

# **Establishment of Secure Crisis Residential Centers**

**Chapter 312, Laws of 1995, Veto Message Section 64**

Department of Social and Health Services  
Division of Program and Policy Development  
Children's Administration

May 2002

# **Establishment of Secure Crisis Residential Centers**

## **Chapter 312, Laws of 1995, Veto Message Section 64**

**Evaluation and comparison of information required to be compiled for secure and semi-secure facilities, including plans to establish secure facilities as funds are appropriated.**

### **Background**

The initial Becca Bill legislation was passed and signed by the Governor in April 1995, and included authorization for the establishment of Secure Crisis Residential Services (SCRC) services. Whereas both capital and operational funds were allocated in the initial legislation, the operational funds were not available until July 1996. The operational funds allocated allowed for 75 SCRC beds statewide.

During fiscal year 1996 (FY96) the Group Care Minimum Licensing Requirement Washington Administrative Codes (WAC) was revised to include SCRC facilities. The final adoption of the new SCRC WAC occurred in May 1996.

In February 1996, plans were initialized to do either a Referral for Interest (RFI) or a Referral for Programs (RFP). To obtain program providers meetings were held with interested parties to brainstorm how the RFP or RFI would work. The initial statewide procurement was conducted in May 1996 with potential providers. EPIC Youth Services in Yakima was the only organization that elected to pursue the licensing and contracting process.

In July 1996, a second statewide procurement was conducted resulting in a few providers expressing interest but ultimately choosing not to pursue the licensing/contracting process. Feedback from potential providers indicated the threat of a lawsuit coupled with the inability of DSHS to guarantee immunity from civil liability thwarted them from pursuing SCRC contracts.

Between December 1996 and May 1997 meetings were held with King, Thurston, Clallam and Benton-Franklin county officials to discuss the establishment of an SCRC in their communities. King and Thurston counties decided not to pursue contracts, and there were issues noted with Clallam and Benton-Franklin counties regarding conflict with the WAC.

While conducting statewide procurements to solicit providers, meetings with legal representatives from a consortium of organizations who were adamantly opposed to the establishment of secure CRCs were also being held. The stated intent of these organizations was to sue the department as soon as a youth was placed in an SCRC facility, charging that detainment in the facility without due process was a violation of a youth's civil rights.

The initial Becca Bill did not allow for the siting of an SCRC in a juvenile detention facility unless there was no one else in the community willing to provide the service. In addition, if an SCRC were to be located within a juvenile detention facility, there had to be sight/sound separation between the SCRC residents and the persons held in detention. The facility also had to be operated in a manner that prevented person-to-person contact between the two populations. Legislation passed in 1998 allowed for the siting of an SCRC within a juvenile detention facility without the restriction noted above.

In November 1997 a third statewide procurement was conducted to solicit SCRC providers. The absence of any lawsuit being filed (EPIC became operational in May '97) and the passing of legislation allowing for the siting of an SCRC within a juvenile detention facility prompted 27 entities to respond. By the end of February 1998, all the proposals were evaluated and potential contractors selected. The potential contractors included four juvenile detention centers and five private agencies. By June 1998 contracts had been signed with three of the five private child placement agencies and contract negotiations, predominantly over capital funding issues, were on-going with the juvenile detention centers.

All the providers required extensive capital construction projects to meet the requirements to become an SCRC, which in some instances resulted in the constructing of a new facility.

- Both Chelan and Kitsap County Juvenile Detentions Centers were under construction and would not be ready for occupancy until mid-1999;
- Clallam County Juvenile Detention Center required remodeling;
- EPIC Youth Services and Janus Youth Programs needed to construct new facilities for the Tri Cities and Vancouver locations;
- EPIC Youth Services and Janus Youth Programs had to work through local zoning issues prior to the opening of their facilities;
- EPIC had to have a public works project completed before they could begin construction of their new Tri Cities facility.

In 1999 a number of new facilities opened for operation. All the facilities that opened in 1999 were respondents from the November 1997 procurement. Daybreak of Spokane opened in January of 1999; both Clallam and Chelan counties detention-based SCRCs opened in June 1999; Kitsap and Janus Oak Grove facilities followed in October 1999.

The Snohomish County Juvenile Detention Center – which had previously avoided seeking an SCRC contract - was persuaded to seek such a contract in late 1999. That facility opened in June 2000.

One of the initial potential providers from King County that was selected from the November 1997 procurement had to withdraw its petition to provide services because the cost to meet current building code requirements and SCRC licensing regulations was prohibitive. Pioneer Human Services, also selected in the November 1997, had originally intended to site their program on the grounds of the King County Juvenile Court. Due to extensive problems in this process the agency had to seek alternative locations. It was able to settle on the Spruce Street Inn site, which required extensive remodeling to meet code and licensing regulations. Spruce Street opened September 2000.

### **Current Status**

As of December 2000, 69 of the 75 allocated SCRC beds were operational. Four of the remaining six beds were under contract to the Grays Harbor Juvenile Court who was awaiting approval from the county commissioners. The two remaining beds were under contract with the Island County Juvenile Court who planned to build a new facility that would have been ready for occupancy in 2002.

The 2001 – 2003 biennial budget passed by the legislature during the 2001 legislative session required a reduction of nine beds in the program.

The decision was made to eliminate the six non-operational SCRC beds that would have gone to Island and Grays Harbor counties and eliminate three operational beds. The operational beds were taken from the Denny Juvenile Justice Center in Everett (one bed – leaving nine beds) and the Spruce Street Inn SCRC in Seattle (two beds – leaving 18 beds). Additionally, Island County was reimbursed for all it's SCRC related capital expenditures.

There are currently 66 operational SCRC beds statewide.

<b>FACILITY</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b># BEDS</b>	<b>OPERATIONAL DATE</b>
EPIC – Yakima	Yakima	5	May 1997
Daybreak of Spokane	Spokane	5	Jan. 1999
Chelan Detention Center	Wenatchee	4	May 1999
Clallam Detention Center	Port Angeles	4	June 1999
Oak Grove	Vancouver	6	October 1999
Kitsap Detention Center	Port Orchard	9	October 1999
EPIC – Tri Cities	Tri- Cities	6	February 2000
Snohomish Detention Center	Everett	19	June 2000
Spruce St. Inn	Seattle	18	September 2000
<b>TOTAL BEDS</b>		<b>66</b>	

The following table provides the individual communities historical utilization of the SCRC programs in their areas.

<b>FACILITY</b>	<b>FY99 UTILIZATION</b>	<b>FY00 UTILIZATION</b>	<b>FY01 UTILIZATION</b>	<b>FY02 UTILIZATION THROUGH MARCH '02</b>
Daybreak of Spokane	65%*	110%	117%	112%
Chelan Detention Center	N/A	30%	40%	37%
EPIC – Yakima	93%	120%	133%	106%
EPIC - Tri Cities	N/A	N/A	65%	82%
Snohomish Detention Center	N/A	N/A	42%	45%
Spruce Street Inn	N/A	N/A	52%	53%
Kitsap Detention Center	N/A	53%	67%	72%
Clallam Detention Center	N/A	10%	17%	14%**
Oak Grove	N/A	68%	75%	73%

\* - Daybreak of Spokane only operational last half of FY99

\*\* - no reports from Clallam since December 2001