

## Overview

The service alignment administrator supports the Department of Social and Health Services, the Department of Corrections, and their mutual clients. The SAA develops and implements strategies that connect DSHS services with DOC programs to improve reentry outcomes for individuals exiting from DOC custody throughout Washington state. This work contributes equally to both departments' goals of reducing poverty and recidivism in meaningful ways by building bridges between programs and initiatives for the benefit of mutual clients, and by identifying opportunities to improve processes within both departments. This includes identifying any impacts, barriers, gaps, or opportunities to partner with other state agencies to create or improve services for those under DSHS and DOC care and custody (as per Washington state's commitment to [Reentry 2030](#) and Governor Jay Inslee's [Executive Order 24-03](#)).

## Current Initiatives

### Reentry 2030

"[Reentry 2030](#) is a national initiative to achieve better and more equitable reentry and reintegration outcomes by engaging states to adopt public, ambitious goals that drive system change."<sup>1</sup> Reentry 2030 aims to scale up access to supports, clear away barriers to opportunities and economic mobility and work to advance racial equity to better access services and have healthier outcomes for those exiting prisons. The DSHS/DOC SAA position is integral to its success by identifying and addressing whole-system design issues with cumulative impacts on poverty reduction efforts.

### Parents and Families

The SAA participates in initiatives focused on parents who are incarcerated and families with a parent who is incarcerated to evaluate and address child support mechanisms and other family supports from both sides of the equation. This includes connecting with parent and family navigators through both agencies as well as being thoroughly familiar with the child support and benefits recalculation processes.

### Interagency Reentry Workgroup

Led by the Department of Commerce, this workgroup focuses on sharing work happening across state reentry programs and coming together to collectively support successful futures for those most impacted. This work includes sharing reentry knowledge, learning about new approaches and exploring opportunities to advance this important work. The SAA position is the DSHS representative on this workgroup.

Another primary focus of this workgroup has been reviewing and addressing second-chance hiring processes and procedures at our respective agencies. To that end, this position works with a small team to review and address the "[Secretary's List of Disqualifying Crimes](#)" and [WAC 388-113-0020](#).

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<sup>1</sup> *Advancing Successful Reintegration for Every Person: Reentry 2030 National Launch*, U.S. Dept. of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance. Available at: <https://bja.ojp.gov/events/advancing-successful-reintegration-every-person-reentry-2030-national-launch>. Last accessed Sept. 23, 2024.

## Local Reentry Supports

Part of the process for coordinating efforts between DSHS and DOC involves connecting people to local reentry supports. For example, the DOC reentry navigator, regional child support manager, CSD local planning area group, DOC healthcare navigator and WorkSource team can all collaborate at the local level to support people exiting incarceration in Washington state.

## SNAP-Ed and DOC Partnership

In short, SNAP-Ed's mission is "Supporting families across the state of Washington to make healthy changes in their homes and neighborhoods." These efforts concern education for communities and families on farmers markets, grocery stores, reading nutrition labels, getting people outside and moving, gardening and all sorts of related activities. In May 2024, this position began coordinating with SNAP-Ed to make their services available to people who have recently exited incarceration.

## Updating Materials, Resources and Communications

DOC and DSHS have written items for internal use, external use, impacted families, etc., that pertain to individuals who are incarcerated or recently exited incarceration and their communities. Not all of them are accurate or up to date.

## Potential Opportunities

Following are just two opportunities representing ideas that still require research, vetting, collaboration and logistical planning but that seem to have much promise and would have an extensive positive impact on individuals, families and communities if they were implemented.

### EBT Cards Issued Upon Exit from DOC Custody

Issuing EBT cards upon exit from DOC custody would ensure individuals who meet eligibility for the Food Assistance Program would have access to a nutritional food source immediately, regardless of their location and without needing to contact DSHS or have a mailing address to wait for a card in the mail. Access to food and shelter are crucial elements of a successful reentry plan, specifically inside the critical 72 hours immediately after reentering the community. Even if the EBT cards were inactive until after an interview with the DSHS Customer Service Contact Center, having a card would dramatically increase the individual's likelihood of a successful transition.

### Reentry Centers | Co-located Offices

State agencies and community organizations are reducing their capital footprint and making access points for people seeking in-person services more streamlined. This is a great time to consolidate services, especially in metropolitan areas where access requires planning and navigation. Bringing together service providers in more central and convenient locations provides a more efficient approach to reentry and transition services.

## Questions

Please reach out to Max Gibbs-Ruby, DSHS/DOC Service Alignment Administrator:

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