



Office of the Corrections

OMBUDS

Quarterly Meeting

2nd Quarter: April – June 2025

July 17, 2025 | MCC-SRTC

July 16, 2025 | Hybrid (In Person & Virtual)

OCO VISION

We envision a more humane and transparent Washington corrections system.

OCO MISSION

We provide opportunities for people impacted by incarceration to raise issues and resolve conflicts. We work to reduce harm in the Washington corrections system by negotiating outcomes, recommending positive change, and reporting individual and systemic concerns.

OCO CORE VALUES

**INTEGRITY RESPECT COLLABORATION
EQUITY COURAGE**

Our Purpose

Provide information

Promote public awareness & understanding

Ensure compliance with relevant statutes, rules, and policies

Identify system issues and responses for the governor and the legislature to act upon

Phases of a Complaint

6-Phase Process



Intake

Complaints can be reported via hotline, mail, or webform



Triage Screening

Complaints are screened for OCO jurisdictional requirements and resource availability.



Determine Investigation Type

The triage processor determines the investigation type.



Documentation & Evidence Review

The case holder reviews documentation and evidence related to the complaint.



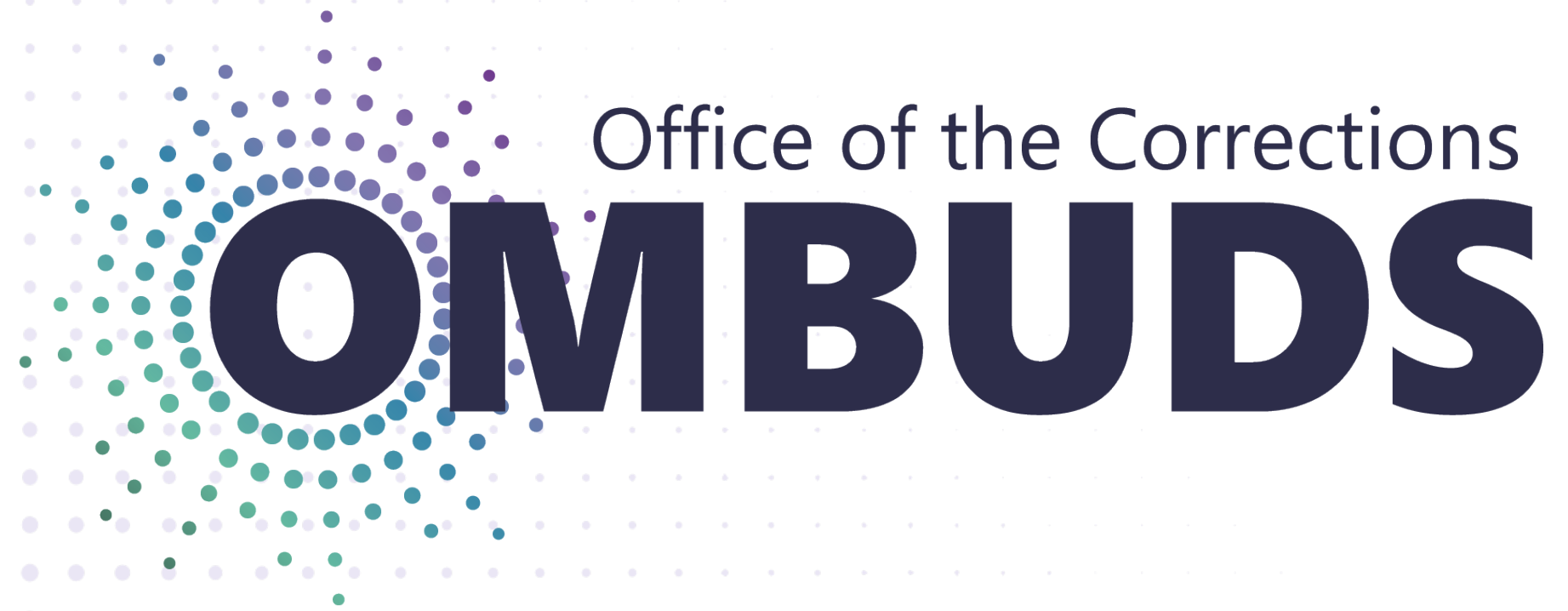
Findings & Negotiation

Once documentation and evidence is reviewed, the case holder will contact the DOC to negotiate a possible resolution.



Outcomes & Case Closing

Once an outcome is determined, the case holder will close the case and notify the incarcerated individual by mail of the findings and outcome.



