

6. *Eliminate exclusions for individuals who have a criminal conviction;*
7. *Eliminate exclusions for those who owe restitution or fines;*
8. *Eliminate exclusions as the result of your provocation or incitement, and for all survivors, narrow discretion to deny a claim based on perceptions of the victim's involvement, end compensation denials based on the victim's alleged actions.*
9. *Increase access to WACVC for individuals or family members who may not be a direct victim but are witness to harm (children exposed to family violence);*
10. *Expand coverage to include more than 12 sessions of grief counseling or mental health treatment;*
11. *Eliminate barriers for eligible low-income applicants by providing an option for crime victim compensation to be paid through a debit card restricted to approved services (like a health spending account);*
12. *Prior to determination of denial, require WACVC office to inform applicants of reasons for potential denial and allow 90-day opportunity to submit additional documentation, provide signature or clarify questions. If denied, provide applicant contact information for victim advocate and legal services providers to counsel application on appeals process;*
13. *Providing resources for qualified interpreters for both the application process and accessing service providers;*
14. *Increase funding and resources to community-based groups and WACVC office to inform the public of these resources through commercials, online resources, and more.*

- **Q:** How does the working group feel about this recommendation? Are these items within the scope of this Task Force? **R:** These are vital issues, but this Task Force may not be the appropriate forum to address them.
- Representative Goodman indicated he would like to convene a separate legislative working group to address the victim compensation issues.
- **C:** Some of these bullet points may be non-starters for certain parties but I think folks should be able to reach common ground around the highlighted points.
- **C:** This conversation should include Labor and Industry.

Action Item: The working group agreed to hold off present this recommendation to the full Task Force. The Facilitation Team will follow-up with members representing crime victims to determine whether this potential recommendation is within the scope of the Task Force.

Potential Recommendation #24: *In circumstances where there will not be adverse impacts to victims or survivors, increase Department of Corrections ability to consider factors which will increase opportunities for successful reentry and long-term support (e.g., proximity to programs, resources, family and pro-social relationships, housing, employment, etc.) when determining release locations.*

- **C:** This recommendation should call out the county of origin statute ([RCW 72.09270](#)). The county of origin (defined as where an individual receives their first adult felony conviction) statute determines where an individual can be released, but does not take time or residency into consideration.
- **C:** There may be opposition to eliminating the county of origin statute, particularly from larger counties (e.g., King, Pierce, etc.). There would likely be more support for amending the statute to allow DOC more discretion.
- **Q:** Why is this an issue for some counties? **R:** Based on population, there is a perception that King and Pierce Counties receive the majority of releases—and by eliminating or altering the county of origin statute, these counties worry they would receive more individuals released from incarceration.

- **C:** Anecdotally, it seems the counties are most anxious about individuals released after serving time for sexually violent crimes. Perhaps we could consider amending the statute to make a distinction based on the type of underlying crime.
- **Q:** How many people get released in each county?

Action Item: Mac Pevey will gather data on the number of DOC releases by location. [COMPLETE]

Action Item: The working group agreed to revise the recommendation, calling out RCW 72.09270, and will present the latest version to the full Task Force.

Potential Recommendation #27: *Increase the delivery of and access to (both while individuals are incarcerated and on supervision) vocational/educational programming that has been proven effective at promoting successful reentry and connecting individuals with employment opportunities upon release.*

Specifically:

- *Support the development of a program delivery action plan among DOC, Reentry Council, Department of Commerce, and entities delivering vocational/educational programming.*
- *Increase funding to support the capacity and infrastructure needed to increase accessibility for vocational training and education within DOC facilities and jails.*
- *Provide the necessary funding to increase the delivery and access to advanced trade/job skills training programs such as TRAC and higher education.*
- *Provide the necessary funding to support the ability of community organizations to help facilitate successful reentry programs. For example, the Dept. of Commerce and Reentry Council is currently administering grants to community organizations including DADS, Tacoma Urban League, House of Mercy, Freedom Project, and Revive Reentry. These grants provide for the basic needs of people exiting, or who have recently exited correctional facilities, including but not limited to: housing, transportation, cell phone, and groceries.*

Chris Poulos described the Reentry Council's grant program to support community-based programming. He noted that the Council would like to see more programming in the community to support individuals.

- **C:** Although we are in a budget crisis that will likely last for some time, it is important to note that recidivism has a public financial cost and by supporting individuals with communications, housing, job training, and other needs, we can ensure more folks successfully reenter the community, ultimately reducing costs.

Action Item: The working group agreed to present this potential recommendation to the full Task Force.

Potential Recommendation #29: *Support current and ongoing efforts to develop incentives for businesses and organizations which hire individuals who complete vocation/educational programming while incarcerated.*

Chris Poulos noted that this potential recommendation was left intentionally broad, simply asking the Task Force to recognize and support the need for gainful employment upon reentry, because several entities (i.e., the Reentry Council and others) are already doing this work.

- **C:** At least one member suggested creating a tax incentive for hiring, similar to one that exists at the Federal level. Others felt more comfortable leaving this potential recommendation broad.

Action Item: The working group will present this potential recommendation to the full Task Force.

Potential Recommendation #30: *Support efforts to address housing concerns for individuals impacted by the criminal justice system. This includes:*

- *Legislative efforts to address landlord practices that exclude individuals with any arrest record or conviction record from rental housing.*
- *Current and ongoing efforts (among DOC, Reentry Council, Dept. of Commerce) to increase access to safe, affordable, and quality housing options for individuals upon reentry.*
- *Developing incentives for reentry housing providers and landlords.*
- *Providing housing assistance.*
- *Increasing opportunities for vacant buildings/units to be developed into reentry housing.*
- *Establishing performance-based criteria for contracts with reentry housing providers.*

Chris Poulos noted that the Reentry Council is working to improve access to housing upon reentry and that the Council welcomes ideas and feedback.

- **C:** If the recommendation *mandates* landlords to allow individuals with past incarceration to rent housing, I don't think I could support it and believe it would be a non-starter for other Task Force members. **R:** The recommendation is not that specific. Currently, there is no guidance at the state level on if/when/how individuals with records can be barred from housing.

Action Item: The working group agreed to present this potential recommendation to the full Task Force.

LETTER FROM MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

After the RWG finished reviewing the remaining potential recommendation, Molly asked the group for input on a letter submitted to them by a member of the public. Molly briefly reviewed the letter, which asked the group to consider drafting a potential recommendation related to lifetime supervision terms. She also noted that DOC proposed eliminating lifetime supervision terms as part of a potential cost-saving strategy. Ultimately, the working group agreed that the issue of lifetime supervision terms was best considered by the Sentencing Effectiveness Working Group.

NEXT STEPS AND ACTION ITEMS

- **The RWG** will present their third and final offer of potential recommendations at the 9/10 (and possibly 9/17) Task Force meetings.
- **The Facilitation Team** will follow-up with Martina Kartman about potential recommendation #18 possibly being outside the scope of the Task Force. (Done)
- **Mac Pevey** will compile data on the number of DOC release by location.