



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1110

June 16, 2020

Joanna Carns
Office of Corrections Ombuds
PO Box 43113
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Ms. Carns:

The Washington Department of Corrections appreciates the opportunity to respond to the OCO Report on the ‘the OCO investigation into staff actions during the recovery of an escaped individual who had been residing at Olympia Corrections Center’ completed by the Office of Corrections Ombuds.

Recommendation	Response
In the future, similar reports of staff ordering irregular activity that are outside of protocol and that potentially impact the safety and security of the institution should be formally investigated.	The Department of Corrections conducts investigations at the level deemed necessary by the appointing authority. The event was investigated by DOC leadership and there was constructive discussion between administration and facility level leadership on appropriate ways to handle the return of an incarcerated individual from an escape.
DOC should implement a clear policy and procedure regarding how staff are expected to manage the return of an escaped individual to their receiving facility.	The Department of Corrections has clear expectations of how staff are to show professionalism and respect in the workplace with the incarcerated population, colleagues, and external stakeholders. Each facility currently has their own localized operational protocol for the return of individuals to their facility following an escape. As each facility is unique, the creation of a system wide protocol would be inadequate for operational needs.

The information provided by the OCO was useful to ensure the Department of Corrections is doing everything it can to ensure an incarcerated person’s time in the agency’s facilities is a fair and safe space for all incarcerated individuals.

We also appreciate your team’s understanding of the unique processes across facilities and the addition of policies and procedures being put in place to address them. We are working towards

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proactivity and improving quality assurance processes throughout the department. Moving forward, Washington Department of Corrections will continue to collaborate with the Office of the Corrections Ombuds to implement additional policies, procedures, and security measures to continue to improve the facility operations.

Sincerely,

Steve Sinclair, Secretary
Washington Department of Corrections