

WELCOME TO JANUARY 2024

From Assistant Secretary Jeannie Darneille

To all Women's Prison Division staff, families, volunteers, and colleagues:

I was asked two years ago to take a giant leap from my prior career to come to DOC and help establish the new Women's Prison Division. For some of you reading this letter, you may still be scratching your heads about my selection as its first Assistant Secretary. Believe me, I have done that repeatedly myself. Secretary Strange asked me to tackle a tough job and showed such confidence in me (even when I didn't possess it myself) that I had to consider it. Now, two years later, it is time to express my thanks for this remarkable chance to put my boots back on the ground, reflect on our success, and say farewell as I retire from public service.

I have been blessed to work with remarkable individuals on our Leadership Team. They educated me on a hundred different levels, talked me off the ledge repeatedly, and modeled tremendous commitment. Not one of them were in their current position when I arrived in the fall of 2021, so we have weathered considerable change together. Three of us staked out a section of the near-empty north side of 4th floor at Headquarters and I benefitted from the wealth of historical reference, good sense, and genuine regard from Jo Wofford and Rhonda Roberts. When a superintendent left on Day 2, and COVID hit the women's facilities with a vengeance, we knew there were rough seas ahead. By Spring, 2022, the entire management teams at both WCCW and MCCCW had changed, and a point-in-time Gender-Informed Practices Assessment helped us identify our vision and value statements, the cornerstones of what became a strategic plan.

Thirteen Advisory Teams were established and remain influential today providing me and the other Jeannie (Miller) with their honest, real, and personal feedback. For nearly two years, I met monthly with custody staff, non-custody staff, and leadership teams at each of the women's facilities. Similarly, I met monthly with teams of incarcerated individuals representing the general population, the Therapeutic Community, and persons who are transgender or non-binary at each of the facilities. Finally, we created what may be the only long-standing Lived Experience Advisory Team, consisting of a dozen women who once experienced incarceration in one of our facilities.



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Their experiences and perceptions have been invaluable and insightful. They opened my mind and my heart to the realities of work and life in our two facilities and helped me understand how we could do more to assist the staff while they remain in DOC employment or help persons who are incarcerated or transitioning back into the community. I was repeatedly rewarded for simply listening to others and pursuing remedies when possible.

Thank you to all the amazing people who make up the Women's Prison Division "family". Be steadfast in moving forward with the division's vision to create and sustain a gender-responsive and trauma-informed prison model for women, transgender, and non-binary persons to improve outcomes while in our custody and as they return to the community. Continue to take great responsibility in cultivating an environment that builds on people's strengths as they improve public safety by positively changing lives. Let our WPD compass guide your work to focus on rehabilitation, health, wellness, and empowerment.

My hope for each of you is to continue to observe and participate in the continuing changes that are to come. Ask important questions, remain open-minded, be bold in presenting your ideas, lean in and seek leadership opportunities, enjoy the future, be a continuous learner, show bravery and a willingness to try new things, always treat people with respect and love, and give them your support. Cultivate friendships. Do what you say you will do. Show your sense of humor, demonstrate perseverance, be guided by hope, and show kindness to all. Tell stories. Thank you all, especially my colleagues in agency and division leadership and DOC Secretary Cheryl Strange for supporting me through this great opportunity.



Women's Prison Division Policy Development Project

by-Jeannie Miller

I am writing to bring your attention to the Women's Prison Division (WPD) Policy Development Project, a comprehensive initiative aimed at significantly improving the conditions of incarceration at the Mission Creek Correction Center (MCCCW) and the Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW). Our approach is centered on incorporating gender-responsive and trauma-informed policies, with a keen focus on creating an environment that not only supports the rehabilitation of individuals but also enhances the overall well-being of our dedicated staff.

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by women, transgender, intersex, and non-binary individuals, our Policy Development Project is founded on a gender-responsive framework. This means tailoring policies and procedures to address the specific needs, backgrounds, and experiences of justice-involved individuals. By adopting a gender-responsive approach, we aim to create an environment that fosters rehabilitation, empowerment, and successful reintegration into society.

Moreover, a key pillar of our project is the incorporation of trauma-informed practices. Many, if not all, individuals within the corrections system have experienced trauma, and it is crucial that our policies reflect an understanding of this reality. By adopting traumainformed approaches, we strive to create a supportive and healing environment that

acknowledges the impact of trauma on both incarcerated individuals and staff. This involves training staff to recognize and respond to the effects of trauma, thereby promoting a culture of empathy, understanding, and resilience.

Importantly, we believe that by focusing on improving the conditions of incarceration, we are not only enhancing the lives of women entrusted to our care but also positively impacting our dedicated staff. Research consistently shows that providing a gender-responsive and trauma-informed environment not only reduces incidents of retraumatization for individuals but also contributes to increased job satisfaction and wellbeing for staff.

