

Forensic Navigators

The Trueblood v. DSHS lawsuit challenged unconstitutional delays in competency evaluation and restoration services for people detained in city and county jails. The Trueblood Contempt 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:

- Phase 1: Pierce, Southwest and Spokane regions (July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021)
- Phase 2: King region (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023)
- Phase 3: To be determined (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025)

Eligibility Requirements

People 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 DSHS certifies that there is adequate forensic navigator capacity to provide these services at the time the order is issued.

Although 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](#).

See [WAC](#).

Program

The Forensic Navigator Program has established an initial set of 12 program policies, a desk manual and a training manual with detailed work instruction. As the program is implemented in each phase, we continue to update to ensure continuous quality improvement.

These include individuals who were determined by a court to be competent to stand trial; were determined by a court to be not competent to stand trial, but were ordered to receive restoration services in an inpatient setting and not in the outpatient program; people who had their charges dismissed; people who were removed from outpatient restoration services; people who had their competency restored and were connected to a case manager with a community-based outpatient behavioral health agency.

Partners

Forensic navigators have maintained extremely close contact with jail and court partners in order to continue serving clients, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. Similarly, forensic navigators have maintained this same close contact with all forensic services partners in Outpatient Competency Restoration Program (OCR), Forensic Project for the Assistance in Transitions from Homelessness (FHARPS), and Forensic Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (FPATH); as well as community-based service providers whom they work with on behalf of shared clients.

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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- If you are not on the Listserv and would like to receive information, please email the Trueblood taskforce email.
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