
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6273

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Senate Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators Boehnke, Dozier, Gildon, and C. Wilson)

1 AN ACT Relating to conducting an audit of the juvenile
2 rehabilitation system; creating a new section; and providing an
3 expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The joint legislative audit and review
6 committee shall:

7 (a) Review the department of children, youth, and families
8 juvenile rehabilitation's existing processes and staffing methodology
9 used for determining adequate staffing ratios to meet the confinement
10 and rehabilitative needs of the juveniles and ensure public safety;

11 (b) Review procedures and protocols for professional development,
12 hiring and recruitment, and training for staff serving youth in
13 juvenile rehabilitation institutions, with a focus on how staff are
14 trained to implement rehabilitative practices;

15 (c) Review youth access to programming, treatment, and services
16 including, but not limited to, educational programming, treatment and
17 services for youth experiencing substance use disorder, behavioral
18 health treatment, available reentry services such as housing, job
19 training, and other supports, access to technology services, family
20 and community connections, and other programming and services offered

1 by the department to provide youth with rehabilitation and
2 restorative interventions;

3 (d) Review existing security and safety measures, including the
4 use of disciplinary procedures for total isolation and room
5 confinement, adopted by the department and their effectiveness in
6 meeting the unique needs of the juvenile population in the custody of
7 the department;

8 (e) Review how often and how many youth face new juvenile or
9 adult criminal offense charges, convictions, or both while residing
10 at juvenile rehabilitation institutions and potential future
11 consequences that may occur as a result such as sentence extension,
12 likelihood of recidivism, health impacts, and effects regarding
13 criminal records;

14 (f) Assess gender equity regarding education, employment, and
15 career options for female youth;

16 (g) Review how staffing impacts youth on youth conflict and
17 safety;

18 (h) Review best practices from other states regarding security
19 and safety measures, programming opportunities, reentry supports,
20 staff training and professional development, and staffing ratios, and
21 identify options that may be feasible to adopt in Washington state to
22 increase public safety and the security, programming options,
23 treatment services, and rehabilitation mission of the department's
24 juvenile rehabilitation institutions;

25 (i) Review the department's existing processes for responding to
26 critical incidents, including communication and cooperation with
27 local law enforcement, and identify areas for improvement; and

28 (j) Review the impacts of changes in average daily population,
29 longer lengths of stay, longer sentences, increases in maximum age of
30 release, increases in more serious offense types and adult sentences,
31 and related effects of juvenile rehabilitation to 25 legislation.

32 (2) The joint legislative audit and review committee shall report
33 its findings and recommendations to the governor and the appropriate
34 committees of the legislature by June 30, 2026. The report shall
35 include recommendations on supporting juvenile rehabilitation's
36 efforts to gradually move young people from carceral settings to
37 least restrictive environments to improve positive reentry outcomes.

38 (3) This section expires December 31, 2026.

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