

Department of Corrections

Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Strategic Action Plan

CREATING A FAIR AND JUST ENVIRONMENT
FOR ALL TO SUCCEED

March 31, 2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

What We Stand For	4
The People of DOC	6
Where We Are Going	9
DOC's Culture of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, & Respect	10
PEAR Advisory Board & Other Community Partners	11
Investment #1: Infractions & Discipline	12
Investment #2: Classification & Holds	13
Investment #3: Workforce Equity	14

A MESSAGE FROM OUR SECRETARY

On behalf of the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC), I am proud to present our Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Strategic Action Plan.

This PEAR plan, created in response to former Gov. Jay Inslee's [Executive Order 22-04](#), will advance equity and justice for everyone across our state, disrupting longstanding disparities. It allows us to bridge opportunity gaps for both our staff and those in our care and custody.

Equity, diversity, inclusion and respect are crucial to our mission of positively changing lives by creating a fair and just environment for all to succeed. A continued focus on equity helps us create a safer and more humane corrections system to work in and for incarcerated individuals to live in, whether that is in prison, a reentry center, or on supervision.

Since initially launching our PEAR Strategic Action Plan in 2022, DOC has made strides toward reaching our PEAR goals, but we recognize that this work is ongoing. Some accomplishments include:

- Released our first annual PEAR Performance Report, highlighting the work done to ensure we provide a safe and equitable environment.
- Established the Secretary's PEAR Advisory Board, made up of agency leaders, tribal representation, labor and key community partners to:
 - o Monitor the progress DOC teams are making on PEAR service line investments.
 - o Provide feedback and help prioritize future service line investments.
 - o Review proposed updates to the PEAR Strategic Action Plan and future progress reports submitted to the Office of Equity.
- Created several PEAR teams across staff at all levels, making significant investments in:
 - o Evaluating equity and inclusion in staff representation.
 - o Evaluating equity and fairness in the classification of incarcerated individuals and the use of holds.
 - o Evaluating equity and fairness in administering infractions and sanctions of incarcerated individuals.

DOC recognizes that those closest to the issues are closest to the solutions, so their voice is critical to our success in implementing a PEAR plan that reduces disparities. We will continue working directly with staff, stakeholders, and incarcerated individuals to accomplish our PEAR goals.

Thank you for taking the time to review our PEAR Strategic Action Plan. We're excited about what's to come as we continue to further our PEAR efforts at the DOC.

Sincerely,

TIM LANG

Secretary



OUR MISSION, VISION, & COMMITMENT



MISSION

Improving public safety by positively changing lives.



VISION

Working together for safer communities.



OUR COMMITMENT

To operate a safe and humane corrections system and partner with others to transform lives for a better Washington.

OUR VALUES



CULTIVATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF INTEGRITY & TRUST

Corrections values partnership and trust. We foster openness and support courageous conversations. We are committed to doing what we say we are going to do by being accountable and taking personal ownership in our actions.



RESPECTFUL & INCLUSIVE INTERACTIONS

Corrections appreciates and values individuals by promoting an inclusive and diverse environment, which encourages safety. We respect, value, and listen to the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of our stakeholders and consider the impact on those we serve as well as each other.



PEOPLE'S SAFETY

Corrections believes in creating an environment that values physical, mental, and emotional security and well-being. We honor those who advance safety for all.



POSITIVITY IN WORDS & ACTIONS

At Corrections, we assume positive intentions and believe there is a shared desire for the best outcome. We consistently demonstrate positive behavior and always put forth our best effort.