OCO Data

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OCO Hotline

Free & Confidential

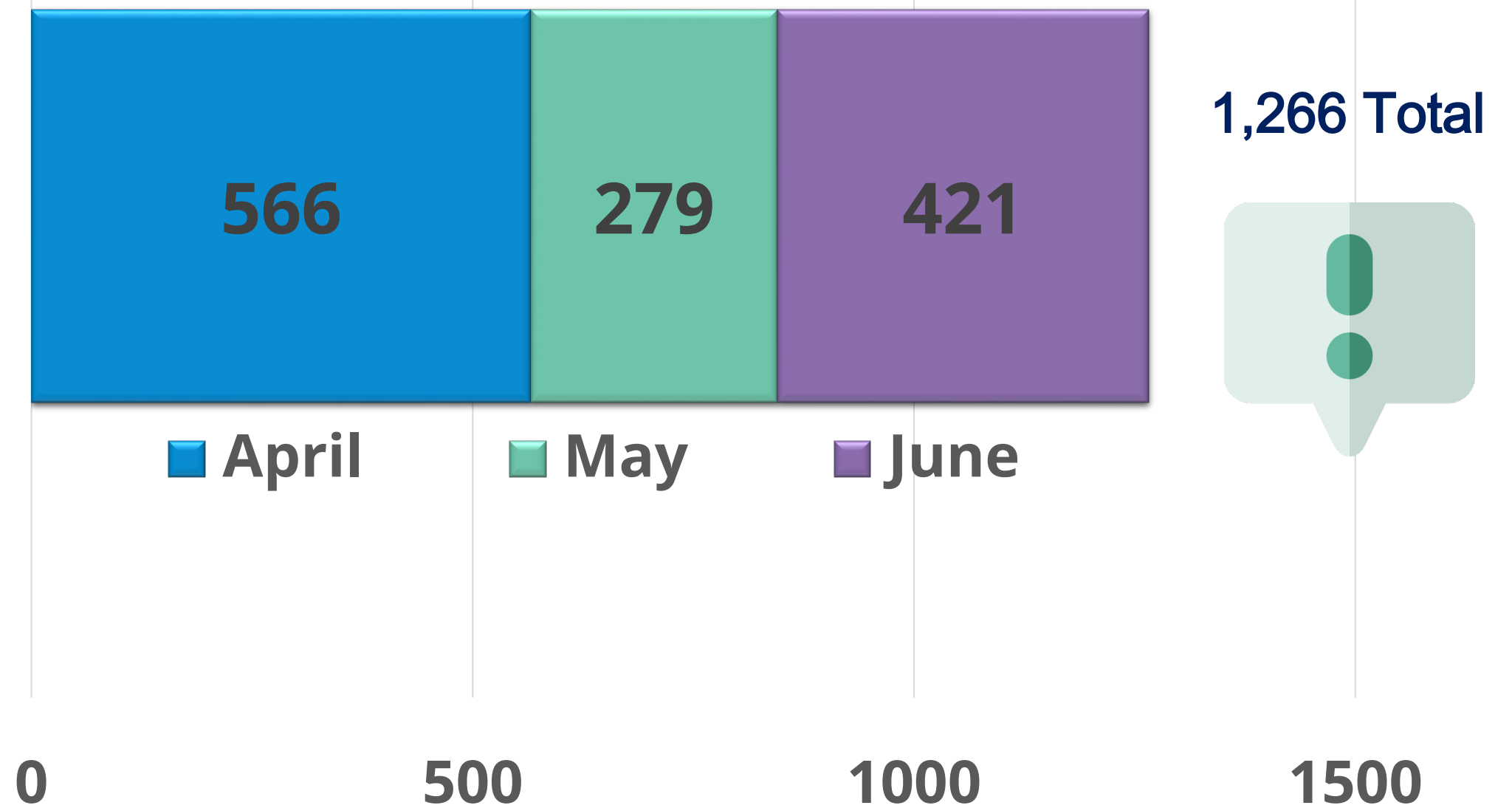
Average of

28

calls per day

Total Calls in April – June 2025

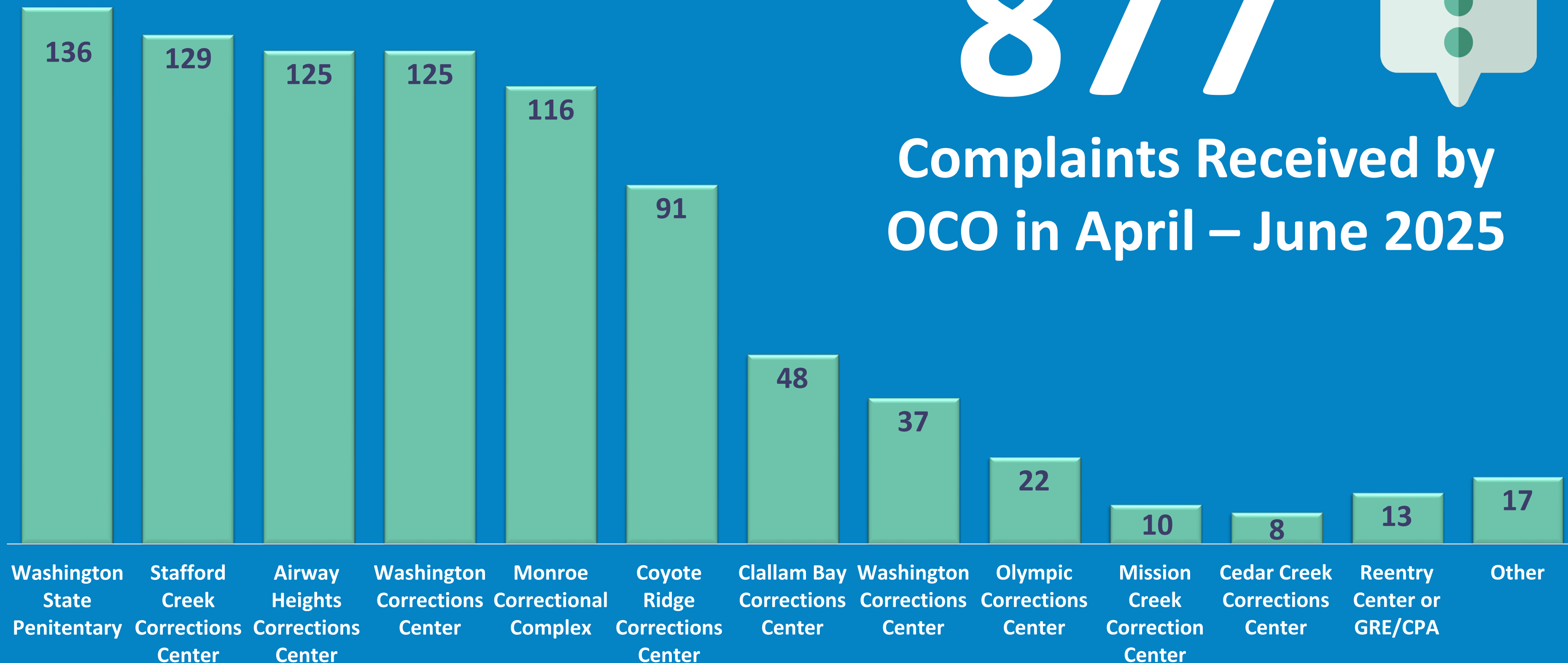
42% of calls were reporting new cases



877

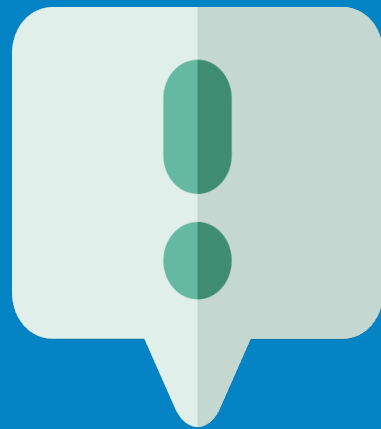


Complaints Received by OCO in April – June 2025



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Top 10 Case Factors (Most Frequently Reported Concerns) Statewide April – June 2025



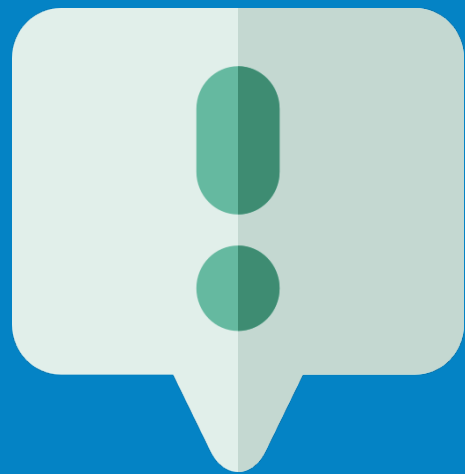
1. Staff Conduct: 270
2. Healthcare: 227
3. Serious Infraction: 173
4. Classification: 130
5. Restrictive Housing Placement: 62
6. Property: 42
7. Visitation: 40
8. Release (ERD): 34
9. Safety (STG): 33
10. Programming: 29

Each individual complaint received may have multiple concerns.

Monroe Correctional Complex - SRTC

51

Complaints Received by OCO in
April – June 2025



Top 10 Case Factors at SRTC:

1. Healthcare: 14
2. Staff Conduct: 6
3. LGBTQIA: 4
4. RTU: 4
5. Classification: 3
6. Safety – STG: 3
7. Close Observation Area (COA): 2
