# Staff Safety

## 2019 Annual Report to the Legislature

*As required by RCW 72.09.680*

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This report is the ninth annual report to the Legislature as directed by Engrossed Senate Bill 5907 (2011) and contains information on employee safety concerns and mitigation strategies completed by the Department of Corrections.

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# Staff Safety

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## Foreword

*"It is the intent of the legislature to promote safe state correctional facilities.  Following the tragic murder of Officer Jayme Biendl, the Governor and Department of Corrections requested the National Institute of Corrections to review safety procedures at the Monroe Reformatory.  While the report found that Monroe Reformatory is a safe institution, it recommends changes that would enhance safety.*

*The legislature recognized that operating safe institutions requires ongoing efforts to address areas where improvements can be made to enhance the safety of state correctional facilities.  This act addresses ways to increase safety at state correctional facilities and implements changes recommended in the report of the National Institute of Corrections."*

Legislative Declaration, RCW 72.09.680 [2011 c 252 §1]

# Executive Summary

## Background

Following the murder of Officer Jayme Biendl in 2011, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) was asked to review systems, policies, and procedures and submit recommendations to mitigate safety and security vulnerabilities at the Washington State Reformatory (a unit of the Monroe Correctional Complex).

The NIC findings and recommendations led to the introduction of Engrossed Senate Bill 5907 (ESB 5907), at the request of Governor Gregoire, with the intent to promote safer prisons.  ESB 5907 was signed into law (RCW 72.09) on May 5, 2011.

## Report Overview

The Department of Corrections (DOC) promotes a culture that inspires each employee to take personal responsibility for all employees' safety and facility/office security, both foundational elements of a public safety mission.  In addition, the Department encourages all employees to take the initiative to actively address security and safety concerns and deficiencies as well as continual monitoring for safety and security improvements in all work areas, practices, procedures, policies and physical plant layout.

In this ninth annual report to the Legislature, the Department communicates the implementation status of legislative mandates to incorporate the recommendations made and its dedication to the safety of all employees, incarcerated individuals, and members of the public.

## Commitment to Safety

All citizens expect to be safe and protected in their communities and Governor Inslee has made this a priority as recognized in Results Washington Goal 4: *Healthy and Safe Communities*.  The Department's mission is to improve public safety by positively changing lives and the Department values people's safety.  The Department (through Results DOC) maintains a key goal to enhance safer operations and measures improvements with outcome-based management practices that include employee safety and safety of all individuals under the Department's jurisdiction, providing basic needs, ensuring safe environments, and managing emergencies.  The Department promotes a culture of employee safety and facility/office security and remains deeply committed to, and actively engaged in, improving employee, individual, and community safety.

Correctional Captain Arminda Svoboda offers, *"Staff safety encompasses a broad range of skill sets including: diligence in work duties, self-discipline, teamwork, and vigilant efforts to continuously examine both the work environment and operational practices for more effective, efficient, and sustainable solutions. This hefty and rewarding task is highlighted throughout this year's report which shares the numerous staff safety accomplishments throughout the Department by a diverse and talented workforce.  Department employees have a keen understanding of the significance of their work in providing for safer communities. Staff safety and facility/office security is always at the forefront of this often dangerous work."*

Prison Safety

## Security Advisory Committees

The Security Advisory Committees are comprised of local and statewide committees that support and encourage employees to take the initiative in identifying and reporting employee safety concerns and facility security gaps as well as furnish an avenue to address them.

Department employees continue to suggest innovative solutions to everyday challenges and actively engage in the process to increase their own safety as well as the safety of others.  The success of this approach can be attributed to the support received from all levels of the Department.  By incorporating multidisciplinary employees from all job classifications, the submittals are broad and diverse, the work is progressive and impactful, and the resolutions highly successful.  **Table 1** provides a summary of the suggestions submitted to date.

**Table 1.  Security Concerns & Suggestions \***

| Year | Total Received | Completed at Local Level | Referred Statewide | Completed Statewide |
|------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| **2011** | 548 | 266 | 33 | 19 |
| **2012** | 714 | 619 | 14 | 18 |
| **2013** | 755 | 764 | 10 | 15 |
| **2014** | 501 | 498 | 12 | 9 |
| **2015** | 397 | 390 | 10 | 10 |
| **2016** | 455 | 357 | 39 | 15 |
| **2017** | 383 | 258 | 16 | 21 |
| **2018** | 350 | 394 | 23 | 26 |
| **2019\*\*** | 263 | 247 | 14 | 12 |
| **Total** | **4,366** | **4,086** | **173** | **147** |

\* Due to increased data fidelity, numerical values may not match prior reports in some columns

\*\* As of October 1, 2019

## Local Security Advisory Committees

Local Security Advisory Committees are active in all 12 prisons and meet regularly.  These committees are chaired by the senior custody employee (Captain or Lieutenant) and include employees from a variety of disciplines who review and discuss security concerns and suggestions that have been submitted at the local level.