SUPPORTING PEOPLE'S SUCCESS

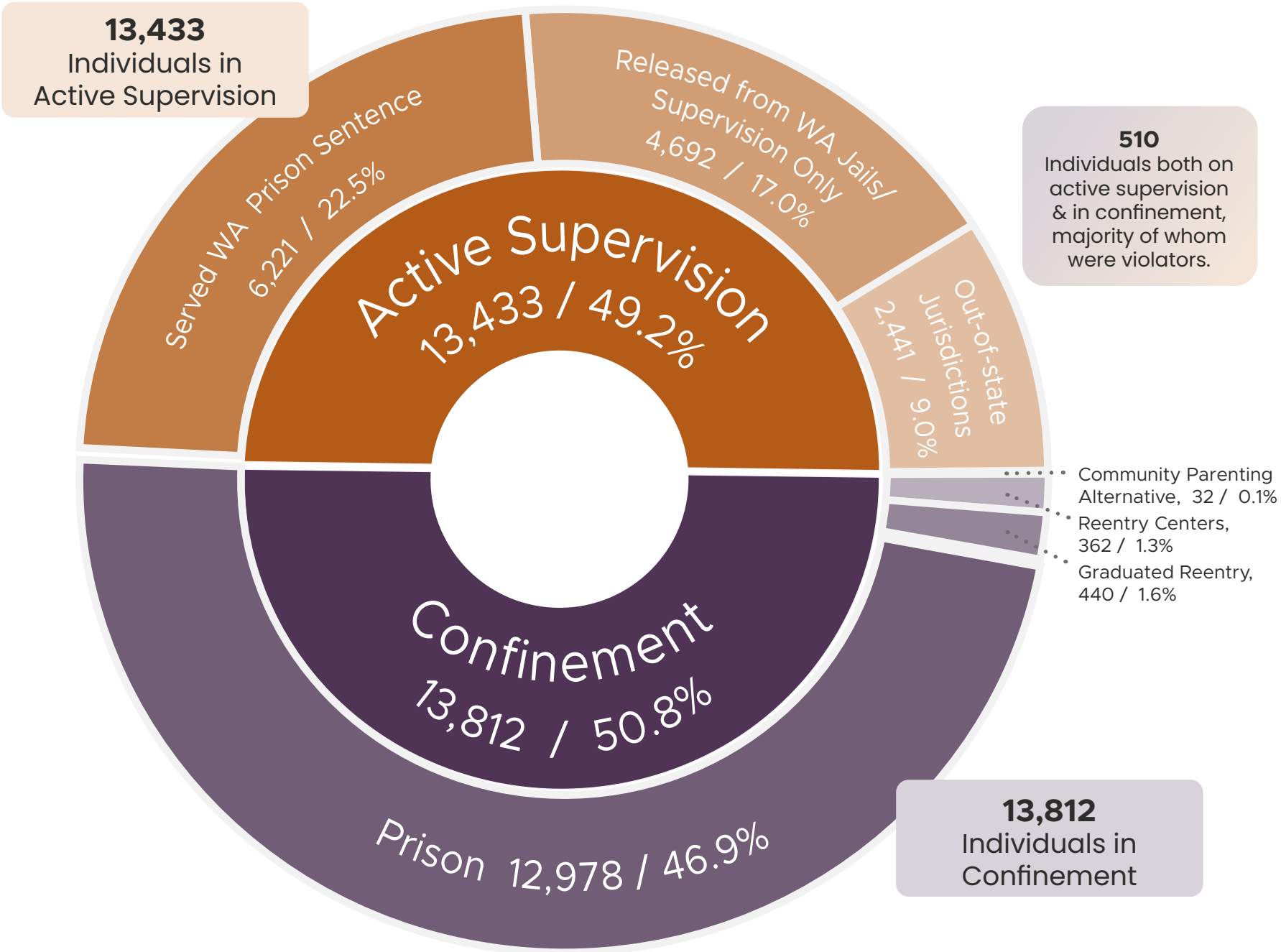
Corrections is committed to our community - understanding individuals, instilling hope, embracing change, and providing opportunities.



WHO WE SUPPORT

DOC works to make communities safer by positively transforming lives. Each year, more than 25,000 individuals are in some level of custody or under the jurisdiction of the department. The goal is to help them become better citizens, neighbors, engaged family members, and potential pillars of the community upon release.

