

2018 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Ready for Notebook

Tab	Action	Option	Version
402	2	A	1

Budget Action Title: Report by the Executive on reentry recommendations

Ongoing: No

Primary Sponsor: Herbold, Lisa

Councilmembers:

Staff Analyst: Asha Venkataraman

Date		Total	SB	KH	LG	BH	LH	RJ	DJ	MO	KS
	Yes										
	No										
	Abstain										
	Absent										

Statement of Legislative Intent:

This Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) requests a report from the Executive addressing preliminary recommendations from the Reentry Task Force, convened by the Seattle Office for Civil Rights. Specifically, this SLI requests reports from:

- (1) The City Budget Office (CBO) to explore how the City's contracts with King County and Snohomish County to provide jail services for Seattle Municipal Court (SMC) defendants facing misdemeanor charges can be managed by (A) those with lived experience of incarceration and/or with experience serving vulnerable populations; or (B) a department with experience overseeing contracts serving vulnerable populations;
- (2) The Office of Economic Development (OED) and the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), analyzing how the City can increase employment opportunities within the City, for non-City employers, and through awarding of City contracts; and
- (3) The appropriate departments, as identified and coordinated by the Mayor's Office, regarding how to support currently and formerly incarcerated individuals (A) with reentry navigators and (B) from indigenous communities.

Jail Contracts

Management of the jail contracts by CBO, an office whose responsibilities primarily center around fiscal policy, financial planning, and budget-related functions, can give the appearance that the City is prioritizing

financial efficiencies over ensuring that individuals that the City incarcerates are given sufficient support. Jails and prisons house vulnerable populations: In Washington State, of those individuals booked into jail, 58 percent have mental health needs and 61 percent have substance abuse needs. At SMC, of those booked into jail, 90 percent are considered indigent, and an estimated 50 percent are homeless. In addition, there are significant differences between the Snohomish County Jail and the King County Jail that can have an impact on successful reentry.

The report should analyze how other departments or groups could manage these contracts, considering the following:

- What is the scope of services the contracts currently fund?
- Are there qualitative outcomes associated with the contracts? If so, who is qualified to evaluate that these outcomes are being met?
- Are the contracts subject to results based accountability measures?
- How has the City used these contracts to ensure humane treatment of incarcerated individuals and that basic human needs are met?
- What characteristics of a department or group does CBO deem essential to be able to manage jail contracts?
- What are the current costs associated with contract administration?

The report should also identify any contracts that the City holds, or has held, which are managed by a body other than an office or department (such as a commission), the reason for the decision that a non-departmental entity should hold the contract, and the scope and outcomes of those contracts.

Employment Opportunities

The report should:

- Analyze how to increase the City's workforce to include a greater percentage of formerly incarcerated individuals through a formalized career pathway to professional, mid-income positions;
- Explore how City departments can work with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and community-led organizations to support active recruitment of individuals exiting DOC and jails to the City;
- Consider how the City can incentivize the private sector to hire formerly incarcerated individuals; and
- Examine granting contracts to formerly incarcerated individuals through all relevant City Request for Proposal processes.

Reentry Navigators

Individuals returning from incarceration and living with criminal history face significant barriers to accessing housing, employment, education, healthcare, and reconnecting to their communities. The earlier that incarcerated individuals can start planning their reentry back into their community, the more successful they can be in regaining stability. The presence of "Reentry Navigators," individuals providing assistance in

navigating multiple complex, interrelated systems to individuals both currently incarcerated and preparing for release and individuals already released from incarceration can be crucial to reentry success. In addition, navigation is most successful when the navigators share similar backgrounds with the individuals they are supporting and are system-engaged. Currently, organizations that often provide this type of navigation service are not owned by or do not employ formerly incarcerated individuals.

The Executive's report should:

- Of the organizations or government programs providing reentry services in any jail or prison where currently or formerly incarcerated individuals are coming to King County or Seattle upon release, including services provided at Snohomish County jail, identify those that are owned by or employ formerly incarcerated individuals to provide reentry navigation services;
- Provide an analysis of how many reentry navigators would be necessary to serve all the currently or formerly incarcerated individuals who are coming to King County or Seattle upon release;
- Provide the total cost and cost per navigator of providing services to all the currently or formerly incarcerated individuals who are coming to King County or Seattle upon release.

Indigenous Communities

The Native American population in prisons and jails is growing increasingly disproportionate to their presence in the general population. Native Americans are incarcerated at a rate 38 percent higher than the national average rate of incarceration. In Seattle, Native Americans/Alaska Natives are seven times more likely to experience homelessness, more than any other racial group. In many conversations regarding race and the criminal justice, Native Americans are often left out. Targeted strategies to address the disproportionality are needed.

The Executive's report should include the items listed below, with the involvement of persons with lived experience of incarceration and who are part of the Native American community:

- Develop strategies to ensure that that City investments in reentry programs will be culturally appropriate and effective for the Native American populations;
- Identify organizations or government programs that are rooted in the Native American community that are providing or qualified to provide reentry services to the Native American population; and
- What percentage of the City's future investment in reentry programs should be targeted towards organizations rooted in the Native American community to ensure Native Americans who are currently or formerly incarcerated and coming to King County or Seattle upon release are adequately supported in reentry.

Responsible Council Committee(s): Civil Rights, Utilities, Economic Development and Arts Committee

Date Due to Council: June 30, 2018

