

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1765

Synopsis as Enacted

C 459 L 93

Brief Description: Creating a corrections mental health center operated through a partnership of the department of corrections and the University of Washington.

By House Committee on Corrections (originally sponsored by Representatives L. Johnson, Morris, Long, Cooke, Dellwo, Mastin, Thibaudeau, Campbell, Riley, Johanson, Karahalios, Eide, J. Kohl, Springer and Leonard).

House Committee on Corrections
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Law & Justice
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background: Sentences for mentally ill offenders are established by the courts according to the severity of the crime and the offender's prior criminal history. The Department of Corrections does not have authority to set or modify special terms of incarceration or community supervision for a mentally ill offender.

No comprehensive and centralized rehabilitative mental health offender program currently exists within the Department of Corrections. The assistance that is provided to the incarcerated mentally ill offender is facility specific and depends on the capacity of the medical and counseling staff and the constraints of the facility.

The Department of Corrections Division of Community Corrections has a limited capacity to accommodate both mentally ill and developmentally disabled offenders. Within the division, the mentally ill and developmentally disabled offenders are served through designated work release facilities such as Lincoln Park/Rap House and, to a limited degree, other work release facilities and field offices in communities throughout the state. Staff at Lincoln Park/Rap House receive specialized training in managing mentally ill and developmentally disabled offenders. Community corrections officers are trained in managing mentally ill and developmentally disabled offenders, including: identification of decompensation, familiarity with commonly used medications and their side effects, case management and referral procedures, and intervention techniques. The division receives offenders who have served time in prison

and require transitional services, supervision, and support as they reintegrate into the community.

Approximately 1,500 offenders in Department of Corrections facilities have been diagnosed as having a major mental illness.

Summary: The Department of Corrections and the University of Washington, through its Institute of Public Policy and Management, are allowed to develop a collaborative arrangement to provide improved services for mentally ill offenders, including establishing a mental health center at McNeil Island Corrections Center. A requirement of the collaborative arrangement is the establishment of an advisory panel of key stakeholders drawn from a broad array of corrections, community advocacy, law enforcement, mental health, and criminal justice interest groups. Together, the Stakeholder Advisory Panel, the University of Washington, and the Department of Corrections are required to develop a strategic plan for the center that will address the following program objectives: develop new and innovative treatment approaches; improve the quality of services within the prisons; address the need for prevention and reintegration strategies for the mentally ill offender when he or she is released; facilitate mental health staff recruitment and training requirements; expand treatment services research for the Department of Corrections and the entire correctional system; develop organizational models and training for mental health professionals; improve the working environment for correctional employees; strengthen the multi-disciplinary collaborations between the appropriate departments within the University of Washington, the public health sector, community mental health system, and local jails; develop a working coalition of mental health professionals in this field; and design and develop a comprehensive coordinated continuum of mental health care from entry in prison until the mentally ill individual is transitioned back to the outside community.

The University of Washington is responsible for conducting research, training, and treatment activities for the mentally ill offender at the center. The Department of Corrections is given responsibility for all aspects of the center that involve the offender's housing, care, and supervision. Other state colleges, universities and mental health providers may be involved with the center's activities on a subcontract basis. Mentally ill offenders may be transferred to the center based on the offenders' needs, the availability of services, and other department considerations.

The Department of Corrections is required to report annually to the Legislature on the attainment of the center's goals.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	96	2
Senate	34	0 (Senate amended)
House	96	1 (House concurred)

Effective: May 17, 1993