

# Forensic Navigators

The Department of Social and Health Services' Office of Forensic Mental Health Services Forensic Navigator program seeks to divert forensically-involved criminal defendants out of jails and inpatient treatment settings, and into community-based treatment settings. Program participants will each have a Navigator assigned to them at the time a competency evaluation is ordered by a court. For those participants deemed not competent to stand trial, and suitable for outpatient competency restoration, courts may elect to grant conditional release in order for those individuals to receive services in the community.

Navigators will work with participants to ensure that they comply with their conditions of release, attend outpatient competency restoration classes, and adhere to prescribed medications. Navigators will connect participants to additional supportive services in the community, such as housing, mental health and substance use treatment, supported employment services, and community-based case management services.

## Eligibility Requirements

Individuals ordered to receive a competency evaluation are assigned a Forensic Navigator at the time the evaluation is ordered. A court may not issue an order appointing a forensic navigator unless the department certifies that there is adequate forensic navigator capacity to provide these services at the time the order is issued.

While there are no qualifying/disqualifying charges, the Forensic Navigator program is designed for those who are determined to be suitable for community-based treatment and support. A screening process is employed in order to ensure that only those who are suitable for receiving community-based treatment and support are offered Forensic Navigator services.

**Authority** see [RCW 10.77.074](#).

## Partners

The following partners are key to program success:

- Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA)
- Outpatient Competency Restoration Program providers (via contract with HCA)
- Courts\*
- City and County jails\*
- Community-based service providers\*
- Law enforcement agencies\*

\*Subject to phased implementation

### For More Information:

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## About the Trueblood settlement of contempt

The Trueblood v. DSHS lawsuit challenged unconstitutional delays in competency evaluation and restoration services for individuals detained in city and county jails. The Trueblood settlement agreement establishes a plan for providing services to persons involved in the criminal court system and for providing treatment to people when needed so they are less likely to become involved in the criminal court system.

The Trueblood settlement agreement includes a plan for phasing in programs and services:

- Pierce, Southwest and Spokane regions (July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021)
- King region (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023)
- To be determined (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025)

[www.dshs.wa.gov/bha/trueblood-et-al-v-washington-state-dshs](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/bha/trueblood-et-al-v-washington-state-dshs)

