

# Review of the Washington Statewide Reentry Council

2023 JLARC STUDY

JLARC must review the Council every six years. The review must include the extent to which expenditures contributed toward reducing recidivism and the Council's achievement of objectives and benchmarks.

## Washington Statewide Reentry Council was created to improve safety and outcomes for people experiencing reentry

*Reentry is the transition from incarceration back to the community.*

ABOUT THE COUNCIL	15 members appointed by Governor to represent various interests	2 FTEs, plus additional support from Department of Commerce	Spent \$1.27 million, primarily on staff and grants to nonprofits
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The Council does not operate reentry programs.

## The Council has performed most of its statutory duties. However, it had limited interaction with most stakeholder groups named in statute.

The Council has held public meetings, issued biennial reports that include policy recommendations, and sought input. The frequency and type of engagement with stakeholders named in statute varies.

- It has regular interaction with some (e.g., individuals who have experienced reentry and Department of Corrections), but no interaction with others (e.g., specialty courts and managed care organizations).
- Its interactions with researchers, educators, legislative caucuses, jails, and local governments have been limited.
- Most of the interactions have not been documented or reported to the full Council.

## It is unclear whether Council activities affected public safety or reentry outcomes

The Council has not adopted performance measures to track its progress towards improving reentry outcomes.

- Possible measures include changes in criminal activity, access to services, and socioeconomic factors.

## There is no strategic plan to focus the Council's efforts

The Council has published a list of strategic priorities such as "house education students together." But the document does not include elements suggested in best practices for strategic planning such as identifying goals with related activities and performance measures.

- Best practices advise that councils should develop a strategic plan to drive actions.
- A plan would help the Council fulfill its intent to center racial equity in its work.
- The Council has issued 24 policy recommendations. It has not consistently linked its recommendations to actions and results.



## LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council should:

1. Develop a stakeholder engagement plan that demonstrates how it will solicit input and participation from all stakeholders identified in statute.
2. Develop a strategic plan to guide its activities, recommendations, and spending. The plan should have performance benchmarks and measures so the Council can track its progress toward achieving the Council's goals.

The complete report is on the JLARC web site: [www.leg.wa.gov/jlarc](http://www.leg.wa.gov/jlarc)

For more information, contact: Keenan Konopaski, Washington State Legislative Auditor  
keenan.konopaski@leg.wa.gov | (360) 786-5187

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