8. Programming: 2
9. Restrictive Housing Placement: 2
10. Safety (PREA): 2

CASE INVESTIGATIONS: 616

Assistance Provided: 109
Information Provided: 239
DOC Resolved: 66
Insufficient Evidence to Substantiate: 55
No Violation of Policy: 140
Substantiated: 7

INTAKE INVESTIGATIONS: 269

Declined: 43
Lacked Jurisdiction: 18
Person Declined OCO Involvement: 44
Person Released from DOC Prior to OCO Action: 8
Technical Assistance Provided: 155
Administrative Remedies Not Pursued: 1

UNEXPECTED FATALITY REVIEWS: 8

Total Investigations Completed: 893

Monthly Outcome Reports

April – June 2025

Assistance, Technical Assistance,
or Information Provided in

56%

of investigations completed

- UFR Committee Members are representatives from: OCO, DOH, HCA, and DOC
- OCO can request reviews of deaths not identified by the DOC as “unexpected”
- UFR Committee Members review incident reports, medical records, video, and other relevant documentation
- UFR Committee meets to discuss findings, questions, and recommendations

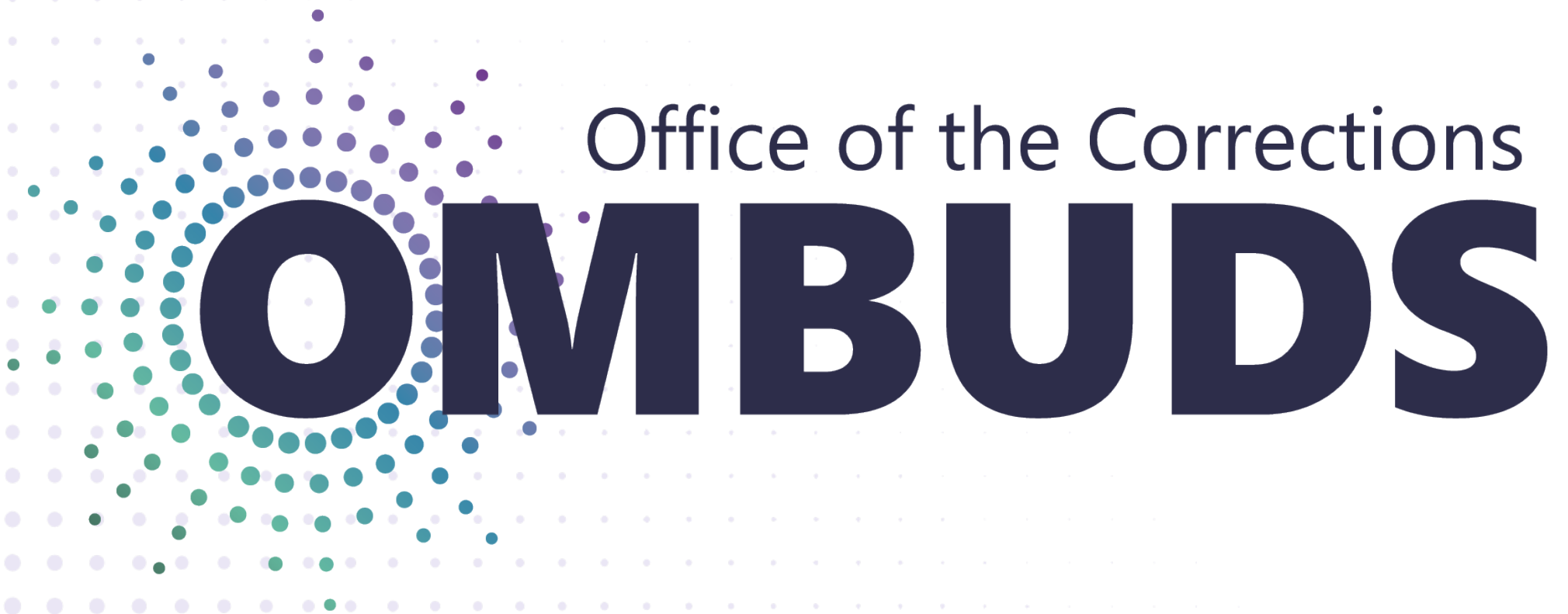
Unexpected Fatality Reviews (UFRs)

