



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE

EXECUTIVE ORDER 24-03

BUILDING SAFE AND STRONG COMMUNITIES

THROUGH SUCCESSFUL REENTRY

(Superseding Executive Order 16-05)

WHEREAS, the purpose of adult corrections and juvenile rehabilitation is to improve public safety by holding those who are incarcerated accountable and providing those individuals the support and tools that help reduce the likelihood they will reoffend after they reenter the community; and

WHEREAS, the research shows that every dollar spent on prison education in Washington state saves up to \$19.80 on the costs of re-incarceration; and that incarcerated individuals who participate in rehabilitative, vocational, and education programs recidivate less than those who do not; and

WHEREAS, in Washington, approximately 96 percent of incarcerated adults and 100 percent of incarcerated juveniles will be released from confinement; and

WHEREAS public safety is enhanced when individuals successfully transition to communities that have opportunities for stable work, housing, health care, and other resources; and

WHEREAS, successful reentry is in alignment with Executive Order 22-04, the Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan to reduce disparities and increase opportunities for all people in Washington; and

WHEREAS, employment following incarceration reduces the likelihood of recidivism, and the state has set a goal to maintain post-incarceration employment at 40 percent; and

WHEREAS, the state of Washington will seek to scale up access to ADA-accessible and affordable housing for all individuals, including people with criminal convictions who need long-term care, behavioral health, medical care, and other supports; and

WHEREAS, the aging prison population faces additional challenges associated with limited access to health care, including mental health services and substance use disorder treatment; and

WHEREAS, data must be utilized to advance policies and investments to address disparities in access to services, improve quality, and measure outcomes. Health care data should also be securely shared between carceral facilities and community providers; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the Legislature created the Statewide Reentry Council to advance a more humane and restorative reentry system by identifying necessary improvements to state laws, investments, and attitudes; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Legislature created a Medicaid Reentry Advisory Council and directed the Council to work to improve Medicaid eligibility, ensure system partnerships, and related improvements; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid renewed our state’s Section 1115 Medicaid waiver, which allows Washington to use federal Medicaid funds to improve Apple Health, our state’s Medicaid program; and

WHEREAS, Washington continues to lead the nation in advancing reentry efforts by providing education, training, and job opportunities that support a successful transition; and

WHEREAS, research shows that comprehensive, person-centered, and individualized reentry services increase public safety, result in cost savings, reduce recidivism, create community unity, maintain family or individual support systems, and good neighbors.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, by the power vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes of the state of Washington, do hereby order all executive and small cabinet agencies to take the following steps within the scope of each agencies responsibilities to support reentry efforts including, but not limited to, the actions listed below:

A. Facilitate statewide, uniform progress by;

1. Actively supporting and prioritizing reentry efforts by consulting with the Washington Statewide Reentry Council and maximizing government resources and services to address discrimination, underemployment, unemployment, housing instability, food insecurity, and limited access to health care.
2. Establishing hiring policies, education systems, and training programs that help individuals gain full and equitable access to living-wage jobs. This includes implementing strategies that remove or mitigate legal, financial, and policy barriers to pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and internship programs, specialized training and certifications, and higher education.
3. Revising all policies, procedures, nomenclatures, manuals, and other materials with human-centered and person-first language that destigmatizes formerly incarcerated individuals. This includes reviewing, adopting, and implementing best or promising practices from other states or countries.
4. Seeking revisions in federal, state, and local laws and regulations to create equitable access to safe and affordable housing for all Washingtonians, including those with criminal history.
5. Developing, maintaining, and expanding partnerships that support reentry efforts.

B. Accomplishing the Goals of Reentry 2030

To achieve the goal of making successful reentry a reality by 2030, the following agencies shall, in consultation with the Washington Statewide Reentry Council, take these steps:

1. Department of Corrections (DOC) and Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF):

- a. Design and implement a comprehensive entry and exit process that includes an assessment of each individual's needs such as housing, employment, parenting skills, health care services, substance use treatment, and mental health services.
- b. Prior to release, provide each person leaving a correctional facility with contact information for local social service programs and other community resources. This information shall include the resource guide distributed by the 2-1-1 program. Upon their return to the community, help connect individuals with community organizations which can assist with their needs.
- c. Seek to ensure equitable access to educational, vocational, postsecondary, and other programming at DOC and DCYF facilities.
- d. Dedicate resources to help individuals obtain, prior to release, a social security card, state identification card or driver's license, and a copy of their birth certificate and veteran service record, if needed. Ensure that individuals, prior to release, are given an opportunity to complete a health care application for Medicaid or Medicare services, register to vote, and obtain a local library card.
- e. Create a comprehensive health care discharge plan for individuals with medical needs, which can assist a community healthcare provider. This discharge plan shall include the person's health history, diagnoses, medications, and any necessary specialty services. Assist with navigation to community health services if needed.
- f. Pursue the removal of any known legal barriers to education and programming based on immigration status and request increased funding to provide appropriate services for incarcerated individuals with limited English proficiency.
- g. Conduct facility reviews to identify unused or underused spaces and prioritize these areas for expanding transitional services and programming.
- h. Support efforts to expand access to state-recognized apprenticeship preparation programs in state correctional facilities, and to strengthen pathways for individuals to advance to state-registered apprenticeship programs upon reentering the community.
- i. Support efforts to have DOC provide an individualized reentry plan for all persons released from a state facility provided sufficient and stable state funding is allocated for this work.

