

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Workforce Development Annual Report

Cassie Cordell Trueblood, et al., v. Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, et al.
Case No. C14-1178 MJP

August 15, 2022

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Introduction

This report is responsive to the requirement that the Department of Social and Health Services submit an annual report each year by August 15 to describe progress in meeting specific expectations concerning workforce development activities pursuant to the Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement (hereafter “Settlement Agreement”). This is the third such annual report.

All criminal defendants have the constitutional right to assist in their own defense. If a court believes a mental disability may prevent a defendant from assisting in their own defense, the court puts the criminal case on hold while an evaluation is completed to determine the defendant’s competency.

If an evaluation opines the defendant competent, and the court agrees with that finding, the defendant is returned to stand trial. However, if the court rules in agreement with the evaluation indicating the person is not competent but restorable, the court will order the defendant to receive mental health treatment to restore competency.

In April 2015, a federal court found that the Department of Social and Health Services was taking too long to provide these competency evaluation and restoration services.

As a result of this case, the state has been ordered to provide court-ordered in-jail competency evaluations within 14 days and inpatient competency evaluation and restoration services within seven days of receipt of a court order. Trueblood applies to people who are detained in city and county jails awaiting a competency evaluation or restoration services. Many of the programs created as a result of Trueblood also target individuals who have previously received competency evaluation and restoration services who are released and at-risk for re-arrest or re-institutionalization.

Implementing programs that train first responders and the forensic workforce in recognizing and responding to mental health challenges makes it more likely that people will be able to get the treatment they need when they need it, and as a result, people experiencing mental illness would be less likely to become entwined in the criminal court system. One goal of the program covered in this report includes providing variable levels of care to prevent overuse of the highest and most intensive level of care.

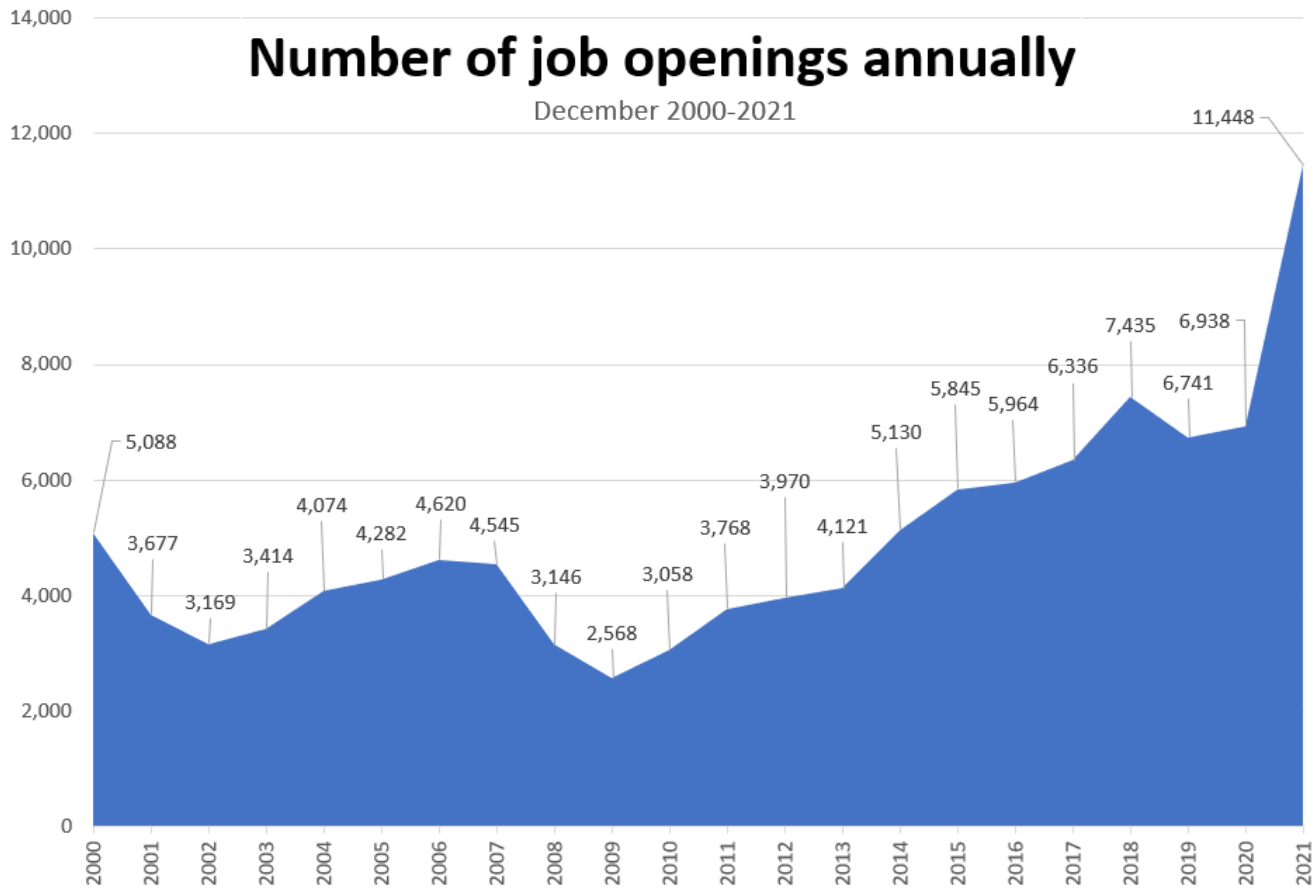
On Dec. 11, 2018, the Court approved the Settlement Agreement related to the contempt findings in this case. The Settlement Agreement is designed to move the state closer to compliance with the court injunction. It includes a plan for phasing in programs and services. In each phase, the state will focus its efforts within specifically identified and agreed upon geographic regions. The Settlement Agreement includes three phases of two years each and can be expanded to include additional phases.

