The preliminary report can be found [here](#). A final report is due to the governor and the legislature by December 1, 2031.

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## 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.

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Travis Taniguchi, (360) 664-9805

## DOC Assessments and Charges

The 2023 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to review all assessments and charges imposed on individuals incarcerated in Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities and their family members and the effect of assessments and charges on the financial status of incarcerated individuals. For more information on the items that must be included in WSIPP's review, please see the study assignment language in the legislation linked below. The report is due to the governor and the legislature by June 30, 2025.

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Nathan Adams, (360) 664-9070

## Adult Corrections Inventory

The 2023 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to update its adult corrections inventory of evidence-based, research-based, and promising programs, and to expand the inventory to include new programs not included in the last WSIPP inventory. The update must focus on programs for incarcerated individuals in prison facilities, including family and relationships programs, learning and working programs, and therapeutic and support programs. WSIPP was directed to prioritize programs currently offered by the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC).

The preliminary report can be found [here](https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/Publications?reportId=689). The preliminary report identifies the programs currently offered in DOC prison facilities and lists the new programs to be reviewed for the updated adult corrections inventory. A final report of the updated adult corrections inventory will also list programs currently offered in DOC prison facilities and will include a determination of each program's likely effectiveness in reducing recidivism based on WSIPP's analysis of available evaluation studies. The final report is due by December 31, 2024.

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Rebecca Goodvin, (360) 664-9077

## 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.

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Travis Taniguchi, (360) 664-9805

## Visitation with Incarcerated People

Past research on prison visitation consistently finds that most incarcerated people never receive a single visit while incarcerated. A major reason for this is that individuals are frequently sent to prison facilities that are not located near their home community. As a result, participating in prison visitation often requires friends and family to travel long distances. In addition to paying for transportation, visitors may need to cover the costs of lodging, childcare, and lost wages from taking time off work. Because it is common for incarcerated individuals to come from economically disadvantaged communities, one of the main explanations for low rates of visitation is that many people who wish to visit incarcerated loved ones cannot afford to do so.

At the same time, evidence suggests that increasing visitation may benefit the correctional system and public safety. In addition, since it is common for people to live with family when they first leave prison, visitation plays an important role in helping individuals maintain these relationships while preparing for community reentry.

The Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) offers several programs to facilitate visitation. WSIPP will examine whether the behavior of incarcerated individuals (measured through infractions) changes before or after a scheduled visitation, if there are any impacts on behavior conditional upon the type of visit, and if patterns of visitation impact recidivism.

A report will be published in the fall of 2025.

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Corey Whichard, (360) 664-9075

## Contracting Processes of Correctional Industries

The 2023 Washington State Legislature directed WSIPP to study the contracting practices for goods and services and manufactured products made or offered by Correctional Industries (CI) to state agencies and others within the state. The report must address the following:

- Provide the number of individuals who have positions upon release that were obtained with skills obtained through work at CI.

For more information on the items that must be included in WSIPP's review, please see the study assignment language in the legislation linked below. The report is due to the governor and the legislature by June 30, 2025.

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## Improving Evaluations of Programs Offered by DOC

It is widely recognized that experimental research is the strongest design for testing causal relationships between variables. Despite the importance of experimental research in understanding the impact of incarceration and prison programming, its use in correctional settings is rare for both practical and ethical reasons.

A preliminary literature review identified few studies that have used experimental designs or natural experiments in partnership with the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC). Much more commonly, quasi-experimental research has been used to assess policies and program impacts. WSIPP will work with DOC to explore potential ways that WSIPP could collaborate with DOC to produce improved policy evaluations for corrections programs offered in Washington State.

A report will be published in the summer of 2025.

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Colin Gibson, (360) 664-9085

## Recovery Navigator and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program Study

The 2023 Washington State Legislature directed the Washington State Health Care Authority to contract with WSIPP to study the short-term implementation and long-term effectiveness of the Recover Navigator Program (RNP) authorized under RCW 71.24.115 and the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) programs authorized under RCW 71.24.589.

The first report will be an implementation assessment of statewide RNP and LEAD programs. It will include descriptions of the current state of RNP and LEAD program implementation, the core principles of these programs as currently implemented, barriers to achieving higher fidelity to core principles established by RNP and LEAD administration, best practices published in existing research or by other relevant stakeholders, and the utilization of technical support of the LEAD national support bureau. The report will also provide further recommendations for additional research and analysis that may be needed.

The implementation assessment is due to the legislature by June 30, 2025.

Additional reports are due on June 30, 2028, June 30, 2033, and June 30, 2038.

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Printed on 07-06-2024



### Washington State Institute for Public Policy

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