April – June 2025

8 UFR reports published in Q2 2025

Cause of Death	UFR Report	UFR Recommendations (see reports for full list of recommendations)
Cancer	UFR# 24-020	
Overdose	UFR# 24-016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOC should explore ways to improve communication during a medical emergency including the process of obtaining and interacting with community EMS.
Suicide	UFR# 24-013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOC should explore options to improve the consistency and quality of tier checks. • DOC leadership should send a communication to incarcerated individuals providing reassurance that no reduction for covered gender affirming care is planned.
Neurological	UFR# 24-017	
Infection (COVID)	UFR# 24-018	
Vascular Disease	UFR# 25-004 UFR# 24-021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing leadership review and update medical emergency response form, DOC 13-440 to include guidelines for clinical instability. • Ensure Health Services Emergency Response training includes signs of clinical instability and reinforces when to request a community EMS response. • Facility leaders should conduct drills and post-action emergency response debriefs to improve communication including the process of obtaining and interacting with community EMS.
Kidney Disease	UFR# 25-006	

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Investigation Examples

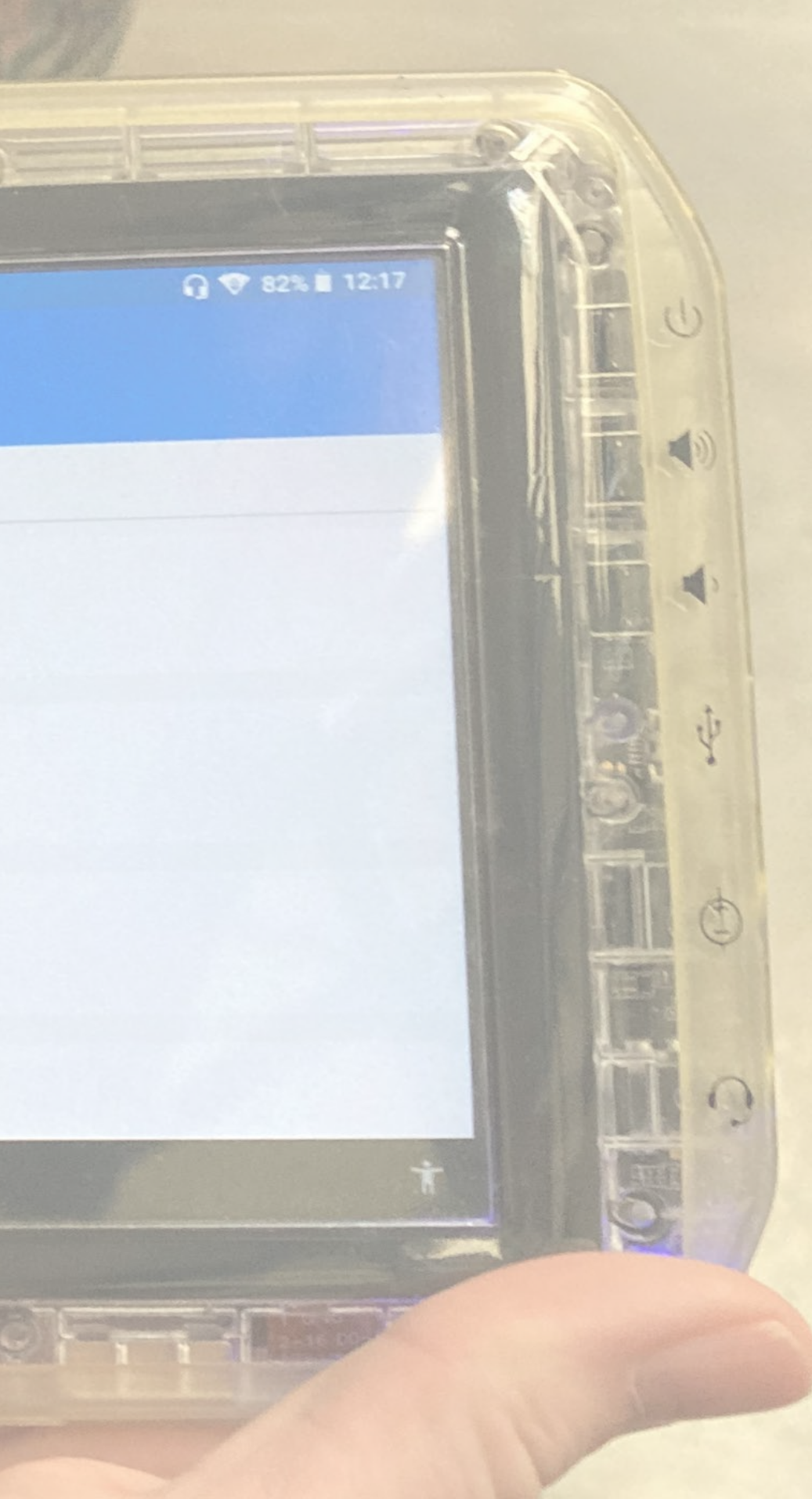
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Assistance Provided: Example 1

Reported Concerns: Incarcerated person reported that he was without his medical property for an extended period due to limited availability of a specialist in the area.

