

# GRADUATED REENTRY SPONSOR SUPPORT GUIDE



# Table of Contents

## Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	3
Mission Statement.....	3
1.1 Electronic Home Monitoring.....	4
1.2 Blackout Period.....	4
1.3 Search Waiver and Background Check.....	4
1.4 Visitors.....	5
2.1 Roles.....	5
3.1 Expectations.....	6
3.2 Reentry Navigator.....	7
3.3 Money/Finances.....	7
3.4 Access to the Community.....	8
3.5 Transportation.....	8
4.1 Medical, Dental and Mental Health.....	8
5.1 Emergencies.....	8
6.1 Employment Services.....	9
7.1 Disciplinary.....	10
8.1 Resolution Requests.....	10
9.1 FAQs.....	11

# INTRODUCTION

Thank you for sponsoring someone transitioning from prison to home on Electronic home monitoring (EHM). In 2021, The Washington State Legislature passed ESSB 5121, which is an expansion to the Graduated Reentry Legislation (House Bill 2638) passed in 2018.

This expansion now allows Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) to transfer individuals onto electronic monitoring at an approved address through two different tracks.

## **Track 1:**

- Individuals who serve a minimum of 6 months in total confinement in a state correctional facility may transfer to a work release facility up to 12 months prior to release, and up to the final 5 months of their sentence served on electronic monitoring at an approved address.
- Individuals who serve a minimum of 6 months in total confinement in a state correctional facility may transfer from a correctional facility to an approved address on electronic monitoring up to 5 months prior to release (no work release component).

**Track 2:** Individuals who serve a minimum of 4 months total confinement in a state correctional facility, may transfer to an approved address on electronic monitoring up to 18 months prior to release.

The focus of this legislation is to provide an opportunity for incarcerated individuals to build skills by attending treatment, programming, work, or other self-help programs as part of a graduated access to the community in order to support one's transition from incarceration. While someone completes their prison sentence in the community, the department must:

Require placement onto electronic monitoring,

Require an approved address,

Require participation in programming and treatment based on one's assessed needs, and development of an Individualized Reentry Plan.

Assign a Corrections Specialist to monitor compliance with partial confinement conditions,

Assign a reentry navigator to assist participants with transitional needs.

## **Mission Statement**

Through cross divisional collaboration, the intent of GRE is to improve public safety by targeting interventions and programs for successful transition into the community. Successful reentry takes place when incarcerated individuals, corrections staff, community members and families team up to develop an individualized graduated plan from incarceration to the community.

## **Goals**

- To increase the successful reentry of incarcerated individuals into our communities.
- To break the cycle of incarceration of those involved in the GRE program.

- To work with participants and their families to provide structure, support, and collaboration of services for the greatest impact.
- To work with other agencies and organizations in reducing duplicative services and programs.
- To intervene at the lowest level, as is appropriate, when violations occur so that participants can correct their behavior to the benefit of their families and communities. The sanction reflects the seriousness of the infraction.

### **1.1 Electronic Home Monitoring**

As a sponsor, you will not be financially responsible for the electronic home monitoring (EHM) costs. The Department will cover the cost of EHM, however there must be an independent phone line in the residence. If an independent line cannot be installed, the Department will work with the sponsor for an accommodation, if feasible. It is important to understand that alternate options (cell units) don't always work in all geographical locations.

You are hosting a participant who is transferring from an institution to your home. It is important that you understand the participant is **not on supervision** but is still an **active inmate** within DOC. All of the participant's activities must be pre-approved by the supervising Corrections Specialist (CS) and cannot be changed without prior approval. The participant must remain in the residence at all times unless previously approved to attend school, family activities, treatment, programs and/or employment. Expect the participant to have a curfew while he/she is participating in the program. The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and Revised Code of Washington (RCW) are specific as to what is allowed in partial confinement programs. The participant is accountable for all of their time in the community and must communicate that to the CS. Failure to account for all of their time may result in termination from the program and the participant being sent back to the institution to complete their sentence.

It is often very difficult for participants to live "half in and half out" so understanding restrictions and accepting the limitations are necessary for the participant's successful reentry. You can assist by providing open, honest communication, and support with the participant in operating within the rules and boundaries to assist their transition into the community.

