S-1274.1

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**SENATE BILL 5792**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senator Darneille

AN ACT Relating to establishing a centralized office of forensic mental health services; and adding a new section to chapter 10.77 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 10.77 RCW to read as follows:

(1) In order to prioritize goals of accuracy, prompt service to the court, quality assurance, and integration with other services, an office of forensic mental health services is established within the department of social and health services. The office shall be led by a director on at least the level of deputy assistant secretary within the department who shall, after a reasonable period of transition, have responsibility for the following functions:

(a) Operational control of all forensic evaluation services, including specific budget allocation;

(b) Responsibility for training forensic evaluators;

(c) Development of a system to certify forensic evaluators, and to monitor the quality of forensic evaluation reports;

(d) Liaison with courts, jails, and community mental health programs to ensure proper flow of information, coordinate logistical issues, and solve problems in complex circumstances;

(e) Coordination with state hospitals to identify and develop best practice interventions and curricula for services that are unique to forensic patients;

(f) Promotion of congruence across state hospitals where appropriate, and promotion of interventions that flow smoothly into community interventions;

(g) Coordination with regional support networks, behavioral health organizations, community mental health agencies, and the department of corrections regarding community treatment and monitoring of persons on conditional release;

(h) Oversight of forensic data collection and analysis statewide, and appropriate dissemination of data trends and recommendations; and

(i) Oversight of the development, implementation, and maintenance of community forensic programs and services.

(2) The office of forensic mental health services must have a clearly delineated budget separate from the overall budget for state hospital services.

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