OCO Actions: OCO met with DOC in multiple service areas of DOC Health Services to ensure a billing issue was resolved so the item could be ordered. OCO followed up with DOC staff consistently until the items were delivered.

Negotiated Outcomes: The person received the medical items.



Assistance Provided: Example 2

Reported Concerns: A loved one reported concerns about an incarcerated person's facility placement and access to programming and services. The OCO spoke with this individual, who verified these concerns and requested an access assistant and to be transferred.

OCO Actions: The OCO visited this person at the facility. OCO then coordinated communication between DOC Health Services, custody staff, and the patient's medical providers who reviewed his placement and treatment plan.

Negotiated Outcomes: DOC Health Services and custody staff determined that the specialist care he needs currently prevents him from being transferred to a different facility. After OCO outreach, a new Custody Facility Plan was written, including current placement needs and limitations of his current placement. Upon OCO request, DOC staff assigned him an access assistant. The OCO visited the unit and verified that it meets policy requirements. The individual named concerns with DOC policy, which the OCO flagged for review.

Assistance Provided: Example 3

Reported Concerns: Incarcerated people reported concerns about mold/mildew on their beds and mattresses.

OCO Actions: The OCO spoke with facility leadership and DOC headquarters staff about the concern and requested that the issue be resolved.

Negotiated Outcomes: The facility created a new mattress maintenance protocol to keep people's mattresses and beds clean of mold/mildew. Incarcerated people at Olympic Corrections Center are now instructed to frequently flip their mattresses and clean them often using warm soapy water. If mold/mildew is not able to be cleaned off, people are encouraged to kite the OCC Superintendent about the issue and a new mattress will be provided. The OCO asked about testing the mold/mildew, and it is not clear if the mold will be tested.



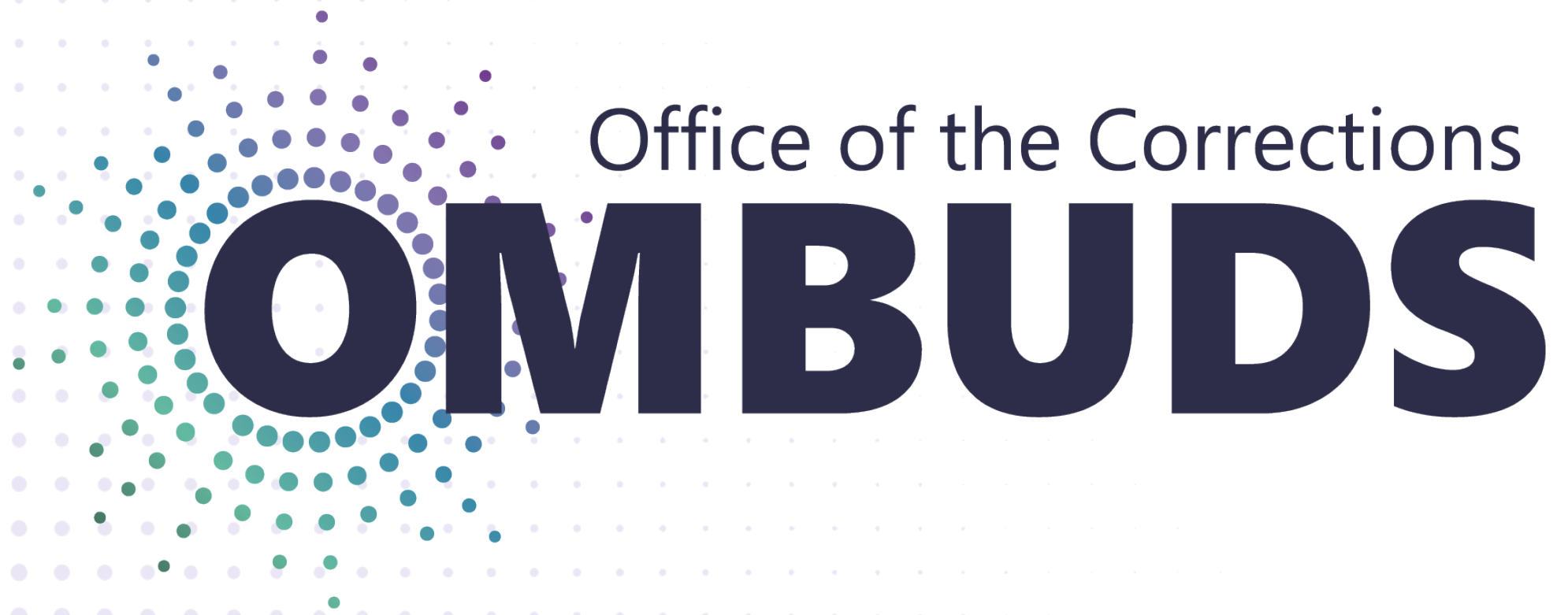
Assistance Provided: Example 4

Reported Concerns: A person reported another incarcerated person living in the same unit required a higher level of medical care than can be provided on the unit.

