

Milestones from the first year of Trueblood implementation

June 26, 2020

Three state agencies have partnered with law enforcement, community groups and a variety of other stakeholders to implement a federal judge's order in the Trueblood vs. DSHS lawsuit and [Contempt Settlement Agreement](#).

June 30, 2020, marks the end of the first year of implementation in the multi-phase plan. Below is a list of milestones that the Department of Social and Health Services, the [Health Care Authority](#) and the [Criminal Justice Training Commission](#) have helped make a reality to transform the lives of Washington residents.

Milestones include:

- [Senate Bill 5444](#) became law in July 2019. This law provides for timely competency evaluations and restoration services to people experiencing behavioral health disorders in the criminal justice system and authorized the creation of the forensic navigator and outpatient competency restoration programs.
- 13 forensic evaluators were hired across the state to ensure that evaluations are done in a timely manner and that wait times are reduced.
- Nine forensic navigators were hired and will begin working with clients beginning July 1. Forensic navigators serve as officers of the court, liaise with community service providers, and perform quasi-case management duties to ensure clients are supported as they move through the forensic system.
- The state has accrued \$66,161,500 in court fines related to the lawsuit, but that money has been held in abeyance while the state works to successfully implement the Trueblood programs. Those fines will not have to be paid if the state continues to be in compliance with the court order.
- Renovation is underway to convert two wards at Western State Hospital and add two wards at Eastern State Hospital, which will result in over 90 additional forensic beds. These beds — 25 of which have opened at Eastern State Hospital — will make a significant difference in reducing the number of forensic patients waiting to get into the state psychiatric hospitals. Eastern is scheduled to open 25 more beds by the end of the summer, while Western State Hospital will have 40 beds ready in the fall.
- Although not a requirement of the settlement agreement, DSHS opened the Fort Steilacoom Competency Restoration Program, which brought 30 more beds online for competency restoration services. The program is located in the west wing of Building 27 at Western State Hospital. The capital construction costs for renovation of the facility were paid for through the Federal Court and the renovation was spearheaded by members of the Trueblood Court Monitor Team.
- The [Jail Technical Assistance program](#) was launched to provide information and training support to Washington jails when they have someone with a mental illness in their custody. This team published the "[Best Practices for Behavioral Health Services in Jail Settings](#)" guidebook, which includes pre- and post-booking diversion options; screening and access to treatment; guidelines for administration of involuntary medication; continuity of care; use of segregation; release planning; crisis de-escalation and more.
- The Criminal Justice Training Center has provided nearly 900 law enforcement officers with 40 hours of crisis intervention training.
- The Health Care Authority's Housing Recovery Through Peer Services and Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness programs have secured housing for 150 people since it began offering services in March 2020.
- Department of Commerce issued \$2 million in capital funds to Pioneer Health to support Trueblood. Pioneer Health will add 16 forensic beds to the Spokane region.
- Three Certified Peer Counselor training events were held to meet workforce demands for Trueblood projects.
- The Workforce Development team increased the number of jails equipped to offer telehealth evaluations from three to more than a dozen as of late May.