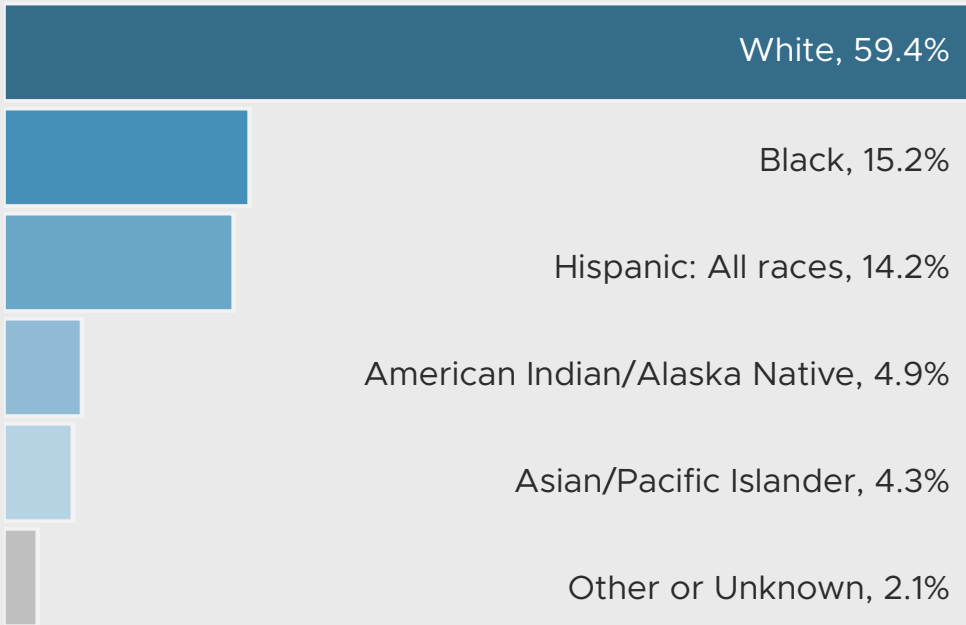
POPULATION



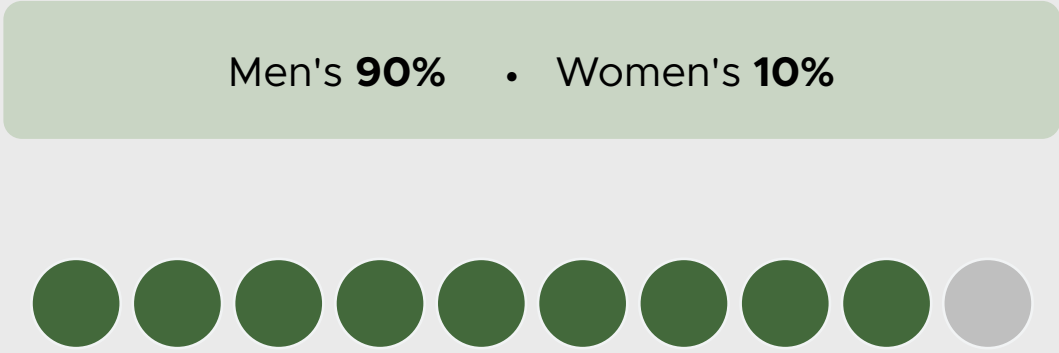
Confinement includes Partial Confinement. Violators, defined by RCW 72.09.10, are included in the active supervision caseload to avoid double-counting.