Phases run parallel to the legislative biennia, which began with Phase 1 during the 2019-2021 biennium. Currently, the Settlement Agreement is in Phase 2:

- Phase 1: July 1, 2019-June 30, 2021. Pierce County, Southwest, and Spokane County regions.
- Phase 2: July 1, 2021-June 30, 2023. Phase 1 regions continue and add King County region.
- Phase 3: July 1, 2023-June 30, 2025. Next steps/region(s) to be determined.

To support the programs and strategies established in the Settlement Agreement, a well-trained and substantial workforce is essential. The DSHS Workforce Development Program involves initiatives that contribute to developing, sustaining, and retaining a viable forensic mental health workforce to meet these current and future needs.

Currently, our agency and those of our partners across the forensic mental health spectrum are experiencing significant workforce challenges. Behavioral health and other health care facilities in Washington reported that the top three occupations with exceptionally long vacancies are mental health counselors, substance use disorder professionals, and social workers. Common recruitment and retention themes cited included (1) better pay and signing bonuses available elsewhere, (2) the desire for flexible options such as telework, (3) a dwindling applicant pool due to fewer people coming into the field because of low pay, (4) the challenging nature of the work, and (5) substantial administrative burdens. Within the Behavioral Health Administration, psychiatric aides are another occupation experiencing increasing vacancies and fewer candidates applying. In offering reasons for this, a survey respondent stated, “Walmart pays better than we can” (Fall [2021, Washington’s Health Workforce Sentinel Network Findings Brief: Behavioral/Mental Health, Substance Use Disorder \(SUD\) Clinics and Residential Treatment Facilities](#)).



Source: U.S. [Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics and Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey](#), June 22

This need for workers is evident throughout the national landscape and can be attributed to the “great resignation,” which started in 2020 — reducing applicant pools, increasing vacancies, and driving competition among employers. The graph above illustrates the increase in job openings between 2000 and 2021. In 2021, openings spiked to 11,448, signaling that employers are currently in dire need of additional employees. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS)” estimates showed large increases in job openings and quits throughout 2021, ... Layoffs and discharges declined throughout the year and reached a low at the end of 2021 ([BLS.gov](#)).

As this event continues to impact the workforce, the team will examine the issues in the coming year to examine the most prominent challenges facing the forensic mental health workforce, and uncover potential strategies to address them. This will be accomplished by engaging with system partners within each of the assigned functional areas.

In addition to the work in this area accomplished by the OFMHS workforce development team, other workforce related efforts are also underway within different components of DSHS. The [June 2022 Trueblood Quarterly Implementation Status Report](#) details several approaches the senior agency leadership has made to address department workforce needs (Pg. 2-3, Trueblood v. Washington State Dept. of Soc. and Health Servs., No. C14-1178-MJP Document 907-1).

DSHS Workforce Development Requirements Under the Settlement Agreement

The Settlement Agreement and subsequent legislative funding provides for DSHS to employ workforce development specialists who focus on workforce development activities in the following areas as specified on pages 33-35 of the Settlement Agreement:

2. *Workforce Development; Degree and Certification Programs*
 - a. *The State will seek funding to hire, or contract with, workforce development specialists. The positions will be assigned to specific workforce functional areas to include:*
 - (1) *Community, including crisis response, homeless, in-home, residential, and clinic-based services*
 - (2) *In-patient, including residential treatment facilities, private hospitals, and state hospitals*
 - (3) *Law enforcement and corrections, including jails and prisons*
 - b. *Workforce development specialists may conduct or manage the following duties:*
 - (1) *Participate in workforce development workgroups with stakeholders such as state hospitals, community healthcare organizations, law enforcement, and jails*
 - (2) *Conduct training needs surveys/gaps analysis*
 - (3) *Assist in the development of a master training plan(s)*
 - (4) *Develop and coordinate training including standardized training manuals and guidelines*
 - (5) *Collaborate with other community-based, organizational workforce development staff*
 - (6) *Conduct training program(s) evaluations; and*
 - (7) *Other duties as assigned at the sole and exclusive discretion of the State.*
 - c. *The functions and duties outlined in this subsection may be implemented with direct hiring, contracting, or any combination thereof.*
 - d. *The workforce development specialists may collaborate with other workforce development efforts (for example, the workforce development efforts of the Economic*

Services Administration), as appropriate.

- e. The State will produce a report annually describing the activities of the workforce development specialists outlined in this subsection, and making recommendations about the specific workforce development steps necessary to ensure success of this Agreement. The State will distribute this report to key and interested legislators. This report will also be distributed to the Executive Committee, and that Committee shall consider whether to adopt those recommendations for possible inclusion in future Phases of the Agreement. The annual schedule for this report shall be set as to align with the Phased approach of this Agreement, and to allow for consideration of the Executive Committee’s recommendations in the established state budget process.*

In addition to the annual workforce development tasks and reporting requirements described in (a)(1)-(6) and (b)(1-7) in the previous section, the Settlement Agreement and Phase 1 final implementation plan required an additional report, “Washington State Forensic Mental Health Workforce: Assessing the Need and Target Areas for Training, Certification, and Possible Degree Programs” (hereafter Forensic Workforce Report), which was due at the end of Phase 1 in July 2021, as described below.