When a local security suggestion is submitted by an employee to the facility's Security Specialist, the suggestion is then queued for review by the Local Security Advisory Committee. Using a facility-wide, multidisciplinary approach, local committees examine and discuss each suggestion focusing on how the suggestion enhances (directly or indirectly) employee safety and security while also considering any unintended consequences on other areas of the facility/office and/or the possibility of statewide impacts (positive and negative).

Examples of submissions of local Prisons safety and security concerns resulting in subsequent changes in practices in 2019 are summarized below:

- <u>Using Unit Officers for Out-of-Unit Duties</u> - At Larch Corrections Center (LCC), unit officers were often pulled from living units to perform non-emergent duties outside their assigned unit. Using the local Place Safety Muster environment to examine the issue, LCC implemented a new process to ensure unit officers are not pulled out of their assigned units unless absolutely necessary for more emergent reasons. By leaving unit officers in their assigned unit, staff and individual safety and security is maintained through appropriate living unit staffing patterns.

- <u>Radio Communications</u> – At Monroe Correctional Complex, the base station radios (used by the communications center) were inadequate at times in facilitating clear, consistent communications. In some cases, emergency response may have been delayed by the radio operator receiving a busy signal. Following the concern being raised, a radio communications repeater has been added to the system and additional equipment are being added as funding becomes available.

- <u>Emergency Response Supplies</u> - At the Washington Corrections Center, during larger disturbances, responding employees might often run out of supplies such as gloves, restraints, flex-cuffs, etc. In response, the facility placed disturbance response kits in key locations around the facility containing extra response supplies needed during larger disturbances. Having response resupply locations in key areas enhances employee and individual safety.

Each local committee's work has proven to be effective. This forum for reviewing employee initiated security suggestions emphasizes the strong local commitment to safety and security through the exchange of ideas, involvement of all employee and program areas, and facilitates a greater understanding of how all employees contribute to safer operations of the facility/office and public safety overall.

## Statewide Security Advisory Committee

In some cases, a Local Security Advisory Committee determines a security suggestion may have statewide impact, requires a change to Department policy, or the costs to implement the suggestion are beyond facility budget capacity. In these circumstances, the suggestion is forwarded to the Statewide Security Advisory Committee for review and consideration.

As required by RCW 72.09.680, the Statewide Security Advisory Committee meets quarterly to evaluate safety and security concerns and suggestions forwarded from local committees that may affect Department policy or require legislative approval and funding. Committee work includes evaluating suggestions, making

recommendations, and taking action on safety and security concerns affecting statewide policies and practices. In addition, the Statewide Security Advisory Committee assists in the development of safety curriculum presented to employees as part of Annual In-Service training for the Prisons Division.

Examples of statewide safety and security concerns that resulted in statewide safety and security improvements in 2019 are summarized below:

- Correctional Officer On-the-Job Training – Previously, the Department had a robust correctional officer on-the-job training program partly funded through a contract with a community college partnership. However in 2010, the program and the partnership were cut due to legislatively mandated budget cuts. Several security suggestions have been submitted over the years documenting the critical need to have a standardized, statewide correctional officer on-the-job training program for new officers. In 2019, after months of development, the revised Field Training Officer (FTO) program was implemented in all facilities providing a consistent method to ensure all new correctional officers are provided structured on-the-job training through the FTO program within their first year of employment.

- Policy Exception Memorandums – To ensure changes to policies are implemented in a timely manner (often before the policy can be revised), the Department issues a policy exception memorandum to employees to ensure new procedures and policy expectations are communicated and followed until such time a revised policy can be implemented. However, the memorandums are not connected to the policies in electronic policies databases often leading employees to follow the current policy language and not the updated memorandum language. This suggestion requires policy memorandums to be placed with the applicable policy in electronic databases and printed manuals. When employees are viewing the policy, they readily have access to any policy memorandums that provide updates and/or exceptions.

The examples above represent the complex work involved in evaluating and reviewing suggestions submitted for statewide consideration. Members of the Statewide Security Advisory Committee review each suggestion in detail, ask for additional information, or require a follow-up review with the appropriate local committee members or labor representatives before making a final recommendation.

This multidisciplinary process ensures each security suggestion, as in the case of the examples noted for 2019, multiple employees and program areas have the opportunity to review, discuss, and agree to support the suggestion. By the time a security suggestion is implemented, abundant sources of information have been consulted, numerous details have been worked out, and any potential negative impacts have been mitigated.