RACE

[View our Fact Card Data Dashboard >>](#)



GENDER



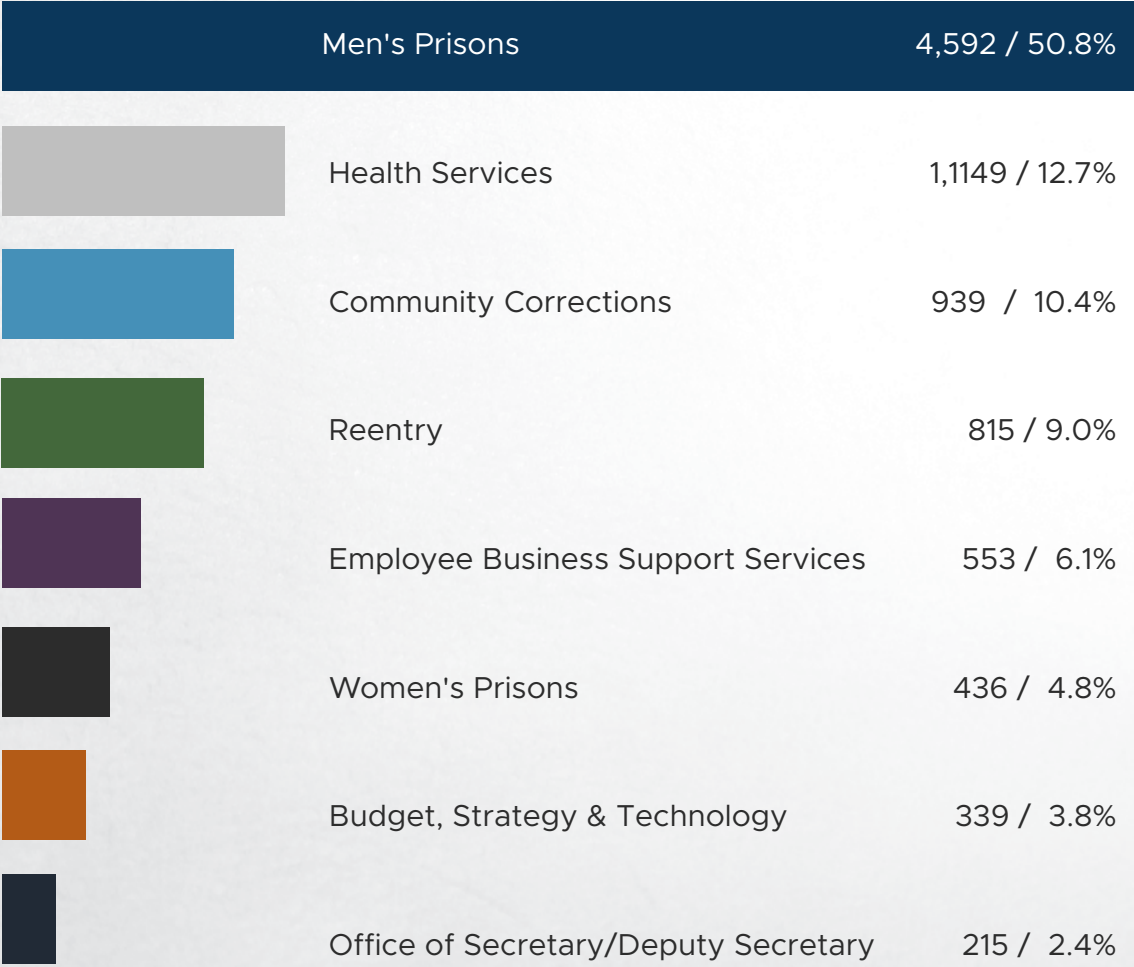
WORKING TO TRANSFORM LIVES

As the second-largest human services agency in the state of Washington, DOC employs around 9,000 individuals who are the driving force behind our commitment to improving public safety by positively transforming lives. Each division's work has a distinct and refined focus that contributes to changing lives for the better every day.

WE SUPPORT THE DEPARTMENT BY:

NUMBER OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED

9,038 Department of Corrections Employees



Source: DOC Human Resources Management System



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

Our strategic priorities guide our department’s direction and decision-making toward our vision of working together for safer communities. These key themes ensure our focus remains clear and effective while our strategic goals outline what we aim to achieve and address the question, “What do we need to do to accomplish our mission?”