- f. The State will assess the need and target areas for training programs, certification programs, and possible degree programs. The State may collaborate with colleges, including community and technical colleges, and universities to accomplish this task, but shall also have discretion to accomplish this task through other means. This assessment shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements:*
- (1) Existing training, certifications, and degree programs in Washington for relevant professions; for example, nursing, psychiatry, psychology, counseling, law enforcement, or other professions determined at the discretion of the State.*
 - (2) Programs for relevant professions in other states.*
 - (3) Statewide staffing needs for all programs covered by this Agreement for a period of the subsequent ten years.*
- g. Upon completion of the assessment in § III.E.2.f. above, the State shall produce a report regarding that assessment that may be shared with appropriate committees of the Legislature. The report will include:*
- (1) High, medium, and low-cost recommendations, and*
 - (2) Long, medium, and short term recommendations for future action regarding training and certification programs.*

The Settlement Agreement also states that:

- h. While the State shall pursue the elements outlined this subsection in good faith, the State is not required to establish new degree or certification programs pursuant to this Agreement.*
- i. In addition to the requirements outlined in § III.E.2.a-h. above, the State will make all reasonable efforts to fill the positions required to timely implement all Phases of this Agreement, as outlined in § IV.A. Reasonable efforts may include the use of incentives¹.*

This third annual report describes progress to date in meeting these requirements and also discusses strategies for continued progress over the coming year.

Progress to Date and Next Steps

Hire Workforce Development Specialists

Progress to Date

During its 2019 session, the legislature appropriated and subsequently allotted \$1,264,000 to fund four positions dedicated to workforce development activities. Beginning in May 2019 (Q4 of Fiscal Year 2019), the workforce development administrator in DSHS BHA/OFMHS began hiring four full-time equivalent workforce development specialists and distributing their assignments among the community, inpatient, and law enforcement and corrections functional areas. By Q2 2020, each of the four positions had been successfully filled.

The workforce development administrator also oversees the Jail Technical Assistance (JTA) program. There is significant overlap between the training and technical assistance offered to jails and the overall forensic workforce or professional development responsibilities of the workforce development specialists. The four DSHS workforce development specialists share responsibilities across both the JTA and Workforce Development programs. Throughout this report, the reader will notice references to JTA. Operationally, jail technical assistance is conceptualized as part of workforce development's functional area number three (law enforcement and corrections, including jails and prisons) listed above, due to the overlap between these two areas.

During FY22, the workforce development team experienced turnover in one its 4.0 FTE positions. The new team member has been fully onboarded and integrated into the team.

Next Steps

During FY23, the team will continue working together to advance the efforts described in this report.

Participate in Workgroups

Progress to Date

In an effort to assess workforce needs in the field of forensic behavioral health, the workforce development team is participating in both internal and external workforce development workgroups, as described below. These workgroups address a number of topics to include identified barriers to the development and/or retention of the behavioral health workforce. The workforce development team participates in:

- ✓ **Best Practices for Behavioral Health in a Jail Setting Workgroup.** The jail technical assistance team worked in collaboration with a number of entities to create a guidebook of best practices for behavioral health services in a jail setting and working with people with mental illness. The initial workgroup convened on May 24, 2019, and included representation from Disability Rights Washington, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, the Washington State Office of the Attorney General, the Health Care Authority's enhanced peer services program administrator, and representatives from city and county jails both within and outside of Phase 1 regions. The guidebook addresses the topics of pre- and post-booking diversion, identification of need for and access to treatment, involuntary administration of medication, transition planning and continuity of care, and use of segregation as well as additional subject matter. The guidebook was completed on May 13, 2020, prior to the June 1, 2020 deadline. Related trainings began in September 2019 and continue monthly as additional topics are covered.
- ✓ **The King County Competency Continuum Workgroup.** This workgroup includes a diverse group of partners in King County who work with Trueblood class members. This workgroup includes representatives from service provider organizations, the Seattle Police Department, jails, diversion programs, attorneys, judges, tribes, the Downtown Emergency Service Center, and others.
- ✓ **The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.** The Workforce Board conducted an assessment of Washington's behavioral health workforce to address shortages in behavioral health professions in the state. The team is actively following their work and participating in meetings relevant to the forensic mental health workforce.
- ✓ **Trauma-Informed Care Workgroup.** This group is working toward the implementation of a trauma-informed philosophy of care within two forensic admission wards in

Western State Hospital. This pilot project will inform future projects to enhance trauma-informed care throughout the remaining BHA wards and facilities. The workgroup is composed of seven subcommittees, one of which is workforce development. The OFMHS workforce development team leads this subcommittee, which is responsible for developing a master list of trainings, a schedule and methodology for training deployment, and audit tools, in support of the trauma-informed approach implementation. Related to this effort, DSHS partnered with HCA on a joint venture to develop a series of online training modules regarding the effective application of trauma-informed approaches in working with patients experiencing mental health conditions who are involved in the criminal court system. This work stems from a grant from the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration and the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. Through this award, five online training modules were produced under contract and are now available at no cost to DSHS staff, all other state employees, and any interested community partners. These trainings are now available via the workforce development [website](#).

Next Steps

The team will continue to collaborate with other workforce development entities and seek opportunities for participation in additional relevant workgroups as they are identified. DSHS workforce development staff have met with their HCA counterparts to identify areas of intersection, share information, discuss potential opportunities, and to expand contacts and connections with external stakeholders. Both agencies have agreed to continue this mutually beneficial collaboration and coordination. Workforce development staff will also continue outreach to external stakeholders to engage in developing increased insight into the forensic mental health workforce needs in the varied communities throughout Washington. Some of the intensive work done in this regard during 2020 and 2021 is reflected in the aforementioned Forensic Workforce Report.