2. Department of Licensing (DOL):

- a. In collaboration with DOC, ensure that, upon release, all consenting individuals have Washington State identification: either a valid driver's license or state identification card. The DOL will continue to remove barriers to its licensing processes for incarcerated persons, including access to driver education and a driving test.
- b. Evaluate and adjust policies and processes related to reinstating and renewing driver's licenses for those currently incarcerated or recently released from custody. Work to remove barriers in the vehicle registration renewal process.
- c. Partner with DOC, DCYF, and the courts to reduce or eliminate fees such as driver's license reinstatement fees.
- d. Provide Correctional Industries, DOC, and DCYF with policy guidance on current restrictions for issuing certain business and professional licenses to formerly incarcerated individuals. Work with DOC and DCYF to conduct preliminary application criminal conviction reviews, when requested, for incarcerated individuals who are pursuing a professional license in Washington State.

3. Department of Commerce (COM):

- a. Support the Statewide Reentry Council mission and strategic plan.
- b. Pursue dedicated housing funding, in collaboration with the Health Care Authority, for individuals leaving incarceration, including those with complex health care issues who need ADA access or have significant behavioral health needs.
- c. Work to ensure that federal, state, and local policies incorporate the needs of incarcerated individuals reentering the community without stable housing and advocate to remove local and federal housing rules that authorize denial or exclusion of people with a history of incarceration.
- d. The Reentry Council will collaborate with DOC and DCYF to build an outreach plan to employers to identify workforce needs that individuals with criminal history can meet with appropriate training.
- e. The Reentry Council will make recommendations to the Governor and state agencies regarding legislation and administrative rules that would help remove barriers to successful reentry.

4. Employment Security Department (ESD):

- a. Work collaboratively with DOC to support employment and training services for individuals, both prior to and following release to their communities, by connecting them with WorkSource services.
- b. Serve as the conduit for individuals to engage with the state's one-stop system, called WorkSource, for referrals to additional employment and training services they may need to attain economic self-sufficiency, and to supports that will help them effectively engage in those activities.
- c. Engage and establish relationships with employers across the state to educate them on the benefits of hiring justice-impacted individuals.

5. **Department of Labor and Industries (L&I):**
 - a. Develop and deliver a workshop for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals on worker rights, protections, and certain license and certification requirements for occupations regulated by the department.
 - b. Create a streamlined process for verifying training and reporting apprenticeship hours worked that must be documented for successful completion of an apprenticeship program.
6. **Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS):**
 - a. Seek funding, authority, and resources for qualified individuals who leave correctional facilities to obtain food benefits and other services provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Disability Support Services, Economic Services Administration, and the state Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance.
 - b. Maintain a liaison position, co-funded by DOC and DSHS and based at DSHS, to facilitate benefits, information, data sharing, reentry, and continuity of DSHS services for individuals reentering the community.
7. **Department of Enterprise Services (DES):**
 - a. In coordination with the Office of Financial Management, update training tools for supervisors on the appropriate consideration of criminal history to allow qualified applicants to pursue opportunities for state employment.
8. **Health Care Authority (HCA):**
 - a. Maximize opportunities under the Federal Reentry Act of 2023 to increase supports under the Medicaid 1115 waiver reentry provisions by assisting with pre-release eligibility assessments and enrollment planning to access Medicaid-covered services and behavioral health care. The agency shall offer medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorder (MOUD) and alcohol use disorder up to 90 days prior to reentry.
 - b. Seek funding to support collaboration among state agencies to ensure the secure and effective exchange of patient health care data in carceral facilities with community providers, which is required by the Medicaid 1115 waiver.
 - c. Create a pathway for individuals to transition directly to mental health and substance use disorder treatment if treatment is recommended by assessments completed while the individual is incarcerated.
 - d. Coordinate sharing of confidential health records, necessary medications, and direct connections to community health care insurers.

Reporting Requirements: Beginning September 1, 2025, the agencies named above must submit annual reports to my office and to the Statewide Reentry Council concerning the progress made towards achieving their stated goals and identify any barriers, including financial or other resources, so that those barriers can be addressed through future executive and legislative action.

I recognize that accomplishing some of these goals by 2030 may require additional funding and staff support, and I strongly encourage agencies to identify those needs in the first annual report so that we can seek those additional resources.

I encourage other statewide elected officials, institutions of higher education, agencies of the judiciary, agencies of the Legislature, and boards and commissions to follow all applicable provisions of this Executive Order.

Provisions of this Executive Order are not intended to alter any existing collective bargaining agreements. This Order is not intended to confer and does not confer any legal right or entitlement and shall not be used as a basis for legal challenges to any rule or any other action or inaction of the governmental entities and employees subject to it.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Signed and sealed with the official seal of the state of Washington, on this 16th of September 2024, at Tacoma, Washington.

By:

Jay Inslee
Governor

BY THE GOVERNOR:

Secretary of State