DOC'S CULTURE OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, & RESPECT

At DOC, we acknowledge our duty to Washington's communities, justice-involved individuals, and staff in eradicating racism and inequities. We recognize that our department is part of a system that has disproportionately affected marginalized populations through its policies and practices.

Our commitment lies in comprehending the impact each of us has in our daily work and the roles we play in fostering a fair and equitable culture. We can achieve this goal by integrating equity, diversity, inclusion, and respect (EDIR) into all aspects of corrections.

Some ways we are doing this include:

- Recognition within DOC's stated values
- Priority in DOC's Strategic Plan
- Implementing DOC's Pro-Equity Anti-Racism Strategic Action Plan
- Dedicated, full time staff working on EDIR
- Diversity Advisory Councils at each prison, community corrections section, Correctional Industries and department headquarters actively foster equity and inclusion in their respective areas; improving relations for staff, incarcerated/supervised Individuals, and the surrounding communities
- Support staff in joining the Washington State Business Resource Groups and engaging in equity-related learning opportunities
- Department policy, programs, and procedures



PEAR ADVISORY BOARD & OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS

DOC recognizes that anti-racism is rooted in “action” and is committed to engaging in efforts to eliminate disparities at the individual, institutional, and structural levels. This includes actively changing the policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate disparities.

A team of 70 agency, labor, and community stakeholders was formed in 2022 to develop DOC’s initial Equity Impact Review that acted as the foundation of our initial PEAR Strategic Action Plan.

The Equity Impact Review process blended initial data findings with internal subject matter expert and external stakeholder feedback that informed agency planning, decision-making, and completion of our first PEAR Strategic Action Plan on September 1st, 2022.

The team reviewed and considered many potential investment areas, three were ultimately chosen that we felt had the opportunity to reduce disparities and improve equitable outcomes for those under our care and custody.

In the Summer of 2023, DOC formed the Secretary’s PEAR Advisory Board made up of agency leaders and key community stakeholders. The Secretary’s PEAR Advisory Board meets twice annually and will play the vital role of:

- Monitoring the progress that DOC teams are making on the PEAR service line investments.
- Providing feedback and helping prioritize future service line investments.
- Reviewing proposed updates to our PEAR Strategic Action Plan and future progress reports submitted to the Office of Equity.

DOC recognizes that those closest to the issues are closest to the solutions, so their voice is critical to our success in implementing a PEAR Strategic Action Plan that reduces disparities and achieve our other desired outcomes.

INVESTMENT AREA # 1

INFRACTIONS & DISCIPLINE

This investment area focuses on what appears to be an overuse of sanctions toward Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic incarcerated men, as well as women, in DOC’s care and custody. The investment will facilitate the agency’s need to better understand the impact of our actions through data collection, analysis, and ongoing monitoring, as well as the review of policies, practices, and procedures related to the discipline of people who are incarcerated. This investment will build a framework for hearing from those impacted by our work; a review and possible rewrite of the DOC’s policies and procedures; and support for changing practices concerning Behavior Observation Entries and onsite adjustments, general and serious infractions, disciplinary hearings, and the DOC appeals process.

Data from March 2018 – February 2023 was compiled on the rate of infractions issued to incarcerated individuals of color versus White, non-Hispanic incarcerated individuals for DOC’s 11 prisons. The initial analysis identified a subset of general and serious conduct violations showing that incarcerated individuals of color were overrepresented in prison infractions and disciplinary hearings.

DOC is actively implementing a broad range of comprehensive corrective action that was informed by sub-group research, interviews with subject matter experts across the agency, and focus groups with both staff and incarcerated individuals at prisons. These areas include the development of new customized implicit bias training

for custody staff, improvements to supervisor training, expanding programming to fill voids, improving orientation and language interpreter processes, and modernizing sanction options.