Conduct Training Needs Survey/Gap Analysis

Progress to Date

As noted in previous annual reports, the workforce development team collaborated with Groundswell Services, Inc. (“Groundswell”), to compile information and facilitate resource connections between Groundswell and key stakeholders within the state’s forensic system to enable the Groundswell team to study and report on Washington’s forensic workforce. The March 2020 Groundswell report identified a number of training-related gaps for the forensic workforce in Washington state. The Groundswell report noted that among candidates eligible for certain disciplines and bachelor’s-level positions, a lack of familiarity with mental illness and with criminal court-involved individuals may leave them wary of working in the forensic system. Additionally, disciplines that are more familiar with mental illness may also have misconceptions about people

involved with the criminal court system, perceiving them as exceedingly difficult to treat or uniformly violent.

Groundswell also noted that across almost all disciplines (other than forensic psychologists), candidates for positions in hospitals, residential treatment facilities for competency restoration, and community programs have little exposure or training involving forensic populations. Thus, many trainees are not prepared to work effectively with a forensic population. They do not understand the forensic system, the laws that influence treatment and disposition, the clinical conditions common to forensic settings (including severe mental illness, personality disorder, and malingering), and the more stringent boundaries typically necessary in forensic settings. This is also true for bachelor's-level staff and peer specialists.

During FY 2022, DSHS has taken action to address training gaps noted in the 2020 analysis, as well as in the FY21 Forensic Workforce Report to include the following:

- A significant effort during FY22 has been to develop an online training series specifically designed to address the previously identified need to enhance basic forensic literacy. Workforce development staff worked in partnership with leadership staff at the King County Jail to craft an outline of the topics to be covered in this training series. Based on that consultation, workforce development staff created a five-module online training series that covers:
 1. An overview of the Trueblood lawsuit
 2. Competency, and competency evaluation
 3. Competency restoration
 4. Diversion; and
 5. Continuity of care

Each of these online training modules is 30 minutes or less. They provide learners with a foundational understanding of our state's forensic mental health system, with a particular emphasis on competency to stand trial and factors related to the Trueblood lawsuit and Settlement Agreement. This series is currently being piloted with staff at the King County Jail. Workforce development staff will incorporate feedback from this pilot as the training is being finalized. Once finalized, this training series will be used to accomplish the strategic goal of enhancing basic forensic literacy for a variety of system partners. To that end, the training will be made available at no cost to all jail staff statewide, educational partners, service providers, and any/all partners in implementation of Settlement Agreement endeavors. The finalized online training series will be available to all state employees through the state's Learning Center. It

will be available to anyone outside of state government via the OFMHS workforce development website.

- Additionally, during FY22, workforce development staff began the application process for making continuing education credits available for people who complete the online training series.
- Also, as a result of FY22 work, an online training series on trauma-informed approaches is now available to state-employed staff and any other interested parties online at no cost, through a partnership between DSHS and HCA. Additionally, workforce development staff lead the trauma-informed care workforce development subcommittee in an intensive effort to embed trauma-informed principles into all DSHS forensic mental health facilities, starting with a pilot project at Western State Hospital.
- During FY22, the workforce development team has continued to support the DSHS Office of Forensic Mental Health Workforce by providing New Employee Orientation training.
- During FY22, workforce development staff have also continued to provide monthly Jail Technical Assistance training events that are open to all city, county, and tribal jails statewide, as discussed in greater detail later in this report.

Next Steps

- During FY23 staff will be building on the above-mentioned five-module training series which provides a foundational understanding of our state’s forensic mental health system. Workforce development staff are working on expanding the series to include modules addressing civil commitment and Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity. This enhanced series will then be made widely available to system partners to include educational entities. Further work will also be done to create and provide a certificate for people who complete the “Overview of Washington State’s Adult Forensic Mental Health System” online training series. This work will support recommendations to enhance forensic literacy.
- Another recommendation noted in the 2020 Groundswell report was to consider creating certificate programs in the area of forensic education and training. During FY22, OFMHS began researching the varied pathways from which students obtain their degrees. Prior to the pandemic a paradigm shift in education was occurring in which

enrollment in online schools vs traditional schools was increasing. The pandemic further accelerated this change. To keep pace with this dynamic environment, the workforce development staff will be researching the educational origins of our targeted workforce to identify new online and traditional school pathways. Staff will then assess the certificate programs or forensic tracks and engage or re-engage with those educational partners.

Develop a Training Plan

Progress to Date

As referred to in last year's Annual Report and provided as an appendix, a substantive accomplishment during FY 2021 was the creation of a master training plan. This master training plan details the career pathways within forensic mental health and the training needs for success in those careers. The plan also provides a conceptual outline of how the DSHS workforce development training efforts fit into a broader set of training systems that are already in place and are operated by multiple system partners. The master training plan describes strategies for how DSHS, and its relatively new workforce development team, fit into this complex system and strategically add value to the development of a skilled and robust forensic mental health workforce.

Additionally, two guidebooks have been created for the workforce and are available on the OFMHS website. The first is [Best Practices for Behavioral Health Services in Jail Settings](#). Topics covered in this guidebook include, but are not limited to, use of restrictive housing, involuntary administration of medication, quality management, identification of need and access to treatment, and continuity of care. The guidebook has served as the foundational source for training offerings to jail staff and other relevant audiences since FY 2020 and continues to serve as a foundational source for future trainings in the upcoming year.