OCO Actions: OCO staff elevated the concern to DOC leadership, who then reviewed the person's care need and housing.

Negotiated Outcomes: The person was approved and transferred to the In-Patient Unit (IPU) for higher level of care.

Office of the Corrections



OCO Actions

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In June 2025,
OCO released a report titled
*Use of Force & Restrictive Housing
Policy Violations at Washington
Corrections Center for Women*



**Use of Force & Restrictive Housing
Policy Violations at
Washington Corrections Center for Women**

June 2025

**The OCO issued four recommendations
that the DOC agreed to implement:**

Recommendation #1 **The DOC should implement a timeline for the superintendent's review of DOC 410.200 Use of Force.**

Recommendation #2 **Provide immediate training to WCCW staff on proper use of OC spray, restraint application, respirators, and decontamination stations per DOC 410.200 Use of Force.**

Recommendation #3 **The DOC should regularly audit use of force incidents at the Headquarters level.**

Recommendation #4 **The DOC should deploy more resources to WCCW to assist with facility staff training.**

The Committee meets once per month. Subcommittees meet regularly between meetings. Minutes of Committee meetings are posted on the OCO website once approved by the Committee.

Subcommittees:

- Data Mapping Team
- Legislative Writing Team
- Training Assessment Team
- Transition Planning Team

**First Annual Report to Legislature due
October 1, 2025**

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Construction Training Pathways (CTP) Oversight Committee



OCO Attends Univ. of Washington Solitary Confinement Research Tour

Mapping Behavioral Disruption & Social Recovery: A Neuroethological Approach to Social Isolation

Join Neural Systems & Behavior Researcher, Micaela Romero, and University of Washington's Wang Lab for a powerful session bridging science and policy. This meeting shares new research using *Bombus impatiens* bumblebees to model social and behavioral impacts of long-term solitary confinement, and what it can teach us about recovery, public safety, and policy reform.



Learn more about
Micaela Romero's research
at micaelaelys.com

The OCO will still accept old versions of the complaint form

Use this form to file a complaint and open a new case with the OCO.

The Office of the Corrections Ombuds (OCO) investigates complaints about the health, safety, welfare, and rights of incarcerated people in Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) prisons and reentry centers. The OCO cannot assist with complaints that are not DOC actions, including court actions, sentencing and convictions, actions by another state agency, complaints against third party vendors, and issues related to a county jail.

- File an appeal for infractions, classification, property, visitation, BOEs and mail rejections. Appeal at facility level and HQ, as applicable. File a DOC Resolution Request for all other concerns.
- When you have completed the actions above and the issue is not addressed, you may continue to Step 2.

- Fill out all sections of this form. Mail this form to the OCO or call the OCO hotline. Do not send additional documents; the OCO has access to DOC records.
- The OCO will then review for jurisdiction, priorities, and assign to an OCO caseworker. You will receive a letter with more information.

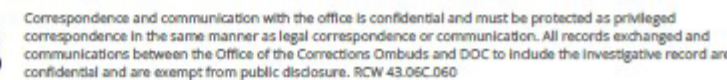
Person's Full Name: _____

Person's DOC #: _____ Current Facility: _____

Have you tried to resolve your complaint through DOC? Yes: ☐ No: ☐

List your most recent resolution requests, medical emergencies, and/or appeals. Let us know if you experienced barriers when trying to file a grievance or appeal.

Outcome of Appeal: _____



Please describe the issue. What did or did not happen? Who was involved? If you know of policy violations, include those details here, too.

What would resolve your concern(s)? What outcome are you looking for? Be specific.

Correspondence and communication with the office is confidential and must be protected as privileged correspondence in the same manner as legal correspondence or communication. All records exchanged and communications between the Office of the Corrections Ombuds and DOC to include the investigative record are confidential and are exempt from public disclosure. RCW 43.06C.060

