

JJ&RA - SPECIAL COMMITMENT CENTER
Addition of Forensic Psychologists



2015-17 BIENNIAL BUDGET

ML Request	FY16	FY17	15-17
FTE	2.0	2.0	2.0
GF-State	\$292,000	\$289,000	\$581,000
Total	\$292,000	\$289,000	\$581,000

DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Juvenile Justice and Rehabilitation Administration (JJRA), Special Commitment Center (SCC) requests \$581,000 GF-State and two FTEs in order to address the need to produce annual reviews to the court in a timely manner. By funding this request, JJRA is expected to complete, within required timelines, the annual reviews of residents’ treatment progress as directed by RCW 71.09.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The SCC is required by law to complete an annual case review for every resident in the facility and provide that review to the courts. There is currently a backlog of annual reviews, causing a significant delay in court hearings which has gained attention by the courts and the Governor’s office. Without timely annual reviews, there is a potential risk of residents being released because they cannot be legally placed at SCC without the annual review by the court. Releasing residents who are not prepared for transition substantially increases the risk of re-offense and reduces community safety. The scope of work required to bring reviews back to legally mandated timelines is so large that the backlog will continue unless additional forensic psychologists are hired to complete these reviews.

SCC is currently incurring additional costs for reviews completed by contracted psychologists. These costs range from \$3,500 to \$4,500 per review, depending on the complexity of the case. The request for permanent forensic psychologists is a better use of state fiscal resources than requesting additional funds to cover the costs of the contracted service.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The additional two forensic psychologists requested will be primarily focused on addressing the backlog of annual reviews. Because the evaluators will be employees of the state, there will be greater management and oversight of production timelines by the Forensic Services Manager. If funding is granted, the positions can be established, recruited



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and hired within a timeframe of 4 to 6 months. It is estimated that within a short time period all evaluations will be conducted within court approved timelines and the backlog will be abolished. The increase in the number of staff assigned to the forensic unit will ensure that annual review timelines are met on an ongoing basis. The current method of engaging contractors for production has not achieved required results and the introduction of two new positions will result in the utilization of state resources more effectively and efficiently.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The budget request supports DSHS Goal 2: Safety – Each individual and community will be safe and DSHS Goal 5: Public Trust – Use of strong management practices that ensure quality efficiency. The decision package is essential to implementing the JJ&RA Strategic Objective 2.4: Increase public safety through provision of coordinated rehabilitative services to residents at SCC and JJ&RA Strategic Objective 5.1: Maintain a productive, effective organization and maximize service delivery capacity within available resources. An increase in the number of forensic evaluators will provide a much needed positive impact to staff morale and will support the reduction of the backlog of forensic evaluations. Ensuring evaluations are completed on time will ensure that residents are not released to the community prior to being ready for transition, which will also uphold the public's trust in the Department of Social and Health Services for keeping the communities safe and innocent individuals protected.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

Internal and external stakeholders will support the timely completion of annual reviews due to the mitigation of risk of residents being unconditionally released before their risk to the community has been reduced.



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