Once fully implemented, the following three outcome measures will be used to determine the effectiveness of the corrective action above:

- **OUTCOME MEASURE 1:** The rate of general infractions issued to Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic people, as well as women, who are incarcerated, compared with those issued to incarcerated people of other racial categories and men, respectively.
- **OUTCOME MEASURE 2:** The rate of serious infractions issued to Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic people, as well as women, who are incarcerated, compared with those issued to incarcerated people of other racial categories and men, respectively.
- **OUTCOME MEASURE 3:** The rate of infractions issued to Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic people, as well as women, who are incarcerated, within the first 90 days after transferring from one facility to another, compared with those issued to people of other racial categories and men, respectively.

Data will be compiled and analyzed for the remaining outcome measures in the future:

- **OUTCOME MEASURE 4:** Collect and examine the data concerning the rate of hearing decisions resulting in sanctions, by infraction number, for Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic people, as well as women, who are incarcerated, compared with sanctions levied against incarcerated people of other racial categories and men, respectively.
- **OUTCOME MEASURE 5:** Collect and examine the data concerning the rate of hearing appeals that were filed by Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic people, as well as women, who are incarcerated, compared with those filed by incarcerated people of other racial categories and men, respectively.
- **OUTCOME MEASURE 6:** Collect and examine the data related to the rate of hearing appeal decisions, by type, for Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic people, as well as women, who are incarcerated, compared with the appeal decisions for incarcerated people of other racial categories and men, respectively.

DOC will also expand the analysis to include infractions and sanctions issued to those in a partial confinement setting, and individuals under community supervision.

INVESTMENT AREA # 2

CLASSIFICATION & HOLDS

Our Classification investment area focuses on what may be an over classification of Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic men, as well as women, in the agency’s care and custody. DOC conducts a comprehensive initial review and classification of all individuals entering prison at our reception centers. Upon the completion of the initial reception center screening a file material review is conducted in search of the following: current crime, history of violence (prior conviction or institutional misconduct), detainers, escape history and age. The combination of this work results in the Initial Custody Designation and the incarcerated individual is transferred to the appropriate facility for their custody level and needs. The primary goal of classification is to minimize community and institutional risks, while providing opportunities for the productivity and development of the individual and assisting them in understanding how their conduct and program efforts affect their custody designation and facility placement.

This investment will facilitate the agency’s need to better understand the impact of our actions through data collection, analysis, and ongoing monitoring, as well as a review of policies, practices, and procedures related to the classification of people who are incarcerated. This investment will establish a system for gathering feedback from those impacted by

our work; a review and possible rewrite of the DOC’s policies and procedures; and support for changing practices around the classification of incarcerated individuals.

Data from 2015-2022 was compiled and initial analysis conducted for the first three outcome measures presented in DOC’s strategic action plan:

- **OUTCOME MEASURE 1:** Collect and analyze the data regarding the Initial Custody Designation for people who are incarcerated, by race and gender, over a predetermined period.
- **OUTCOME MEASURE 2:** Collect and analyze the average and median length of time that people who are incarcerated spend in each custody level, by race and gender, over a predetermined period.
- **OUTCOME MEASURE 3:** Collect and analyze the average and median number of times that people who are incarcerated change custody levels, by race and gender, over a predetermined period.

The initial findings show that incarcerated individuals of color are generally assigned higher initial custody levels than their White, non-Hispanic counterparts on their Initial Custody Designation.

DOC’s classification models are from the late 1980s and are now perceived to over-classify certain individuals. Work began in 2022 with a nationally recognized expert to build a new set of gender specific classification models that will provide the greatest amount of predictability with the least amount of bias as possible. Implementation of the new classification model and necessary updates have been delayed because of limited IT resources.

Our Classification workgroup is also implementing corrective action for holds, which also impacts where individuals can be housed and through what means they can reach less-restrictive custody levels. Initial research for this investment area identified many medical, mental health, education/programming, and infraction holds that keep individuals from transferring to lower levels of custody, including partial confinement options such as Reentry Centers, and participating in the Graduated Reentry program.