A second guidebook titled *The Intersection of Behavioral Health and the Law* was created in 2020 through a collaborative effort between DSHS and HCA and is approximately 90 pages. It serves as a workforce training resource that addresses the history, rules, laws, services, and practices pertaining to the forensic mental health setting. The guidebook is a foundational source of training for peer support specialists. During FY 2020, the 12 modules from this guidebook were each presented through YouTube [sessions](#) as part of the training for peer support specialists working with the forensic population. This foundational training addresses the widespread need for forensic literacy that is noted by Groundswell and others. Workforce development staff developed a three-module Social Learning Program series which is now utilized for training the DSHS residential treatment facility workforce.

DSHS has established an email address for training and/or technical assistance for jails. The target

audience for the email request system is people who work in jails (e.g., custody staff, administrators, behavioral health). As of May 2022, the team has received and responded to more than 41 requests for assistance received via this request system. Requestors include jail commanders, jail psychiatrists, custody staff, HCA staff, DSHS staff, prosecutors and defense attorneys. The mailbox is monitored regularly for technical assistance and training requests; responses typically go out the same day.

In addition, DSHS continues to provide monthly jail technical assistance webinars that are available to jail staff statewide, including tribal, city and county jails.

During FY 2022, the following topics were addressed through the monthly jail technical assistance webinars:

- Transition Planning and Continuity of Care for Jails: 12:30-1:30 p.m., July 20, 2021
- Outpatient Competency Restoration Program: 12:30-1:30 p.m., Aug. 24, 2021
- Screening and Assessment Training for Jails: 12:30-1:30 p.m., Sept. 21, 2021
- Involuntary Administration of Medications: 12:30-1:30 p.m., Oct. 19, 2021
- Use of Segregation in Jails: 12:30-1:30 p.m., Nov. 30, 2021
- Characteristics of the People Served: 12:30-1:30 p.m. December 21, 2021
- Crisis De-escalation Training in a Jail Setting: 12:30-1:30p.m. January 25, 2022
- Behavioral Navigator Makes and Impact: 12:30 to 1:30 P.M. February 22, 2022
- Certified Peer Counselor Panel: 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. March 29, 2022
- Involuntary Medication in Jails: Considerations and guidelines: 12:30-1:30 p.m. April 26, 2022
- Designated Crisis Responder: Valuable Colleagues for Jails: 12:30-1:30 p.m. May 24, 2022
- Discharge Planning and Continuity of Care: 12:30-1:30 p.m. June 28, 2022

Next Steps

During FY23, workforce development staff will continue to implement strategies from the training plan. This will include continued provision of New Employee Orientation for OFMHS staff, and the monthly JTA training events. It will also include the distribution of both the Trauma-Informed Approaches training series and the Overview of Washington State's Adult Forensic Mental Health System training series, each of which were developed during FY22.

Additionally, during FY23 workforce development staff will continue to operate the curriculum review committee to ensure standardization and quality of OFMHS trainings. The team will also continue to monitor the training request mailbox to review any requests for training that may be received.

Develop and Coordinate Training, Standardized Manuals, and Guidelines

Progress to Date

A course catalog has been developed which outlines available training topics, including a brief summary of the topic, training objectives, and details about the training format (e.g., in-person, self-directed, or webinar). As the workforce development team continues to expand training offerings, they will be added to the catalog for reference. In an effort to provide exemplary training, the team maintains a master instructor contact list for external subject matter experts. This list acts as a resource for professional consultation, peer review, and to solicit instructors when needed.

Depending on budget constraints, OFMHS may be able to contract with one or more of the expert trainers on the list for training opportunities.

The workforce development team has developed and deployed a Curriculum Review Committee in adherence to policy OFMHS 11.08 Training, 6.0. Designated staff review all internal and external OFMHS training material and make required and/or recommended changes to the author. Training material is tracked and once finalized, placed in a training repository for future use.

The workforce development team has enhanced the standardization and functionality of OFMHS' New Employee Orientation. This includes curricula review, standardized agendas and correspondence to instructors and participants, and tracking of participant feedback.

During FY 2020, workforce development staff coordinated with HCA's Outpatient Competency Restoration Program administrator to provide training on the Breaking Barriers program to contracted providers. The Breaking Barriers CORE curriculum instructor and patient workbooks have been reviewed by a workgroup that consisted of residential treatment facility and state hospital staff who implement the Breaking Barriers program.

This standardized training is provided to staff who facilitate any aspect of the Breaking Barriers program to competency restoration patients. DSHS headquarters master instructors were trained on April 21, 2020. Outpatient competency restoration program (OCRCP) master instructors and subject matter experts were then trained, which enabled OCRP staff to be fully trained and operational by July 1, 2020.

When Phase 2 of the Settlement Agreement started July 1, 2021, a similar approach was taken to ensure that new OCRP providers within King County received this training in the Breaking Barriers model for competency restoration treatment.

Next Steps

During FY22, DSHS workforce development staff coordinated with King County Jail as a pilot site for

the “Overview of Washington State’s Adult Forensic Mental Health System” online training series. During FY23 we will incorporate feedback from this pilot site, finalize that training series, and make it widely available at no cost to any/all interested parties.

As noted in the separately provided [Forensic Workforce Report](#), substantive work has been done to build connections with colleges, universities, and community colleges. This has included discussions with social work and mental health counseling programs, law and justice programs, and psychology programs. DSHS workforce development staff also spoke with the Washington Student Achievement Council and Clinical Placements Northwest regarding the field of forensic mental health. During FY23, workforce development staff will make both the Trauma- Informed Approaches training series and the Overview of Washington State’s Adult Forensic Mental Health System training series available to these partners for their use at no cost.