### **1.2 Blackout Period**

Each participant will have a 48-hour blackout period from the time of arrival to their home. During this time, the participant will not be allowed to leave the residence. Due to this restriction, we ask that the sponsor assist the participant with their initial needs (food, linens, clothing, hygiene etc.) during the blackout period. The assigned Reentry Navigator can also assist with locating resources if the sponsor is unable to address these essential needs.

### **1.3 Search Waiver and Background Check**

In order for a home to be approved for GRE EHM, every adult residing in the home will sign and agree to a Search Waiver form. In addition, each adult will also undergo a national background check. It is important to remember that the participant is an active inmate, so they cannot use or possess drugs or alcohol, including marijuana, or possess firearms. While the participant is on EHM, the home must be free of drugs, alcohol, marijuana, and firearms. If the sponsor has a prescription for narcotic medication or marijuana, they must keep it secured so the participant does not have access to the substances. Please review the information provided in the GRE Handbook. It is important that you



important for all adults to be consistent with household rules and consequences of behavior.

- Spend time with the participant discussing how things are going and helping him/her to problem solve. Help the participant figure out what to do but don't do it for him/her.
- If you are asked to participate in any of the participant's programming, we hope you feel comfortable in doing so.

**If the participant is a parent:**

- Identify successful parenting strategies you have been using and share those with the participant, so they can build upon those. Help the participant set up expectations for the children and then help everyone follow them. Don't allow the children to "divide and conquer" the adults in their lives.
- Consider having a weekly family meeting that everyone attends to foster promote open, honest communication and discuss what is working and what isn't. Talk, don't yell, and take a break if things get heated. Consider writing an agreement of expectations for everybody in the household and refer back to it if there are questions/problems.
- Encourage Support the participant to attend and participate in all required classes, treatment programs, employment, etc. Encourage the participant's active involvement in the child/children's education, reading to the child/children, spending time with the child/children, and at family dinner time without distractions of TV or other electronic devices.

**3.1 Expectations**

An integral part of the success of the GRE program is the relationship you establish with the supervising Corrections Specialist (CS). The CS will investigate the transfer plan to your residence, and closely monitor the participant while he/she is participating in the program.

You can expect to see the CS at your residence multiple times a month, and the two of you may also have regular telephone communication. The following are some examples of what and when to communicate with the CS:

**Do:**

- Ask the CS for assistance if you have questions or concerns about the rules and expectations of GRE.
- Call the CS if you identify a potential problem requiring mediation with the participant.
- Immediately notify the CS if you become aware of or suspect infraction behavior. This will help to provide transparency and minimize potential manipulative behavior; the sooner the CS is made aware of an issue, the sooner they can intervene with the participant, and resolve the problem. There are alternative sanctions that do not result in a return to confinement. The sanction equals the severity of the infraction.
- Inform the CS if the participant is not going to the approved location and you are aware that



they are not being honest with the CS.

- Inform the CS if the participant consumes alcohol and/or drugs and you know the participant has not been honest with the CS regarding the use.
- Know that the participant, and only the participant, is responsible for what he/she does or does not do.
- Remember we are a team and want the participant to successfully transition into the community.

#### **Don't:**

- Bring items or people into the residence that violate the participant's GRE rules/conditions and/or put them at risk of violating those rules/conditions.
- Allow visitors into your home who may compromise the participant's ability to remain in the program.
- Expect unnecessary schedule changes and home visits

### **3.2 Reentry Navigator**

Each participant will be assigned a Reentry Navigator (RN) to help with individual transition throughout the progressing phases of Graduated Reentry Program. The assigned Reentry Navigator is available to assist participants in developing an Individual Reentry Plan (IRP), which includes a 72-hour plan for transition. The assigned Reentry Navigator will assist with resource navigation in order for participants to gain access to resources that will assist with identified needs to accomplish stability in the community.

The RN will engage participants in a manner that promotes and encourages a safe space for transparent communication and open dialogue that follows all GRE expectations and values. Each participant will engage in a Reentry Team Meeting (RTM) with the assigned Reentry Navigator and CS in person or by phone before transfer to EHM.

