

## 2014 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

### DEPARTMENT SAFETY OPERATIONS

Request	FY14	FY15	13-15
FTE	0.8	3.0	1.9
GF-State	\$57,000	\$230,000	\$287,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$280,000</b>	<b>\$350,000</b>

### DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) requests funding for 3.0 FTE Safety Officer 2 positions in order to conduct objective and thorough investigations of workplace violence assaults in DSHS. Nearly 20 percent of all reported safety incidents in the Department and over 40 percent of all Workers' Compensation Claims involve client-on-staff assault.

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

Over 2,000 safety incidents were reported in 2012, of which 1,053 developed into Worker's Compensation Claims. Client-on-staff assaults accounted for 454 of the claim injuries, and 367 of these were approved to receive additional assault benefits costing DSHS over \$2,000,000. This was \$2,000,000 above and beyond the more than \$38,000,000 the department paid in Worker's Compensation premiums to Labor and Industries.

Currently, client-on-staff assaults are routinely investigated by local supervisors. Competing workload demands make it difficult for these supervisors to perform comprehensive, effective safety incident reviews or conduct thorough safety investigations.

### PROPOSED SOLUTION

The Financial Services Administration intends to hire 3.0 FTE Safety Officer 2 positions to be managed by the Department's Central Safety Office in the Enterprise Risk Management Office (ERMO). One position will reside at the Medical Lake complex, one at Western State Hospital, and one in Olympia. The three Safety Officers will be charged with conducting objective investigations of all client-on-staff assaults that occur in the Department that are, or may realistically become, OSHA recordable events.

The three Safety Officers will be expected to:

- 1) Make qualified, consistent recommendations to executive management regarding the payment of assault benefits;
- 2) Determine the root cause(s) of each client-on-staff assault;

## 2014 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

### DEPARTMENT SAFETY OPERATIONS

- 3) Make specific mitigation strategy recommendations to avoid future assault occurrences; and help train employees regarding assaults and workplace violence.
- 4) Help train employees regarding assaults and workplace violence.

#### EXPECTED RESULTS

It is expected that by incorporating qualified, objective investigation and analysis to workplace client-on-staff events, workplace assaults will be reduced by ten percent over calendar year 2015, with an additional reduction in 2016.

The reductions will have the added effect of:

- 1) An increasingly safer, satisfying working environment for all DSHS employees, particularly facility staff;
- 2) Increased understanding of the nature of workplace violence and effective prevention methods;
- 3) Decreased assault benefits, employee risk ratings, and Worker's Compensation premium payouts in future years;
- 4) Decreasing complaint visits and possible violations/penalties by the Department of Labor and Industries.

This package supports Governor Inslee's Goal 4: Healthy and Safe Communities – Fostering the health of Washingtonians from a healthy start to a safe and supported future.

#### STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

It is anticipated that the employee unions and the Department of Labor and Industries will favorably endorse the Department's expanded efforts to concentrate qualified, professional expertise at the critical issue of staff assaults and workplace violence.