Collaborate with Community-based Organizational Workforce Development Staff

Progress to Date

Collaboration with community-based organizational workforce development staff is ongoing. Initial efforts include outreach to some county behavioral health staff as well as Washington Workforce Development Councils within the Trueblood Phase 1 counties, communication and collaboration with HCA workforce development staff.

During FY 2022, as King County becomes engaged in implementation of the Settlement Agreement, DSHS workforce development staff has made connections with the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County in an effort to build a collaborative relationship with that organization. However, during FY 2020 and FY 2021, the DSHS workforce development team learned that the Workforce Development Councils tend to have limited understanding of the forensic behavioral health workforce or its specific needs. Given that these councils cover a wide array of workforce issues and interests, the workforce development team received only limited guidance and support regarding forensic mental health workforce development interests. However, they did offer contact information for partners within King County whom DSHS will be reaching out to during FY22. Additionally, during FY22 DSHS workforce development staff has continued to participate in the King County Competency Continuum Workgroup that is specifically focused on serving people with both serious mental illness and criminal involvement. This workgroup is a multidisciplinary group with representatives who work in law enforcement, courts, housing, and behavioral health treatment. Through participation in this workgroup, DSHS hopes to learn more about King County’s specific workforce development needs regarding forensic mental health, and find ways to possibly be of assistance.

During FY22, our DSHS workforce development staff at OFMHS has made connections with relevant

BHA workforce development partners including those at the Special Commitment Center and Western State Hospital.

Next Steps

Moving forward to FY23, DSHS workforce development staff plan to convene a quarterly meeting of all relevant BHA workforce development partners to share insight and resources.

Relationship building and collaboration between DSHS workforce development staff and community-based organizations is progressing via the intensive outreach and information gathering that was done as part of preparing the Forensic Workforce Report. Workforce development staff have interviewed a wide range of system partners to learn about workforce needs and education and training programs. Interviewees have included behavioral health providers, law enforcement, jails, community colleges, and universities.

System Partner Interviews	
Adams County Integrated Health Care Services, Mental Health Clinical Services	Multnomah County, RN
Central WA University, Mental Health Counseling Program and Law and Justice Dept.	Neighborhood Resource MHP with Kirkland Police Dept.
Clark Community College, Addiction Counseling Education Dept.	Office of Forensic Mental Health Services, Western State Hospital Psychology Doctoral Internship Program
Clark County Sheriff's Office, Dept. of Leadership and Discharge Planning	Office of Forensic Mental Health Services, Postdoctoral Fellowship Program
Clinical Placements Northwest	Olympia Police Dept. Corrections Division
Community House Mental Health Agency, LINC Program	Pioneer Human Services, Spokane
Downtown Emergency Center (DESC), Clinical Programs Entry Services Manager	SeaMar Community Health Centers, Behavioral Health Program
Eastern Washington University, Social Work Field Education and MSW Program	Shoreline Community College, Criminal Justice & Sociology Departments
Eastern State Hospital, Clinical Placement Coordinator	Shoreline Community College, Health Occupations & Nursing
Frontier Behavioral Health, Chief Operating Officer	Skamania County Behavioral Health
Goldendale, Washington Police Department Leadership	South County Corrections Entity (SCORE) Leadership
HCA Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, Medical Program	Southwest Washington Accountable Community of Health (SWACH)

Healthcare professions, Highline Community College, Peer Support	Spokane County Jail, Dept. Leadership
King Co. Behavioral Health & Recovery Division, Assisted Outpatient Treatment	Spokane County Regional Behavioral Health Administrative Service Organization (ASO)
Klickitat County Court, Legal System Partners	University of Washington, Seattle, Office of Field Education School of Social Work
Klickitat County Sheriff's Office and Klickitat County Jail	WA Student Achievement Council, Workforce Programs
MultiCare Behavioral Health, Crisis Services	Western State Hospital, Nursing Education

These discussions not only produced valuable insights that were incorporated into the Forensic Workforce Report, but they have also helped DSHS begin to build collaborative relationships with a wide range of partners for the department to engage with in FY 2023 and beyond.

Evaluate Training Programs

Progress to Date

During FY 2020, workforce development staff began conducting evaluations of its new employee orientation for OFMHS staff. This training evaluation continues to be conducted. During FY 2022, the process was further developed and standardized. Evaluation begins with a formal curriculum review and approval process, in which the OFMHS Curriculum Review Committee vets training curricula against standards, laws, rules, and best practices. The next evaluative intersection occurs when course participants are given surveys to provide feedback on the training. The surveys are reviewed by workforce development specialists, and the feedback from the course reviews informs future training. To date, workforce development staff have facilitated the training of approximately 150 staff through the New Employee Orientation.

During FY 2022, workforce development staff worked to improve evaluation of its trainings provided through the Jail Technical Assistance program. An online training feedback survey is now available to participants in the monthly JTA training events and survey results are analyzed by workforce development staff to continuously improve JTA trainings.

Next Steps

The standard training evaluation processes described above will continue for trainings developed and delivered by OFMHS staff.

Forensic Workforce Report

As discussed previously, the Settlement Agreement and Phase 1 final implementation plan required an additional report titled Washington State Forensic Mental Health Workforce: Assessing the Need

and Target Areas for Training, Certification, and Possible Degree Programs (hereafter Forensic Workforce Report) which the DSHS workforce development team provided, per requirement, at the end of Phase 1.