The goals of our corrective action proposals are to:

- Reduce the volume and duration of prison holds.
- Develop agency guidelines to establish clearer and more consistent hold processes.
- Improve the usability of the hold features

in OMNI, the application that contains information about each incarcerated and supervised individual that has been under DOC’s jurisdiction.

- Improve hold monitoring practices in all agency divisions.
- Improve intradepartmental communication and collaboration on holds.

Additionally, it was discovered that nearly 1,800 individuals currently incarcerated at DOC are unable to go to the minimum-security camp setting due to dental issues. DOC moved forward with corrective action by purchasing a two dental chair mobile dental unit and is now funded to provide dental care at our three minimum-security camps. The clinic is essentially ready to serve patients, and we expect to begin service as soon as we identify a dentist to work in the clinic.

These combined corrective actions should improve the timeliness of incarcerated individual transfers to lower levels of custody, improving access to program opportunities. Staff will benefit from hold reference resources, improved data in OMNI on holds and improved inter-divisional communication. Administrators will have access to aggregate and individualized metrics on a dashboard that will assist in making data driven decisions.

INVESTMENT AREA # 3

WORKFORCE EQUITY

Our Workforce Equity investment focuses on the underrepresentation of certain racial and gender groups in various roles across the agency. This investment will facilitate the agency's need to better understand the impact of our actions through data collection, analysis, and ongoing monitoring, as well as the review of policies and practices related to the recruitment and retention of employees. This investment will provide the agency the opportunity to expand on current efforts to create a shared space for staff at all levels to learn and receive support and resources; ultimately leading to a more inclusive culture and a greater sense of belonging. This investment area falls into two primary areas:

- **WORKFORCE ENLIGHTENMENT** - create shared spaces for employees to learn, find support, and heal; maintain a repository of resources for learning about/unlearning racism and other types of oppression.
- **EQUITY IN RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION** - reduce disparities and opportunity gaps for all in the recruitment and retention processes at DOC.

The following outcome measures guided the initial workgroup efforts on our workforce equity investment:

- **OUTCOME MEASURE 1:** The number of Diversity Advisory Councils that are established across the agency.
- **OUTCOME MEASURE 2:** Publish a directory of resources for learning about/unlearning racism and other types of oppression.

We conducted in-person listening sessions at 23 community correction centers, ten prison facilities, and three reentry centers. These listening sessions were instrumental in the eventual design of a new Equity Diversity Inclusion and Respect (EDIR) Resource Library, as they provided staff insight into their current understanding and needs of EDIR and engagement with EDIR activities across the department. Our workgroup used this input to

inform the resources used in a new comprehensive repository of resources for learning/unlearning racism and other types of oppression that is now available to all agency staff.

As part of our Workforce Equity investment, DOC has also taken considerable steps to increase support for and strengthen our Diversity Advisory Councils (DACs) by restructuring after meeting with employees across the state. DACs, together with the applicable appointing authority, support our diversity efforts throughout the year by sponsoring educational diversity events/activities that foster diversity and inclusion in the workplace. DACs are located at each prison, each community corrections section to include reentry centers, department headquarters and Correctional Industries headquarters.

DOC also hosted a large, in-person DAC Conference with representation from all DAC locations statewide. We also have all DACs connected to one of the agency's EDIR staff and are updating DOC's EDIR policy to include the DACs.

With our Equity in Recruitment and Retention focus, our initial focus will be analyzing hiring and promotion practices and developing corrective actions to address current disparities. Their initial focus will be on the recruitment process from the lens of the PEAR goal to reduce disparities and opportunity gaps in the recruitment process. The following initial outcome measures continue to guide the workgroup efforts:

- **OUTCOME MEASURE 3:** Collect and examine disaggregated data concerning the racial and gender makeup of staff currently employed with the DOC.
- **OUTCOME MEASURE 4:** Collect and examine disaggregated data concerning the racial and gender makeup of staff at each stage of the hiring process over a specified period.