By creating an atmosphere that prioritizes empathy and understanding, our staff can experience a more supportive workplace, leading to reduced stress, burnout, and turnover rates. Furthermore, adopting trauma-informed practices can contribute to a safer working Women's Prison Division Policy Development Project environment by promoting effective communication, conflict resolution, and team cohesion among our dedicated staff.

As we move forward with the Policy Development Project, we are committed to fostering open communication and collaboration. We encourage feedback and insights from staff at all levels, the incarcerated population, external partners, including those with lived experience, and our families, as your perspectives are invaluable in shaping policies that not only adhere to the highest standards but also reflect the practical realities of your daily work.

Beginning in January, we will be organizing informational interviews and focus groups to begin enhancing and updating agency policy. Your active participation and engagement are crucial to the success of this endeavor, and we look forward to your valuable contributions. Thank you for your dedication to the well-being of our incarcerated individuals and for the commitment to creating a positive and supportive work environment. Together, we can build a system that truly serves the needs of all individuals involved.

Solitary Confinement Transformation Plan

What's the Vision?

Working with staff, incarcerated individuals and stakeholders to be humane in corrections by safely increasing meaningful time out of cell.

What's in it for you?

By treating the Solitary Confinement risk factors of incarcerated individuals early on, we can positively change the behaviors that result in violence, which directly impacts the prison work environment in a positive way and increases safety inside prisons and beyond.

Key Definitions

Restrictive Housing is defined as a housing assignment for individuals whose presence in general population is deemed to present a danger to self, others, or facility security.

Solitary Confinement is measured and defined as an operational status in restrictive housing where the individual is confined to a single-occupancy cell for more than 20 hours a day without meaningful human contact, out-of-cell activities, or opportunities to congregate.

What's not changing

- The use of Restrictive Housing as a tool to maintain facility safety
- The process and policies for referring an incarcerated individual to Administrative Segregation and Maximum Custody

What's changing or new?

- Improved staff training and staffing ratios to enable plan requirements
- Expanded access to risk-reduction programming in general population for all incarcerated individuals
- Enhanced options and alternatives to placement in solitary confinement conditions following incident responses in general population settings
- Greater efficiency of movement through the restrictive housing system, including increased opportunities for diversion, access to out-of-cell programs, and step-down models for gradual re-entry back into general population
- Increased opportunities for out-of-cell time in restrictive housing areas, including meaningful congregate activity, through operational changes, bolstered staffing, and a series of capital projects

When is this happening?

- September 2023 – SCTP Plan submitted by ISG/Falcon to DOC
- October 2023 – Plan released publicly. Decision Package submitted to legislature
- Spring 2024 – Decision received from Legislature
- Spring 2024 – Facility specific implementation planning to begin

What to expect next?

- Additional facility site visits to continue conversations with staff
- Project meetings and newsletters to communicate timeline, progress, and plan details
- Requests for input and feedback by the project team for future planning

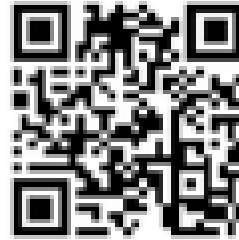
Solitary Confinement Transformation Plan con't

Want to learn more?



<https://doc.wa.gov/SCTP>

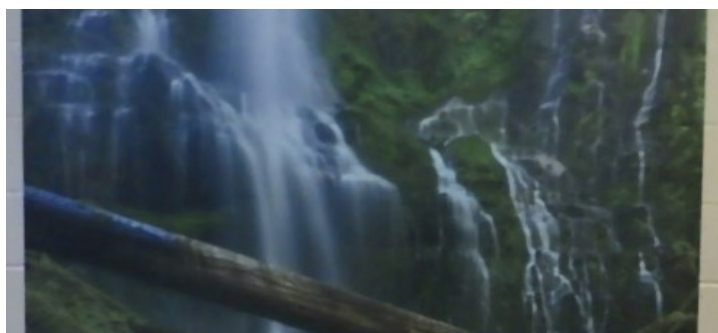
Questions?



<https://doc.wa.gov/SCTP-FAQs>

WCCW Murals in Solitary Confinement

WCCW had the chance to work with Mirals Your Way <https://www.muralsyourway.com/> to create murals in the solitary confinement area



8 Winter Safety Tips:

1. Drive Safely-

AAA offers the following driving tips:

- Avoid using cruise control in wintry conditions
- Steer in the direction of a skid, so when your wheels regain traction, you don't have to overcorrect to stay in your lane
- Accelerate and decelerate slowly
- Increase following distance to 8 to 10 seconds
- If possible, don't stop when going uphill
- If visibility is severely limited due to a whiteout, pull off the road to a safe place and do not drive until conditions improve. Avoid pulling off onto the shoulder unless it is an absolute emergency. Limited visibility means other vehicles can't see yours on the shoulder.