As noted above, the Forensic Workforce Report was completed and submitted in June 2021. Four recommendations emerged from the analysis of the findings in the Forensic Workforce Report. Those recommendations are:

Recommendation 1

Increase introductory knowledge of forensic mental health across forensic disciplines

- Develop a foundational forensic mental health training series
- Aid in recruitment/retention by developing outreach materials and events targeted to relevant disciplines
- Expand opportunities to reach diverse audiences to increase awareness of and knowledge of forensic mental health
- Work with post-secondary educational institutions to develop opportunities to deliver information

Recommendation 2

Enhance discipline- specific training

- Collaborate with post-secondary educational institutions to expand internship or practicum opportunities
- Explore training development programs

Recommendation 3

System-level enhancements to support the forensic mental health workforce

- Consider the development of forensic tracks or certificate programs with a forensic focus
- Expand opportunities for mid-level practitioners
- Expand and support professional development offerings for forensic mental health
- Expand the funding for tuition reimbursement programs

Recommendation 4

Engage in further exploration of the forensic mental health workforce in Washington

- Conduct additional focused data collection
- Continued liaising with stakeholders

Progress to Date

During FY22, in support of these recommendations the workforce development team has:

- ✓ Taken steps to enhance basic forensic literacy, through the development of an online training series titled *“Overview of Washington State’s Adult Forensic Mental Health System,”* which will be made widely available to varied external partners.
- ✓ Sent the Career Pathways brochures to Skills Centers within Washington state, which focus on students ages 16-24. Staff also disseminated these Career Pathway brochures to all 300+ public school districts in Washington state.
- ✓ Regarding Recommendation 3, staff completed an application for learners to receive CEUs for our Trauma-Informed Approaches online training series.
- ✓ Initiated focused data collection through surveys targeting internal staff and legal partners. The survey of internal staff was centered on issues of retention and the survey of legal partners provided information on potential training topics to aid legal partners in supporting class members. This survey was also developed to identify focus group members to support a more in-depth understanding of issues pertaining to class members.

Next Steps

The workforce development team will continue to focus on efforts to support the recommendations from the workforce report. Specific areas of focus will be:

- ✓ Continued work with post-secondary schools to increase awareness of careers in forensic mental health and forensic mental health knowledge. During FY22, OFMHS began to research and compile data regarding post-secondary schools and programs for outreach that met the focus criteria. This information was combined with that from the previously mentioned research on the educational origins of our targeted workforce. Staff then began to conduct outreach efforts with those educational partners identified through this process.
- ✓ Further development of the Overview of Washington State’s Adult Forensic Mental Health System training series.
- ✓ Enhancing the resource section of the external facing website to provide information supporting careers in forensic mental health.
- ✓ An exploration of Washington’s training programs and internship and practicum opportunities to support the targeted workforce.
- ✓ Further research to identify additional outreach events and activities.

Recommendations on Specific Workforce Development Steps to Support Trueblood Contempt Settlement Agreement Success

The DSHS/OFMHS Workforce Development team continues to serve as an integral component of the Trueblood Settlement Agreement effort. In addition to continuing the efforts described above, further recommendations for future work in support of the Settlement Agreement include the following.

Continue to advance the use of telehealth evaluations. Over the past three years, workforce development staff played a central role in introducing and providing technical assistance so that competency to stand trial (CST) evaluations can be completed with people in jail via video teleconferencing. This methodology is clinically appropriate in the majority of cases, and also creates opportunities for more timely completion of competency to stand trial evaluations. Prior to 2019 this capacity existed in only three jails. Almost every CST evaluation done within a jail had to be completed in person, with the forensic evaluator travelling to the jail to conduct the interview. And, not uncommonly, the patient's defense attorney would also need to be included in person. This created scheduling challenges and slowed down the speed at which CST evaluations in jail could be effectively completed. However, as a direct result of the leadership and effort of workforce development staff, more than 200 CST evaluations each month are completed in jails via the use of telehealth evaluations. This has made a significant contribution to the key OFMHS goal of quickening the pace at which the evaluations are completed.

Further develop and deploy training materials. As noted in the Forensic Workforce Report, there is a widespread lack of forensic mental health information currently embedded into the education and training of virtually all health care professionals such as nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, master's-level clinicians, bachelor's-level staff, crisis intervention specialists, and community workers. DSHS should make the Overview of Washington State's Adult Forensic Mental Health System training series widely available and at no cost. Learners should be provided the opportunity to study one, several, or all modules within this training. Further, DSHS should consider the possibility of providing some type of certificate and/or educational credits to learners who complete this training.

This foundational training can serve two purposes. One is to increase the awareness of the fundamentals of forensic mental health to professionals currently working in these fields. The other purpose is to expose those in schools and training programs to the field of forensic mental health in order to create interest and encourage potential future members of the workforce to seek opportunities in a relevant career path. During FY 2020, DSHS workforce development staff developed a set of Career Pathway brochures designed to provide information about and stimulate interest in career opportunities within the field of forensic mental health. These brochures were provided as an appendix to last year's annual report. During FY22, workforce development staff sent out the Career Pathways brochures to Skills Centers within Washington state, which focus on

students 16-24 years of age. They also disseminated these Career Pathway brochures to all 300+ public school districts in Washington. Opportunities during FY 2023 could include further dissemination of these brochures among educational institutions, and presenting as guest lecturers in nursing schools, master of social work programs or psychology programs. If COVID-19 restrictions ease, there may also be opportunities to attend and/or present at conferences, or provide information booths at conferences and job fairs.

Advance the DSHS effort to become an Employer of Choice. During FY22, workforce development staff volunteered to conduct an internal survey of all Office of Forensic Mental Health Services staff, titled OFMHS Workplace Culture Survey. This confidential survey elicited more than 150 unique comments from OFMHS staff regarding their perspectives and hopes about the OFMHS workplace culture. Workforce development staff analyzed the survey results, noted key themes, and presented those findings to the OFMHS leadership team. OFMHS will be taking follow-up actions based on this information to improve workplace culture. This kind of work should be encouraged to continue as it supports staff retention and the broader goal to make DSHS an employer of choice.