### **3.3 Money/Finances**

You are not financially responsible for the participant and all of their needs for the duration of the time they are on the GRE program. It is acceptable to assist the participant with primary needs such as housing, a phone line, food, and transportation for a short time, but this should not go on indefinitely. As the participant spends time in the program, they will collaborate with the supervising CS in an ongoing plan which may include employment, schooling and/or training. The participant may also be eligible for financial assistance through DSHS. Resources may be available in the community to assist the participant in working on budgeting issues. Keep in mind that the participant cannot enter into any contracts without prior approval from the CS, and the CS may view banking accounts, receipts, etc. to ensure funds are properly spent. The CS will also review the participant's budget plan to verify if the participant is on track with their spending and savings plan. If you have any concerns with how the participant is managing their finances, to include unnecessary



purchases and/or failure to pay financial obligations, please communicate this information to the CS as soon as possible. Once the participant has a job, they will be expected to pay 10% of their earnings towards their legal financial obligations.

### **3.4 Access to the Community**

The participant will be expected to email their weekly outing schedule (access to the community) to their CS each week for approval. This will require access to internet through a computer, cell phone, I pad etc. If you are not able to provide internet access in your home, work with the participant and assigned CS to utilize Wi-Fi and/or computer access in the community (i.e. local library) to complete their schedule each week. It is also important for the participant to access computer/internet for job searching, resume building and locating resources.

### **3.5 Transportation**

You are not required to provide transportation for the participant. Prior to the participant's transfer to your residence, begin a discussion regarding how they will get to and from necessary appointments, programming requirements, and activities, etc. Travel is approved from point to point; any additional stops must have prior approval. Please be honest about what you can and cannot provide so the CS can assist the participant with finding appropriate transportation. Any individual that provides transportation for a participant must be approved by the assigned CS and will undergo a background check.

Participants may be allowed to drive while on the program, if they provide necessary documentation and receive prior authorization from the CS and Program Administrator. If you have questions about this, please discuss them with the CS.

### **4.1 Medical, Dental and Mental Health**

While participating in the GRE Program, the participant will have access to medical, dental, and mental health services in the community, and they are responsible for payment of all costs associated with this care. The participant may be eligible for a medical coupon through DSHS, but this is not guaranteed. The participant is also eligible for healthcare through Washington State Medicaid (Apple Health Care). If you have concerns about physical and/or mental health issues or medications for the participant, please discuss these with the CS. The CS may have insight into available resources in the community. Any/all trips to a medical provider needs to be documented by the participant on their daily itinerary log and verified with documentation.

### **5.1 Emergencies**

For the purpose of Graduated Reentry, an emergency is defined as: **a sudden, urgent, usually unexpected occurrence or occasion requiring immediate action.**

Graduated Reentry participants are required to return to his/her approved residence at the designated time. In an emergency, a telephone call must be made to a GRE Supervisor assigned as the Duty Officer (DO) for the week. The participant must inform the DO that they are late, state the reason for the time extension, and provide details surrounding the emergency. The assigned DO will



research the emergency to ensure that the participant did not violate any conditions as it relates to Graduated Reentry. The participant must also contact their assigned CS to inform them of the emergency as well.

Again, the participant must provide verification of their whereabouts to their assigned CS for all times out in the community. Being late returning home because they did not plan time well is not considered an emergency.

An example of an emergency and verification would be:

The participant or their child had an accident and were transported to the emergency room. The verification could be the discharge papers from the hospital's emergency room doctor, listing the doctor's name and a contact number for the CS to verify the emergency.

*Please remember that lack of planning does not constitute an emergency on our part.*

## 6.1 Employment Services

Part of the participant's daily schedule may be to participate in an employment orientation or job search. During the first 30 days of this program, they will have employment restriction that will be discussed with them by their CS.

During their daily job search, participants will be required to complete the Job Search Log and to include names of employers contacted, when the employer was contacted, and the results of the contact. Once a job is offered, the participant must immediately relay this information to the CS. The information must include:

- Supervisor's name
- Work site address
- Hours of work
- Contact information
- Type of employment



The CS will verify the information prior to the participant beginning any employment. The employer must comply with all state and federal laws, provide insurance coverage through Labor and Industries or a private company, and comply with Employment Security rules and all Federal Tax Requirements. Once approved by the CS, schedule change requests must be submitted to modify the electronic home monitoring hours as needed. The CS will verify with the employer that the participant has informed the employer of their GRE status, and employment prohibitions and must be agreeable to the CS contacting and appearing at the work site.