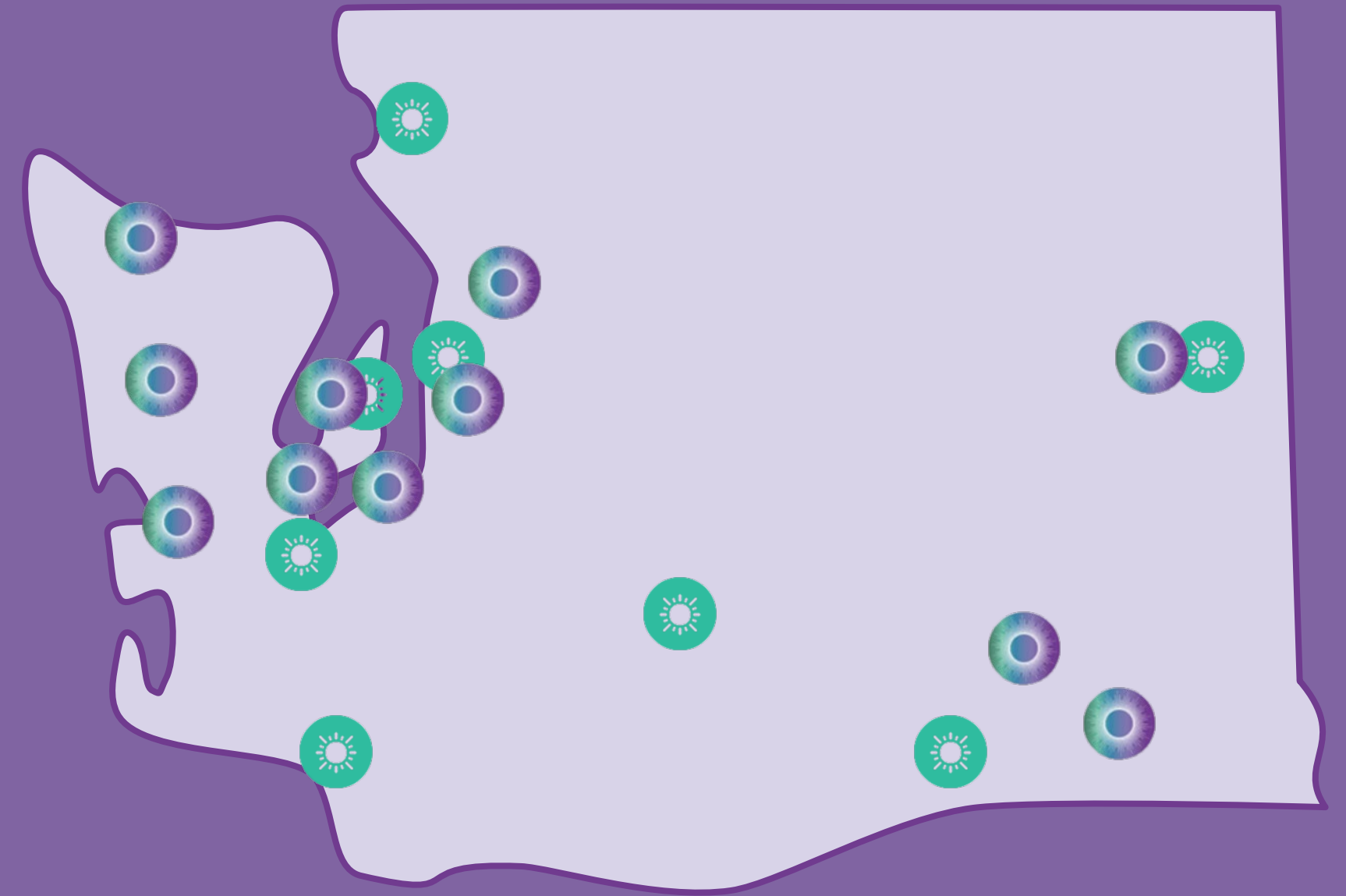
Monitoring Visits April – June 2025

33

Prison & Reentry Center Monitoring Visits

In-person monitoring of DOC facilities is a critical, core function of the OCO.

Although a statewide travel freeze remains in effect due to the statewide budget deficit, the OCO continues to conduct announced and unannounced monitoring trips to all DOC prisons and reentry centers.



“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.”

