

# OFFICE OF THE CORRECTIONS OMBUDS

## COMMUNITY PUBLIC MEETING

JANUARY 26, 2023 4:00-5:30 PM  
HELEN SOMMERS BUILDING  
GROUND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM



# OCO ORG. CHART

**ERO:**  
Early Resolution Ombuds

**Caitlin Robertson, PhD**  
Director

**Elisabeth Kingsbury, JD**  
Senior Corrections Ombuds – Policy

**Carolina Landa, MPA**  
Assistant Ombuds

**Heather Bates**  
Office Manager

**Zak Kinneman, JD**  
Community Relations Specialist

**Angee Schrader**  
Senior Corrections Ombuds – Investigations

**Sara Appleton**  
Assistant Ombuds

**E.V. Webb**  
Lead ERO

**Stella Spracklin**  
Lead ERO

**Jessica Means**  
ERO (intake)

**Chase Rapach**  
ERO

**Tianna Cain-Wardlaw**  
ERO

**Rebecca Glosser, MSW**  
ERO

**David Skattebo**  
ERO

**Madison Vinson**  
ERO

Second Substitute Bill 1889 of the 2018 regular session  
Signed into law by Gov. Inslee on March 27, 2018

## Purpose

- Provide information
- Promote public awareness & understanding
- Ensure compliance with relevant statutes, rules, & policies
- Identify system issues and responses for the governor & the legislature to act upon

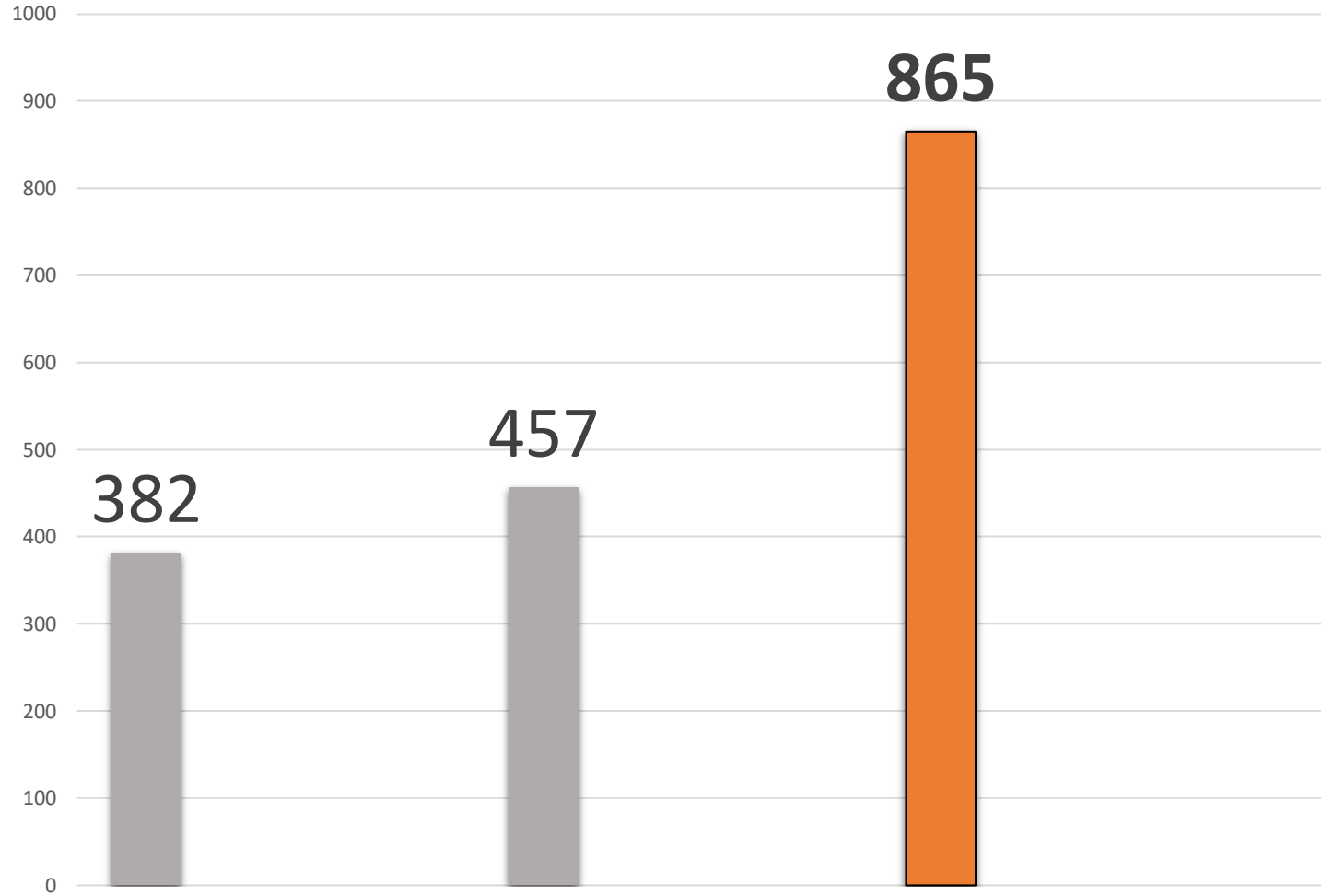
# What makes an effective ombuds office?

