

## Halverson, Beth

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**From:** Nelson, Julie A. (DOC) <janelson@DOC1.WA.GOV>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 18, 2018 10:51 AM  
**To:** Office State Actuary, WA  
**Subject:** Retirement

I work as a corrections officer for State of Washington. I have been employed 20 years as of Oct 1, 2018.

My question is why is it that corrections officers have a 30 year retirement? Not to minimize any other position with the state or with the Department of Corrections for that matter. I know that we as state employees all play a valuable role no matter what job class we are in.

My concern is for corrections officers in my profession that have to work into their 60's in order to retire because we have to work for 30 years (PERS2). I look at corrections officers as police officers/law enforcement in charge of their own little city. We go through the academy, we qualify on firearms, we have self-defense and defensive tactics training, etc. We have a very demanding job, both mentally and physically. We respond to emergencies, perform uses of force, transport offenders, deal with crisis situations and a variety of scenarios. We have SERT, ERT and Crisis Negotiation Teams. As with law enforcement, we never know what our day holds but we want the end result to be going home to our families when our shift is over. To the best of my knowledge, law enforcement agencies have a 20 or 25 year retirement plan. We also have a higher rate of injury due to this physically demanding job. Quite a few of the officers that I work with have been on L&I on more than one occasion, myself included.

I myself have had three surgeries due to uses of force: two knee surgeries and a hand surgery. I do not have any statistics on physical injuries or mental health issues for corrections officers but I believe they are pretty high. I also believe corrections officers have a high suicide rate. We don't have a high life expectancy after we retire either. It would be nice to retire and enjoy our lives a little bit.

I do not know if trying to get an earlier retirement for corrections officers is even an option but I felt I must at a minimum share my thoughts on the subject. I am not the only one that feels this way. I am not even sure if I am e-mailing the right department.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,

C/O Julie A Nelson  
Airway Heights Corrections Center