

JJ&RA - JUVENILE REHABILITATION
Public Disclosure
2015-17 BIENNIAL BUDGET



Request	FY16	FY17	15-17
FTE	2.0	2.0	2.0
GF-State	\$151,000	\$136,000	\$287,000
Total	\$151,000	\$136,000	\$287,000

DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Juvenile Justice and Rehabilitation Administration (JJRA) requests two records specialists in Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) in order to meet the rapidly expanding use of the public records act in response to public/media interest and recent legislative changes. By funding this request, JR is expected to eliminate the current backlog of requests, improve response time, prevent future financial or legal penalties for the agency and avoid negative impacts to client services.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

JR has critical deficits in administrative support for the functions of coordinating and responding to public disclosure and juvenile records requests. Past budget reductions meant staff resources to respond to these requests were reduced, requiring staff to take on the additional duty with other workload. Limited staff resources create risk and delays. Over the last 3-4 years, JR has had a 50 percent increase in the number of requests being made for JR records. In 2010, JR spent 370 work hours on public disclosure/records requests compared to 1,272 hours in 2012. The complexity of these requests is heightened by the need to search electronic data and metadata, and utilize highly-advanced and sensitive electronic search technology. This requires dedicated staff with specialized training, knowledge, and time to devote to completing this work.

The Public Records Act requires the state to respond to all individuals asking for records within five business days. The requests require time-consuming, hands-on review and redaction to ensure federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) laws regarding protected health information and juvenile record confidentiality requirements per RCW 13.50.100 are met. Timely production of records is critical for the Office of the Attorney General (AGO) to respond to litigation and the Department of Corrections (DOC) to fulfill their statutory requirements to assess risk and protect public safety in the release of offenders. Records management in other Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Administrations, the DOC, Special Commitment Center, Department of Health, Department of Transportation, etc. is completed by a Forms and Records Analyst classification. JR does not have a Forms and Records Analyst position.

Overloaded employees are highly vulnerable to making errors as they respond to multiple, competing demands. The agency is at risk of violation of public disclosure law and other statutory requirements for the production and release of



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records. Significant fines are likely, as evidenced in DSHS and other parts of state government when they have not produced all relevant records, unintentionally disclosed protected health information (PHI), or have not sent the five day letter within the designated timeframe.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

JR is requesting two FTEs to serve as Forms and Records Analysts. Two staff with the specific functions and specialized training as Forms and Records Analysts will have the primary responsibility to manage the volume of records requests received by JR. They will uphold client privacy and ensure JR complies with federal and state laws. For all requests, they will review files, scan for electronic copy, work on redaction of confidential information, prepare invoices to requestors, and send out requested records. In the field, records work is currently being performed by receptionists, parole counselors and others. Funding this request will relieve them of this work, allow a greater focus on client services, and properly manage records consistent with the training and knowledge needed. Full implementation professionalizes the management of risk and liability to the agency similar to what is done in other state agencies and DSHS Administrations.

EXPECTED RESULTS

This budget request supports DSHS Goals of Safety – Each individual and each community will be safe and 5: Public Trust – Strong management practices will be used to ensure quality and efficiency. The decision package is essential to implement JR’s Strategic Objective 5.1 Maintain a productive, effective organization and maximize service delivery capacity within available resources.

When JR can confidently provide accurate and timely response to public records requests, it will promote public trust and government transparency, reduce unnecessary fines so tax dollars may be spent most efficiently on services to those in need, and promote public safety by responding to legally mandated requests for records within the time frames required by law and agency stakeholders.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

The primary stakeholders are the general public and the DOC End-of-Sentence Review committee. Timely access to juvenile records in order to meet statutory obligations for information sharing and avoiding fines as well as information to assist in establishment of a risk level classification for sex offenders in Washington State is critical. DOC and the AGO are in full support of this request.



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