According to the United States Ombudsman Association:

- Independence
- Impartiality and Fairness
- Credibility of the Review Process
- Confidentiality

# INVESTIGATIONS OPENED IN 4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER

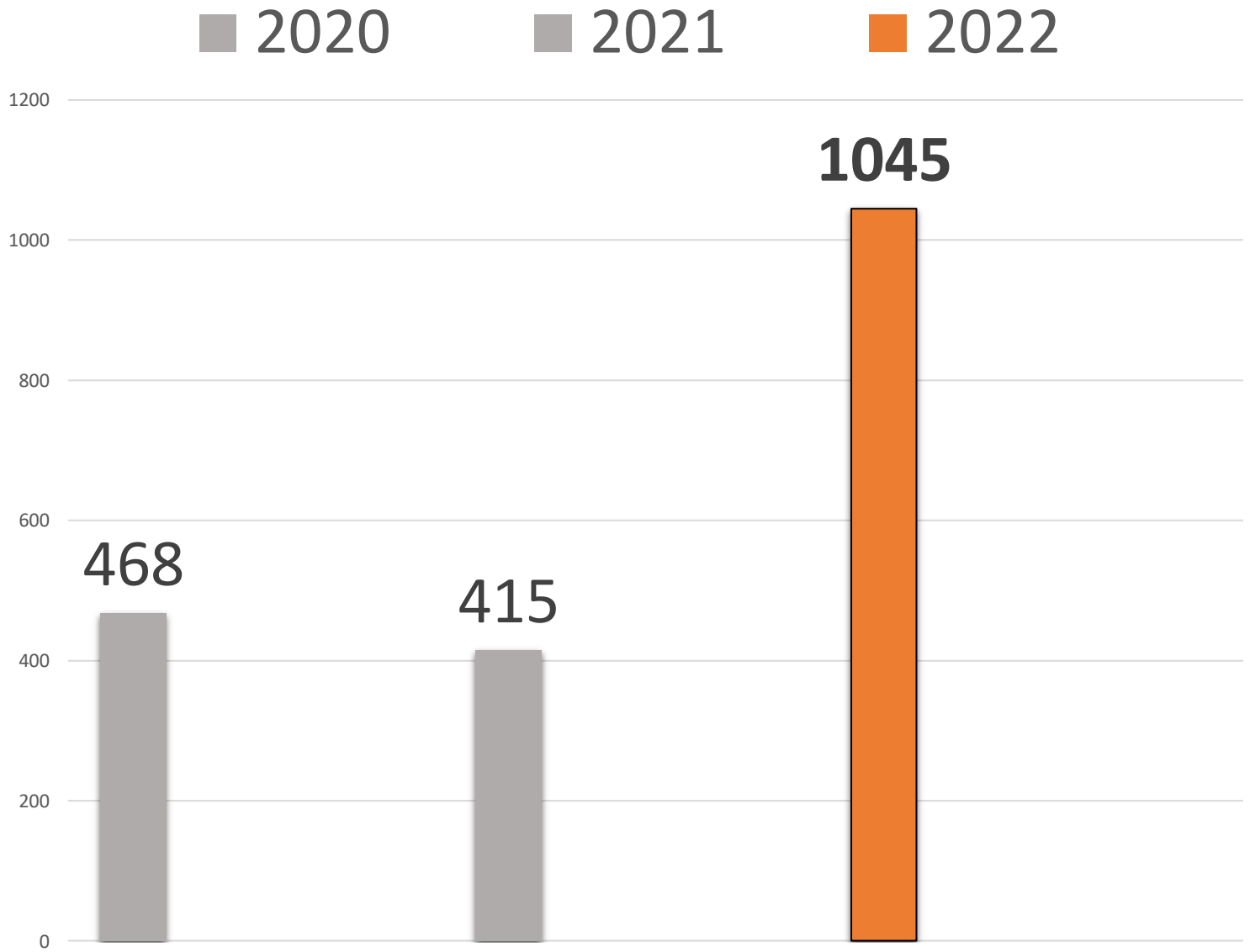
■ 2020      ■ 2021      ■ 2022



**89% INCREASE**  
**FROM 2021-2022**

# INVESTIGATIONS RESOLVED IN 4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER

**152% INCREASE**  
**FROM 2021-2022**



# MONTHLY OUTCOME REPORTS

## INTAKE INVESTIGATIONS

- Administrative Remedies Not Pursued
- Declined
- Lacked Jurisdiction
- Person Declined OCO Involvement
- Person Left DOC Custody Prior to OCO Action

## CASE INVESTIGATIONS

- Assistance Provided
- Information Provided
- DOC Resolved
- Insufficient Evidence to Substantiate
- No Violation of Policy
- Substantiated

## UNEXPECTED FATALITY REVIEWS

Reviewed in accordance with RCW 72.09.770, which directs DOC to conduct an unexpected fatality review in any case in which the death of an incarcerated individual is unexpected, or any case identified by the OCO for review.

# DECEMBER MONTHLY OUTCOME NUMBERS

## INTAKE INVESTIGATIONS: 115

Administrative Remedies Not Pursued - 71  
Declined - 20  
Lacked Jurisdiction - 14  
Person Declined OCO Involvement - 8  
Person Left DOC Custody Prior to OCO Action - 2

## CASE INVESTIGATIONS: 203

Assistance Provided - 29  
Information Provided - 70  
DOC Resolved - 18  
Insufficient Evidence to Substantiate - 16  
No Violation of Policy - 62  
Substantiated - 8

## UNEXPECTED FATALITY REVIEWS: 3

# 321

## RESOLVED INVESTIGATIONS

## ASSISTANCE OR INFORMATION PROVIDED IN

# OVER 48%

## OF CASE INVESTIGATIONS



# PUBLICATION UPDATE



## Earned Gratuity (Wages) Withheld After Termination - DNR/DOC Fire Crew

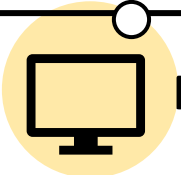
- OCO negotiated payment of multiple Fire Crew workers at AHCC and Larch resulting in thousands of dollars in recouped wages.
- Interagency Agreement has been signed

# PHASES OF A REPORTED COMPLAINT



## PHASE 1: INTAKE

Complaints can be reported via hotline, mail, or webform.



## PHASE 2: TRIAGE SCREENING

Complaints are screened for OCO jurisdictional requirements.



## PHASE 3: DETERMINE INVESTIGATION TYPE

The case holder determines the investigation type.



