

## Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force

Meeting Summary for May 16, 2022

*Agenda item links to YouTube video are functional at the time this meeting summary was created, however, YouTube links may change. Links in this document will not be updated. Please refer to the time notation on each agenda item.*

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### 1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Stephen Gockley called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. The meeting was held via remote-only Zoom Webinar.

Members Present: Barry Buchanan, Bill Elfo, Heather Flaherty, Seth Fleetwood, Stephen Gockley, Daniel Hammill, Mike Hilley, Jack Hovenier, Raylene King, Scott Korthuis, Jenn Lockwood, Rhyan Lopez, Perry Mowery, Mike Parker (proxy for Greg Winter), Eric Richey, Flo Simon, Donnell Tanksley, Bruce Van Glubt, Maialisa Vanyo

Members Absent: Arlene Feld, David Freeman, Deborah Hawley, Jason McGill, Eric Peterson, Dave Reynolds, Tyler Schroeder

### 2. [Justice Project Needs Assessment \(00:01:45\)](#)

Buchanan reported that there would be one more meeting with Behavioral Health Committee co-chairs and Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) members. He gave a brief summary of the work of the Justice Project, the SAC, and the Law and Justice Council and clarified the difference between them.

### 3. [Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion \(LEAD\) Program \(00:07:24\)](#)

Malora Christensen and Thomas McAuliffe of the Response Systems Division of the Health Department gave an overview of how the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program operations.

Presentation topics included:

- LEAD is currently fully staffed with four Case Managers and one Outreach Coordinator.
- Case Managers provide services to clients immersed in the criminal justice system, including transportation assistance, social service needs, and behavioral health referrals.
- LEAD currently serves 80 clients and over 300 referrals have been made since September 2020.
- There is no wrong door to make a referral to LEAD – they take referrals from a wide variety of sources and try to take a proactive approach.
- The majority of referrals come from Whatcom County Jail and the Prosecutor's Office.
- Once referrals are received, they are taken to an Operational Work Group meeting where the Work Group determines if the individual meets criteria and would be a good fit for the program.
- If the client is approved for LEAD, the Case Manager and Outreach Coordinator will find out what the client needs, meeting the client where they are and building trust with the client.
- Prosecuting attorneys have the ability to send some individuals to the LEAD program as a pre-charging diversion referral.
- A client graduates from LEAD once they have achieved a sustainable point of stabilization.
- The new Recovery Navigator program will be an expansion to LEAD and will allow them to hire two more Outreach Coordinators and one additional Case Manager.

McAuliffe and Christensen took questions from Task Force members. Topics addressed included:

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- They have seen an over 95% reduction in jail bookings for those participating in LEAD, though there may be other factors affecting that data. They will soon have a full program evaluation.
- LEAD's original inception was for law enforcement to divert individuals from the field, however they are not doing that at this time. Their referrals come from many different sources and they would like to see law enforcement referrals increase.
- In order to be enrolled in LEAD, individuals must be involved in the local legal system.
- They are adequately staffed at the moment and are looking forward to growing with the expansion. They do anticipate reaching capacity in the near future, at which point priority would be given to referrals coming from law enforcement.
- There is a three to six-month process to begin engagement with a new client. This can be attributed to intakes taking up to three to four contacts and the fact that diversion from the field is not a part of their model.
- Vanyo pointed out that the program does not serve high risk/high need clients and that she has not seen many pre-charge diversions either. Christensen replied that many of the high risk/high needs referrals cannot be served by LEAD due to safety concerns for staff.
- Hammill asked how the Blake decision has affected the program. Christensen replied that it has not had a big impact on their referrals because they do not have to wait for an individual to have a new charge in order for them to be referred.

#### 4. [2023-2024 Budget \(00:56:10\)](#)

Buchanan stated that the administration is working on the next biennium budget and they would like the Task Force to start thinking about what funding they need for operations of the Task Force and Committees. Ideas and discussion topics included:

- Space rental for a potential return to in-person or hybrid meetings.
- Additional funds for the work of the communications consultant.
- Priorities for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and what decisions have been made on where the dollars are going to go.

Committee members discussed returning to in-person meetings. Legislative Coordinator, Jill Nixon, said that she would be polling members on this topic.

#### 5. [Washington State Supreme Court's Racial Justice Consortium Action Plan \(this item was moved from agenda item six to agenda item five\) \(01:07:00\)](#)

Dr. Damani Johnson gave a presentation on the Action Plan developed by the Washington State Racial Justice Consortium. He gave background on why the Consortium was formed and how the Action Plan was established. Main points of the presentation included:

- The Consortium consists of about 45 people, including 17 judges and 22 people working in court administration. 16 spaces are designated for community members from different areas of the state, however they are not all filled. The majority of the members are people of color.

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- The purpose of the Consortium is to educate the workforce on racism, provide a review of how the Court system contributes to racial disparities, and provide meaningful reform of policies and practices.
- One identified area of reform was belonging, which led the Consortium to establish a series of commitments, a vision, and a mission.
- The Consortium utilizes the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) Toolkit.
- The consortium has focused on five main topic areas so far, including: child welfare and dependency, youth justice, sentencing, legal financial obligations (LFOs), and Re-Entry.
- Dr. Johnson gave an overview of each area of focus and how the Consortium decided on them. He emphasized that there were many other important topics out there and invited Committee members to give feedback on what they think is important.
- A staff member from the Office of Court Innovation has offered to meet with stakeholders around the state to get feedback on the Action Plan and implementation.

Hammill asked how they would go about eliminating incarceration for non-payment of LFOs. Johnson replied that he believes it would need to be done on a state legislative level. Judges have discretion in their courtroom, but state-wide legislation would make it a sweeping change. Task Force members discussed LFOs further including situations in which they are waived or alternatives are offered.

Flaherty advocated for including local-level data for all of the areas of focus. Dr. Johnson agreed that data collection is needed.

### 6. [Committee Updates \(01:40:30\)](#)

Buchanan reported on Steering Committee, summarizing the discussion on GARE implementation.

Hammill reported on the joint meeting between the Behavioral Health Committee and the Legal and Justice Committee. He referenced the meeting summary for his report.

Mowery reported on the Crisis Stabilization Facility meeting. He gave an update on the certification for administering 12-hour law enforcement holds and data collection.

### 7. **Other Business**

There was no other business.

### 8. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

### 9. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 A.M.