



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1110

September 13, 2021

TO: All DOC Prisons Staff

FROM: Michael Obenland, Assistant Secretary [Signature on file]
Prisons Division

SUBJECT: Elimination of Disciplinary Segregation

During the past several years the Prisons Division has been reviewing the Incarcerated Individual Disciplinary Process to identify areas that can be improved. The utilization of Disciplinary Segregation (D.Seg) as a sanction has been identified as an area the agency can make improvements. D. Seg has been a topic of conversation throughout the country and within Washington State as not being an effective sanction or deterrent to negative behavior. Disciplinary Hearing data indicates D.Seg is given as a sanction more often for non-violent incidents when compared to violent incidents. Additionally, in most cases “credit for time served” occurs as the individual was housed in Administrative Segregation for a longer period than the sanction length.

Information collected from September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020 indicates:

- Approximately 2,500 D.Seg sanctions were given during the year.
- 57% of D.Seg sanctions given were for *non-violent* infractions (1,441 of 2,525).
- The average length of time given was 11 days for non-violent infractions and 16 days for violent ones.
- The number of actual D.Seg days individuals served *after* a disciplinary hearing was very small.
- Most individuals who were given D.Seg had already been in Administrative Segregation, were given credit for time served and returned to general population.

Additional FAQ information can be found at [Elimination of Disciplinary Segregation FAQ.docx](#)

The Disciplinary process is intended to hold individuals accountable; address behavior utilizing meaningful sanctions and ultimately change negative behavior. Many facilities are aware of the shortcomings tied to D.Seg and as a result it is rarely issued today as a sanction.

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To ensure consistency within our facilities and assist with the issuance of more effective sanctions, D.Seg will no longer be available as a disciplinary sanction starting September 16, 2021. Hearings Officers have been engaged and are aware.

The sanction will no longer be available on the prisons sanctioning grid. Initial Serious Infraction Report 17-076 includes a section that encourages staff to include a recommended sanction when a serious infraction is written. Staff are encouraged to complete this section with an appropriate/meaningful sanction recommendation.

Additionally, there are other avenues we as an agency can utilize for those most violent incidents individuals sometimes engage in through the classification process. If necessary, individuals can be referred for a custody demotion through Maximum (MAX) custody Committee. If you have questions moving forward, please contact Prisons Disciplinary Program Manager Michael Hathaway.

Thank you for your continued commitment and dedication to the work we do.