2. Prepare Your Car- Is your car ready for winter travel? It's not too late to winterize your car. Check out these car care tips to prepare you for winter driving:

- Check your tires and replace with all-weather or snow tires, if necessary.
- Keep your gas tank full to prevent ice from getting in the tank and fuel lines.
- Use a wintertime fluid in your windshield washer.
- Make an emergency kit to keep in your car. Include water, snacks, first-aid kit, blankets, flashlight, extra batteries, portable cell phone charger, and emergency flares.

3. Prepare Your Home - Winterize your home to help protect yourself and your family from any potential damage the cold temperatures and snow may bring.

Follow these tips to keep your home safe and warm:

- Check your heating systems.
- Clean out chimneys and fireplaces.
- Closely monitor any burning fires or candles.
- Check your carbon monoxide and smoke detectors.
- Remove ice and snow from walkways to prevent slips and falls.
- Keep an emergency kit in your home that includes flashlights, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, extra medicine, and baby items.
- If you lose power, your kit should also include food and water for three days for each family member, warm clothing if you have to evacuate, and toys and games for children.

4. Prepare for Outdoor Activities - Remaining indoors during the winter is appealing. But you and your family may want to venture outdoors to enjoy winter activities. When you do, take these steps to prevent serious injuries and illnesses, like hypothermia and frostbite:

- Wear layers of light and warm clothing, a wind-resistant coat, waterproof shoes, and a hat, gloves, and scarf.
- Work slowly when engaged in outdoor tasks, such as shoveling your driveway or removing snow from your car.
- Take a friend and carry a charged cell phone when participating in outdoor activities.

5. Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning - Carbon monoxide detectors save lives. Every year, over 400 people die and 50,000 are treated for carbon monoxide poisoning.

The most common symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are often described as “flu-like” – headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain and confusion.

6. Avoid Snow Shoveling and Snowblowing Injuries - Shoveling snow or using a snowblower are among winter's most grueling activities. High levels of activity in cold temperatures put many people at risk of heart attack, especially those that have inactive lifestyles.

While most people won't have a problem, shoveling snow can put some people at risk of heart attack. Sudden exertion, like moving hundreds of pounds of snow after being sedentary for several months, can put a big strain on the heart. Pushing a heavy snow blower also can cause injury.

And, there's the cold factor. Cold weather can increase heart rate and blood pressure. It can make blood clot more easily and constrict arteries, which decreases blood supply. This is true even in healthy people. Individuals over the age of 40 or who are relatively inactive should be particularly careful.

National Safety Council recommends the following tips to shovel safely:

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin
- Shovel only fresh, powdery snow; it's lighter
- Push the snow rather than lifting it
- If you do lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel
- Lift with your legs, not your back
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion
- Know the signs of a heart attack, and stop immediately and call 911 if you're experiencing any of them; every minute counts
- Don't pick up that shovel without a doctor's permission if you have a history of heart disease. A clear driveway is not worth your life.

7. Prevent Falls This Winter - When the rain and snow starts to fall, so do people. In fact, falls are the leading cause of nonfatal injuries in adults 45 and older. Protect yourself from a life-changing injury this winter with these safety tips:

- Choose the right shoe. Shoes and boots need to fit properly and have soles with good traction. Snow boots or hiking boots will provide the best protection for the worst type of weather.
- Leave early. Falls are more likely to happen when you're in a rush. Allow yourself plenty of time to get to where you're going.
- Walk like a penguin. Take short steps and walk as flat-footed as possible on icy or slippery ground.
- Keep your hands free. You'll need them to help you balance, so avoid carrying heavy loads and keep those hands out of your pockets.
- Remove snow and ice from walkways frequently. Don't wait for it to melt. That could take awhile. Apply ice melt and ask for help if you need it.
- Keep the lights on. If you have exterior lights on your home, use them to help see where you're walking at night.
- Advocate for your safety. If the entrances or sidewalks do not look safe outside of a business or a local venue, speak up and let someone know.

8. Keep a Charged Phone With You - Your cell phone can help with any emergency you may come across walking, driving, or playing in the snow. It's important to keep a charged cell phone with you or anyone you are out with, so you can call for help if anything were to happen!





Service Years

20 YEARS

Stephanie Colburn - MCCCW
Tyrrell Baker - WCCW

20 YEARS

April Diggs - WCCW

15 YEARS

Tracy Harding - WCCW
Bobbie Booth - WCCW
Roger Fleek MCCCW
Carlos Medina - WCCW
Courtney Robbins - MCCCW

10 YEARS

Elizabeth Orten - WCCW
Yunyun Lu - WCCW
Rebecca White - MCCCW

5 YEARS

Justin Murray - WCCW
Joshua Baese - WCCW

Retirement

Andrea Lane - WCCW - November
Chrislee Smith - WCCW - November
Tyrrell Baker - WCCW - December
Jeannie Darneille- Assistant Secretary - January

