

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## 2SHB 2277

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning youth solitary confinement.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Peterson, Ortiz-Self, Frame, Goodman, Kilduff, Callan, Senn, Lovick, Thai, Fitzgibbon, Leavitt, Ryu, Appleton, Valdez, Davis, Ormsby, Macri, Doglio, Gregerson and Pollet; by request of Attorney General).

**House Committee on Human Services & Early Learning**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Senate Committee on Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

**Background:**

*Juvenile Rehabilitation Institutions and County Detention Facilities.*

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) operates three juvenile institutions for juveniles adjudicated of crimes and sentenced to more than 30 days of confinement. Echo Glen Children's Center in Snoqualmie serves younger male offenders and female offenders. Green Hill School in Chehalis serves older male offenders. Naselle Youth Camp in Naselle provides services to male offenders and offers a forestry work program.

Confinement imposed by a juvenile court up to 30 days is served in a county juvenile detention facility. Counties with more than 50,000 inhabitants are required to provide and maintain a juvenile detention facility, while counties with less inhabitants may provide and maintain such a facility.

A consortium of counties in Eastern Washington contract with Martin Hall Juvenile Detention Facility in Medical Lake for juvenile detention services.

*Juvenile Rehabilitation Policy Regarding Isolation and Room Confinement.*

On November 1, 2019, the DCYF updated its policy regarding isolation and room confinement. According to this policy, room confinement and isolation may not be used as a punishment, but may only be used:

- as a time-limited response to specific behavior;
- to allow youth to regain emotional and behavioral control; and

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- for the least amount of time necessary.

Room confinement is defined as any instance when a youth is separated from the youth population and placed in a room for 15 minutes or longer, which may occur to:

- protect other youth, staff, or property;
- give youth time to cool off; or
- protect the youth.

Isolation is a subcategory of confinement occurring in a room other than the one assigned for sleeping.

Youth receiving room confinement in institutions must be visually checked at least every 15 minutes on a random schedule, and this must be documented.

Youth receiving room confinement or isolation must have formal reviews every 2 hours to encourage the youth to return to the general programming and determine if they are committed to safety and emotionally regulated enough to return to programming.

Youth receiving room confinement or isolation must be provided an opportunity for:

- a daily bath or shower;
- hourly access to a toilet and sink;
- medical and mental health evaluations; and
- large muscle activity.

### **Summary:**

The term "juvenile solitary confinement," defined as involuntarily separating a youth from the youth population and placing the youth in a room other than the room assigned for sleeping for longer than 15 minutes, is prohibited in county detention facilities and juvenile rehabilitation institutions.

Juvenile institutions and county detention facilities must limit total isolation and room confinement of a juvenile to no more than 4 hours in any 24-hour period, except when:

- the reason for isolation and details regarding isolation are documented;
- an individualized plan is developed to reintegrate the juvenile to the general population; and
- the institution or facility superintendent provides documented authorization every 4 hours.

Placing pregnant juveniles in isolation is prohibited. Isolation is defined as confinement that occurs:

- when a youth is separated from the youth population and placed in a room for longer than 15 minutes for the purpose of discipline, behavior modification, or due to an imminent threat to the safety of the youth or others; and
- in a room other than the room assigned to the youth for sleeping.

If the total isolation or room confinement exceeds 24 hours, the Secretary of the DCYF must provide documented authorization.

Room confinement is defined as a juvenile separated from the youth population and placed in a room or cell that the juvenile is assigned to for sleeping, other than during normal sleeping hours, but does not include time a youth requests to spend in his or her room.

Juvenile institutions and county detention facilities may use isolation:

- to prevent imminent harm based on the juvenile's behavior;
- when awaiting transfer of facilities;
- overnight due to disruptive behavior that disrupts other residents; or
- when necessary to respond to an escape attempt.

Juvenile institutions and county detention facilities may use room confinement when:

- there is a repeated violation of facility or living unit rules;
- there is a refusal to follow staff directives;
- it is necessary to prevent behavior that causes disruption of the detention facility or institution.

Staff from institutions or facilities must remove the juvenile from isolation and room confinement when:

- the purpose of the confinement is met;
- the desired behavior is evident; or
- the juvenile has been evaluated by a professional who has determined the juvenile is no longer an imminent risk to self, staff, or the general population.

Staff from institutions or facilities must visually check every juvenile placed in isolation or room confinement.

When an institution or facility places a juvenile in isolation or room confinement, the juvenile must have access to:

- clothing;
- mattress and bedding;
- medication under staff supervision;
- a toilet and sink at least hourly;
- a bath or shower at least daily;
- necessary mental health services; and
- reading, writing, and treatment material unless precluded by suicide precaution level.

Each juvenile in isolation or room confinement must be visually checked every 15 minutes, and these instances must be documented. The juvenile in isolation must have access to certain things (clothing, mattress and bedding, medication, toilet, bath or shower, mental health services, and reading and writing material). The DCYF must compile certain information regarding juveniles confined in state institutions and facilities, including the number and times isolation and room confinement were used and information about such isolation and room confinement.

*Model Policy.*

The DCYF must adopt a model policy prohibiting the use of solitary confinement in detention facilities and institutions with the goal of limiting the use and duration of isolation

and room confinement by July 1, 2021. The DCYF must consult with stakeholders in determining the model policy, and the model policy must include certain elements regarding isolation and room confinement.

By December 1, 2021, the detention facility or institution must review and either:

- adopt the model policy; or
- notify the DCYF of the reasons the facility or institution will not adopt the model policy.

*Reporting Requirements.*

The DCYF must compile, on a monthly basis until November 1, 2022, certain information regarding juveniles confined in all state institutions and facilities receiving isolation or room confinement in excess of one hour. After November 1, 2022, the DCYF must annually compile this information and post the information on the DCYF website.

Counties operating a juvenile detention facility must compile, on a monthly basis until November 1, 2022, certain information regarding juveniles receiving isolation or room confinement in excess of 1 hour in those facilities and report this information to the DCYF. The DCYF must compile all of this information and provide a report to the Legislature by December 1, 2022. After November 1, 2022, county juvenile detention facilities must annually compile this information and post it on the detention facility's website.

*Periodic Reviews.*

The DCYF is required, beginning January 2023, to conduct periodic reviews of policies, procedures, and use of solitary confinement, isolation, and room confinement. The DCYF is required to prepare a report to the Legislature at least once every three years summarizing its reviews.

*Juveniles Held in Adult Jails or Holding Facilities.*

A juvenile who is subject to adult court jurisdiction may not be held in an adult jail or holding facility for a period exceeding 24 hours excluding weekends and holidays, unless a court finds that it is in the interest of justice. Juveniles in adult jails or holding facilities may not have sight or sound contact with adult inmates unless the court finds that it is in the interest of justice to permit such contact.

The court must hold a hearing every 30 days to review whether sight or sound contact with adults and placement in a jail or holding facility is still in the interest of justice.

Juveniles must not be held in an adult jail or holding facility or allowed to have sight or sound contact with adults for more than 180 days unless the court makes a finding of good cause or the juvenile waives the limitation.

Juveniles have a right to counsel during hearings to determine placement in a jail or holding facility.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House 76 20

Senate 36 13

**Effective:** June 11, 2020