Ida B. Wells, 1892

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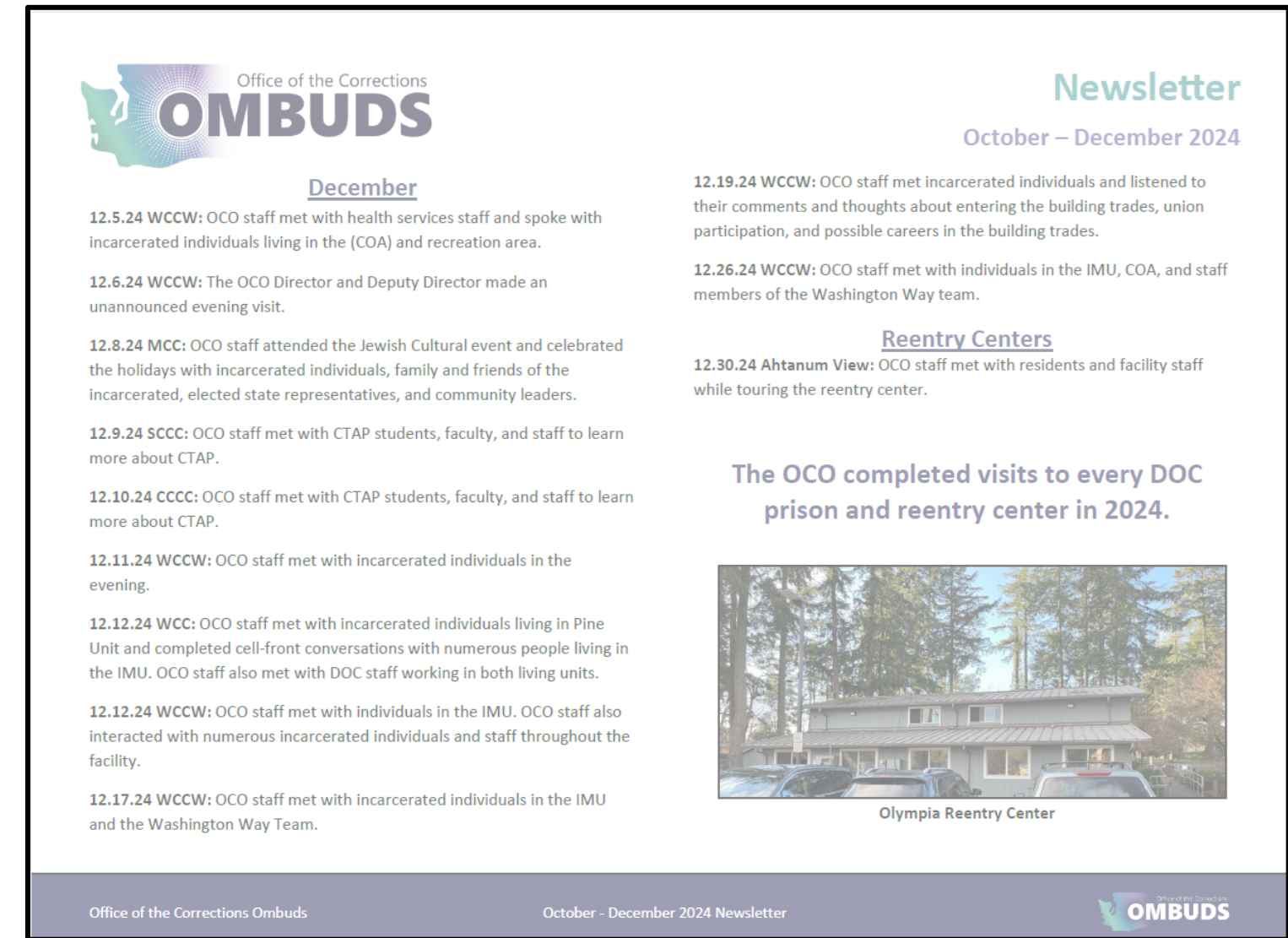
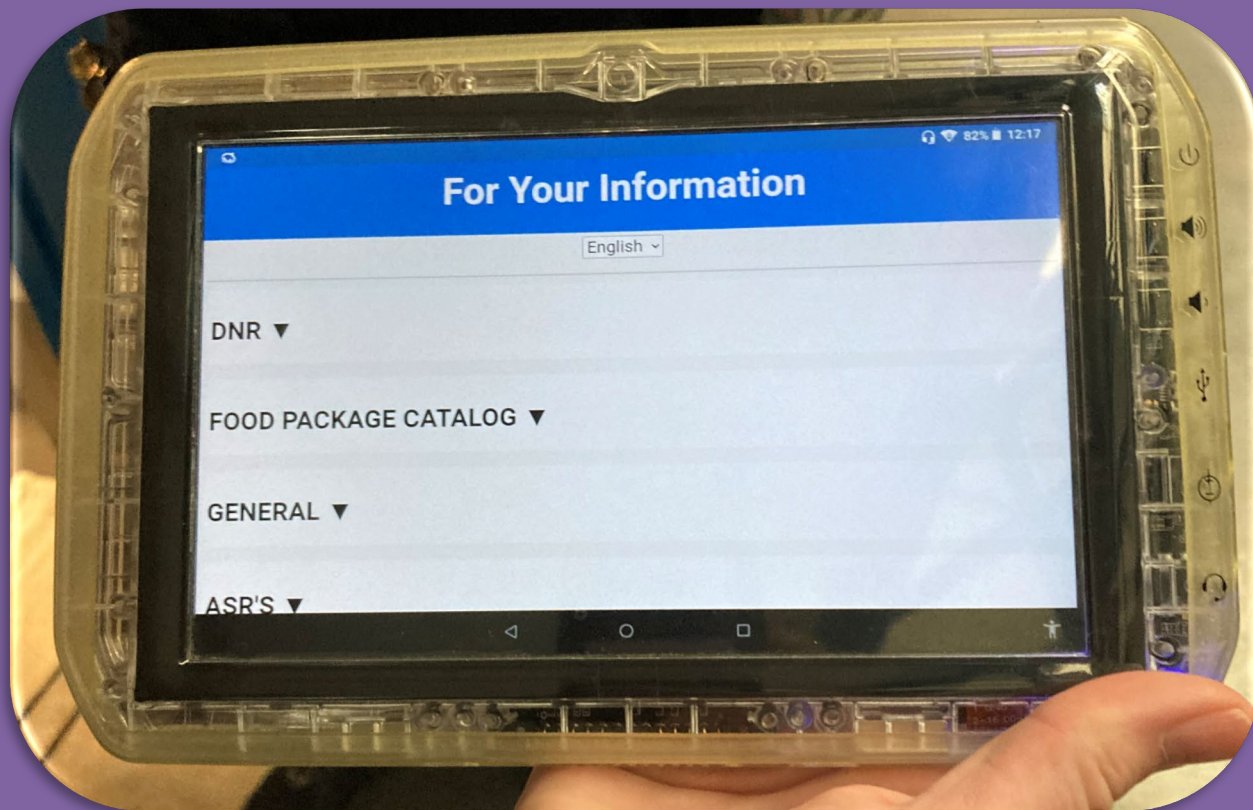
April: 12 Visits	Monitoring Details
MCC	WSR, medical floor, camp, SRTC, living units
SCCC	IMU, living units, cultural events, medical
WCCW	Ongoing investigation; PEAR-CAT
OCC	OCO Quarterly Meeting

May: 10 Visits	Monitoring Details
SCCC	LGBTQ+ listening sessions, IMU, CARES meeting
CBCC	IMU, tier reps, safe harbor, kitchen, facility
AHCC	Carpentry, food factory, CI
CRCC	B unit
WSP	IMU South, BAR units, close custody, camp, SPL
MCC	Kitchen, CLO event
Ahtanum View	Kitchen inspection

June: 11 Visits	Monitoring Details
AHCC	Living units, Sage construction, Pride event, LFC
CRCC	Living units
WCCW	Ongoing investigation
MCC	Freedom Group graduation, living units
MCCCW	Gold & Bear units, SHU
SCCC	Wealth of Wellness CARES, IMU, medical
Reynolds	Facility-wide monitoring



All OCO reports & publications are available on the FYI app on SecurUs tablets.



OCO Publications on the FYI App include:

- Newsletters
- Monthly Outcome Reports
- Investigative Reports & Spotlights

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Office of the Corrections

OMBUDS

Submit a Complaint



Confidential Hotline:

(360) 664-4749

Mon: 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Tues: 1:00 – 3:00 PM & 4:00 – 6:00 PM

Wed: 1:00 – 3:00 PM & 4:00 – 6:00 PM

Thurs: 1:00 – 3:00 PM



Mailing Address:

PO Box 40009

Olympia, WA 98504

SUBMIT

Online:

oco.wa.gov/submit-complaint



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