## **Job Restrictions**

Employment may be a part of the participant's programming while on the GRE Program, but it will not be allowed to replace other programming requirements that are important to the participant's transition to the community. There are some restrictions to employment which are listed in the GRE handbook. In addition, the participant finding employment may necessitate changes in childcare needs (if applicable), daily routines in the family, etc. This requires ongoing conversations between you and the participant to discuss these changes. The CS can assist the family in planning for and negotiating these changes.

## **7.1 Disciplinary**

Disciplinary procedures for the GRE Program are similar to those used in work release, DOC policy 460.135. The GRE handbook outlines behavioral expectations for inmates in the community and consequences for infractions, which range from verbal warnings up to and including termination and possible loss of good conduct time.

## **Escape**

As previously mentioned, the participant must get prior approval from the CS before leaving the residence and must return at the approved time. Failure to return at the designated time will be considered an escape, and the CS will issue an escape warrant. It is the participant's responsibility to be aware of their own schedule, when they need to return to the residence, and to communicate that to family and friends. Should you notice the participant has not returned to the residence at the designated time, please contact the CS immediately.

## **8.1 Resolution Requests**

A Resolution Request is a written, formalized complaint. The Resolution Program provides the participant with a way to have complaints heard and resolved in a formal manner. Before filing a Resolution Request, the participant should try to resolve their issues at the lowest level possible. Resolution Requests are handled consistent with Department of Corrections Policy 550.100 Resolution Program. A Resolution Request form can be obtained from the CS or the local DOC Field Office.

Complete the Resolution Request form and mail it to:

Department of Corrections  
Resolution Program Manager  
PO Box 41129  
Olympia, WA 98504

## 9.1 FAQs

**Q: If I want to sponsor a GRE participant at my house, what is the expectation from me?**

A: It is primarily the participant's responsibility to be compliant with GRE conditions. You can help the participant with their successful reentry by assisting with their schedules, providing transportation to appointments, communicating with the participant's case manager and/or just being a supportive person in the individual's life. The Department strives to build a partnership with sponsors, individuals, and their support network so that we can work together to achieve the same outcome; that individuals successfully release so they can remain with their loved ones in the community. We ask for open communication, support, and collaboration.

**Q: If a participant lives at my house while on EHM, what is and is not allowed in the home?**

A: In order for a home to be approved, the following conditions apply:

- Firearms are prohibited in the residence. This includes those stored in a locked safe.
- Alcohol and drugs are prohibited inside the residence. Prescription narcotic medications are expected to be secured and not accessible to the participant.
- There may be additional restrictions based on an individual's risk of harm and/or their conditions of sentence.

**Q: I have a criminal record. Does that mean I can't sponsor a GRE participant at my home?**

A: A criminal record in and of itself does not exclude anyone from sponsoring individuals. There are several factors that may influence the decision, such as active warrants or pending prosecution, protection orders, crime partners, and length of time from last criminal behavior. The Specialist is responsible to weigh the benefits and risk associated with each situation. All cases recommending denial will be staffed with a supervisor.

**Q: I have medical marijuana in the home, does that mean a GRE participant can't live with me?**

A: Any prescription marijuana and/or prescription narcotic medications must be secured away (i.e. locked box/safe) where the participant does not have access to it. Remember that the participant is an active inmate, so any prohibited items in the home that are accessible to the participant could put them in jeopardy of an infraction.

**Q: How much does Electronic Home Monitoring Cost?**

A: There is no cost to an individual or their family to participate in EHM, however, in order to be monitored at the residence, an independent operable phone line that must be maintained. If you are unable to have a phone line installed, the Department will attempt to accommodate with a cellular unit when feasible. Please note that cellular units do not work in all geographical locations.

**Q: If my address is approved, when will the participant transfer home?**

A: The soonest a participant can transfer to EHM is 5 months prior to their release (Track 1), or 18 months prior to their release (Track 2). In addition, transfer dates are based on caseload capacity, as well as any notifications that are required for the participant transferring to the community. Please encourage the participant to be patient and remain infraction free. As soon as a transfer date is scheduled, the assigned CS will contact you.