Continue to develop strategic relationships with partners in the legal system. During FY22, workforce development staff created a survey to learn more about the perspectives of prosecutors, defense counsel, and judges regarding the continuing increase in demand for pretrial competency services. A total of 279 people returned completed surveys. Among other things, results from this survey identified opportunities for DSHS to help address important training needs for our legal partners. They have presented the survey results and proposed next steps to the executive leadership team of DSHS' Behavioral Health Administration. Future steps will include sending a report on the survey results to all those who received it, and conducting follow-up focus groups to engage further with survey respondents.

Continue cultivating relationships with potential collaborators. Continue building relationships with potential partners involved in the training, recruitment, retention, and professional development of positions needed for the forensic workforce in Washington. This requires identification of potential intra- and possibly interstate partners. As mentioned above, fruitful partnerships have been developed via the interviews that were conducted to inform the Forensic Workforce Report. As potential partners are identified, focused outreach efforts should be used to further cultivate these valuable partnerships.

Increase awareness of our work and develop networks. The workforce development program should continue to work to increase awareness with stakeholders across the state, including service delivery systems such as jails, state hospitals, and community service organizations serving the criminal court involved population, to raise awareness of potential workers regarding career opportunities in the field of forensic mental health, and to motivate potential workers to pursue these opportunities.

Increase training opportunities and support of jail staff. Given the impact of the COVID-19 virus during FY20 and FY21, jail technical assistance efforts were principally focused on the delivery of monthly webinars that addressed topics of interest to jail staff. The monthly virtual training events have continued through FY22. Additionally, during FY22 as COVID-19 restrictions began to ease, staff were able to resume in-person visits to jails. These visits have centered on a semi-structured interview designed to gather further information regarding practices across jails in four key areas of mental health work:

- ✓ Initial screening to identify possible mental illness;
- ✓ Mental health assessment;
- ✓ Capacity to provide mental health treatment within jails; and
- ✓ Continuity of care for people upon discharge from jail.

In addition to gathering information on the topics listed above, visits have also included discussion of challenges and identification of best practices.

To date, FY22 jail visits have been conducted at the following jails:

1. South Correctional Entity (SCORE)
2. King County Adult Detention facilities - Downtown
3. King County Adult Detention facilities - Kent
4. Pierce County Jail
5. Kitsap County Jail
6. Mason County Jail
7. Olympia City Jail
8. Chehalis County Jail
9. Grays Harbor County Jail
10. Aberdeen City Jail
11. Hoquiam City Jail
12. Cowlitz County Jail
13. Wahkiakum County Jail
14. Skamania County Jail
15. Clark County Jail
16. Pacific County Jail

17. Thurston County Jail
18. Jefferson County Jail
19. Clallam County Jail
20. Skagit County Jail
21. Island County Jail
22. Whatcom County Jail

This effort should continue into future years, with the goal of gaining a more comprehensive understanding of essential mental health practices throughout our state's jails.

As information is gathered regarding the strengths and challenges of mental health work in jails through the visits mentioned above, the department recommends building upon the bank of current resources by providing additional materials that are implementation ready. For example, through conversations with our workforce partners, it is evident that many would benefit from materials that could be downloaded and implemented, such as screening instruments, discharge planning templates, and many other relevant templates, tools, and instruments. Additionally, many would benefit from established model policies and procedures developed by other jurisdictions that have addressed the needs of the incarcerated mentally ill population.

Enhance engagement and interactivity of online training. A notable challenge that has been highlighted by the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 crisis is the limited engagement and interactivity of our webinars and other online training offerings. Significant progress has been made in recent years in creating more effective online learning experiences, and DSHS has begun utilizing newer online methods of training delivery such as Articulate software and YouTube videos. While it is anticipated that some training functions will return to a live presentation format following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, recognition exists that online learning will be a key component in our future training efforts. Creating effective content and processes for online learning will be crucial to workforce development success. It is recommended that additional training and IT resources are obtained for the DSHS workforce development team to support improvements in the online resources we are striving to provide to the community, inpatient, and law enforcement workforce.

Enhanced external-facing websites. The forensic workforce development and jail technical assistance teams have dedicated pages on the DSHS website. The jail technical assistance [website](#) contains resources which include the Washington Legal System Guide to Forensic Mental Health Services, a guide on medication management in correctional settings, screening and assessment in corrections, suicide prevention and risk management resources, substance use disorder treatment and management resources, and transition planning and continuity of care resources. The workforce development [website](#) provides training links and is compiling a list of resources to be posted, which

are designed to aid in recruitment and retention of the forensic mental health workforce.

Next Steps

It is recommended that these online materials be substantially expanded and enhanced as a resource, both for the forensic workforce in general and for the jail staff in particular. Training and reference materials developed within the department could be organized and made available through the DSHS website, as could relevant materials developed by other jurisdictions. Resources like these that have been developed by colleagues in other jurisdictions could be obtained, reviewed, and made available as needed by various forensic workforce groups in Washington. Such materials could include screening forms, training materials, and established policies and procedures for addressing the needs of the individuals that are incarcerated and are living with mental illness. This would also address the aforementioned need for jail staff and other partners to have readily accessible materials to implement while minimizing their need for independent internal development.

Summary

This report describes work completed by the DSHS workforce development team during FY22 and provides preliminary plans for FY 2023, to support development of Washington state's forensic mental health workforce, and the success of the Settlement Agreement.