## Staff Safety Performance Audit

In March of 2016, the Washington State Auditor's Office concluded a Performance Audit on Prisons Safety and Security that assessed whether the Department could do more to ensure the safety and security of employees and facilities. The State Auditor's Office published a final report which is available for public review.

After receiving the final report, the Department began taking action to review each recommendation and formulate an improvement plan to address each of 13 areas identified for improvement. Many of the recommendations involved correcting gaps in policies and/or procedures and the majority of those have been completed. However, two of the recommendations (additional radios for non-custody employees and public

access staffing) have only been partially implemented. The additional radios needed continue to be added as funding becomes available.

<u>Staffing Model Review</u>

One of the recommendations in the State Auditor's report was the Department's staffing model was out of date and should be revised to include, among other things, the additional duties and tasks required of employees to increase staff safety and facility security and an updated/accurate relief factor. The Department received $400,000 of the general fund state appropriation to contract with an independent vendor to provide a comprehensive review of the prison staffing model and develop an updated prison staffing model for use by the Department. A vendor was selected and a contract issued in September 2018.

The final report, *Washington Department of Corrections Prisons Staffing Model Review* (CGL Companies) was received in June 2019 and has been shared with external stakeholders including the Legislature. In summary, the staffing model review identified multiple areas where the Department was understaffed, including the custody relief factor, which can lead to increased risks to employee and incarcerated individual safety and facility/office security. In the 2019-21 budget cycle, the department received partial funding for the additional staff needed to provide incarcerated individuals with the medical and mental health care they require, but did not receive funding requested for needed custody relief. DOC has requested the remaining funding needed in the 2020 Supplemental budget.

<u>Employee Searches</u>

One of the recommendations in the State Auditor's report was to implement employee searches upon entering the secure perimeter of a prison (public access point). As mention above, DOC has requested full funding for higher priority custody relief, and the additional staff needed to provide incarcerated individuals with the medical and mental health care they require. We are continuing to assess what staffing may be requested to be requested to address the needed to implement employee searches at all public access points in every prison. This research may lead to a future budget request.

# Prisons Division Training

## Prison Safety Series Curriculum

The Department promotes a culture that encourages personal responsibility for safety and security in prisons and has invested in extensive employee training programs. The Department is charged with developing training curriculum regarding employee safety issues at the Department's total confinement correctional facilities. The content, discussions, and activities delivered through annual in-service training target strategies for improving personal safety, the safety of others, and the safety and security of the work place as required by RCW 72.09.684. At a minimum, the training is expected to address the following issues: security routines, physical plant layout, individual movement and program area coverage, and situational awareness and de-escalation techniques.

This year's staff safety annual in-service training will focus on increasing safety and security through improved detection and deterrence of contraband and narcotics from entering facilities.  In addition, improved response techniques to both narcotics/unknown substances and individuals suspected to be under the influence are explored to increase employee knowledge and the safety of all individuals.

Lesson Objectives:

- Identify the methods of contraband/drug introduction.
- Recognize contraband/drugs often discovered in prison facilities and identify signs/symptoms of those suspected to be under the influence of narcotics.
- Explain what safety precautions should be taken to limit exposure to toxic/unknown substances.
- Given examples, improve the quality of report writing.
- Strategize de-escalation techniques for individuals suspected to be under the influence of narcotics.

The Department considers the input of both the Statewide Security Advisory Committee and the Local Security Advisory Committee in developing annual in-service staff safety curriculum.  The curriculum for this series was developed by a multidisciplinary team, reviewed by the Statewide Security Advisory Committee, and is being delivered to all Prison Division employees.

# Electronic Security Technology

## Full Body Scanners

The Department was funded for one full-body scanner to be piloted at the Washington Corrections Center for Women to determine whether this is a viable alternative to conducting strip-searches.  The scanner began operating in March 2019.  The scanner has been extremely successful in detecting and deterring contraband from entering the facility. The Department completed a report for the Legislature (December 2019) on the body scanner pilot.

## Employee Accountability System

The Security Management Unit is currently leading the effort to create a standardized, electronic system to account for all persons within the secure perimeter of all facilities.  The *Facility Access and Control Tracking system (FACT)* collects, manages, and tracks data regarding all employees, facility visitors, volunteers and contract employees who enter and exit facilities.  This system is able to account for persons within the secure perimeter of a facility in real time by reading a bar code embedded onto the identification card.  The *FACT* system improves accuracy and significantly reduces the amount of time it takes to conduct accountability procedures.

The *FACT* system went live at Stafford Creek Corrections Center (SCCC) in 2017 as a pilot.  Following the conclusion of the pilot, stakeholders were confident that the FACT system will meet accountability needs on

an enterprise level. Currently, the FACT system has been approved by the Department's Information Technology Governance Board to move forward for design and implementation in all facilities.

## Radio Communications

The following are steps the Department is taking to increase efficiencies with radio communications:

- Continuing to secure Mutual Aid Agreements (MAA) with law enforcement jurisdictions to support the communications needs of the Department and increase employee and public safety when working in the community.
- Continuing to acquire and deploy radio equipment as funding allotments permit.
- Upgraded antenna system at Clallam Bay Corrections Center to improve in-building coverage.

## Security Electronic Networks

The following are steps the Department is taking to increase staff safety and facility security through Security Electronic Networks:

- Managing the numerous security electronic network projects in various stages of completion. From the expansion of video camera systems, to door and video control integration and replacements, to reviewing and identifying critical systems for upgrade prioritization, the enhancements being made to the security electronic networks have a direct impact on increasing employee safety and facility security.
- Two (2) prisons are presently in a design/review phase to upgrade and install security electronics network infrastructure which will support camera installation. One (1) has started replacing/installing cameras and the other is preparing to complete agency/vendor negotiations for camera placement and installation.
- Two (2) prisons are presently in final contract review phase for door control upgrades. However, door control upgrade work has paused as we determine costs to upgrade and integrate with video in addition to a new requirement to update from Win7 to Win10 (funding will be a factor to consider).
- Contract requests have been published to begin the work of remodeling, upgrading, and expanding security electronic networks at Maple Lane Corrections Center.
- Purchased and installed updated video equipment in two (2) Community Corrections offices, one (1) Work Release, and the dock areas at McNeil Island.

# Community Corrections Safety

The Community Corrections Division (CCD) continues to update policies and procedures aligned with the CCD evidence based supervision model. The ongoing review and implementation of changes is done with a focus on employee safety and office security while maintaining accountability of those individuals supervised in the community.

## Community Corrections Security Advisory Committee

The Statewide Community Corrections Security Advisory Committee continues to meet quarterly to evaluate safety and security concerns and suggestions that may affect department policy, budget, and workload. The committee is co-chaired by the CCD Program Administrator and staff representatives of the Washington Federation of State Employees. The committee membership is comprised of CCD Security Specialists and CCD employees from around the Department with a variety of job classifications. The committee recently amended the bylaws to extend committee membership from two to three years. This will assist in the elimination of constant turnover of committee members and provide stability to the committee. The charge of the committee is to review and develop recommendations, propose solutions, and evaluate best practices related to employee safety and office security within CCD. Additionally, the Community Corrections Security Advisory Committee assists in the development of employee safety and office/operational security curriculum presented to employee as part of the annual in-service training for employees in the Community Corrections Division.

Examples of 2019 statewide community corrections safety and security initiatives/concerns that resulted in improvements are summarized below:

- Hospital Watch – Development of a hospital watch policy for Community Corrections.
- Office Reception Windows – To better protect staff, CCD continues an ongoing effort to replace old reception windows.
- Protective Helmets – Training and distribution of protective helmets to be used during transports for supervised individuals who are demonstrating self-harm by banging their heads. This enhances staff safety during transports as well as of those detained.
- Communication – Distribution of safety bulletins regarding current trends and issues regarding staff safety.
- Violator Transports – During the past year, transportation issues have continued to increase in frequency and distance as jail beds for the violator population continue to be at a premium across the state. To improve efficiencies regarding transportation, the agency has consolidated supervised individual transports under one administrator for both Prisons and CCD. This realignment will provide for enhanced safety as the transport teams train specifically for this type of work.
- NARCAN – CCD has reached the first anniversary of the distribution of NARCAN. There continue to be reports of supervised individuals saved due to the administration of NARCAN by staff.
- Pre-Employment Screening – Unfortunately, pre-employment screening was not funded during this budget cycle. CCD continues to move toward pre-employment psychological and drug screening, working with Human Resources and the Staff Psychologist with the anticipation of funding. Once implemented, this will provide CCD with the ability to make informed decisions in the hiring process and enhance the safety of employees.

# Community Corrections Division Training

Training in community corrections continues with an emphasis on skill enhancement which increases positive engagement with supervised individuals.  The ability to engage individuals, and how to intervene in high-risk behaviors, promotes both employee and community safety.

A number of courses have been developed for delivery on an ongoing basis to employees in addition to annual in-service training.  These include:

- Active Shooter training – This is being done on a local level, teaming with local agencies to align with local practices.
- Arrest, Planning, Implementation II (API II) (January 2020).
- Evidence Training (custodian duties, handling, preservation, storage, labeling, etc.).
- Drug identification and field testing of drugs (NIK Kits).
- Firearms identification (how to disarm, secure, transport, and disposal).
- Use of Force and Incident Report writing.