## PHASE 4: DOCUMENTATION & EVIDENCE REVIEW

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



## PHASE 5: FINDINGS & NEGOTIATION

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



## PHASE 6: 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 ACTION –CONFIDENTIAL HOTLINE

## Total 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter calls received

October:	420
November:	335
December:	354

## Total Calls received in 2022

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter:	1,708
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter:	1,325
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter:	1,048
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter:	1,109

## Average calls per day across all shifts

13

# OCO ACTION – HEALTH SERVICES

## Case Example 1: Cancer Care (2021-2022)

**Reported Concerns:** Patient reported continued kidney pain and delayed access to testing & appointments. Patient was later diagnosed with cancer.

### OCO Actions

- Elevated concerns and requested resolution through facility and headquarters health services leadership.
- Scheduled phone calls with the patient for updates & to share self-advocacy info.
- Added appointments to OCO tracker: monitored & confirmed cancer testing, treatment, and follow ups.
- Requested appointment with re-entry nurse to discuss access planning upon release.

### Negotiated Outcomes

- Patient received additional testing & follow ups for kidney pain.
- Patient received cancer care appointments and follow ups.
- Patient scheduled with re-entry nurse to create a continuity of care plan for appointments after release.

# OCO ACTION – HEALTH SERVICES

## Case Example 2: Wheelchair HSR & Consult (2022)

**Reported Concerns:** Patient reported concerns about access to pain management while awaiting a consult. Patient later reported their wheelchair Health Status Report (HSR) was removed without an assessment prior to consult.

### OCO Actions

- Elevated concerns & requested resolution through facility and health services leadership.
- Discussed concerns about substantiated third-party reporting from custody staff related to Durable Medical Equipment & HSR changes.
- Engaging in continued conversations with DOC Health Service Administrators (HSAs).
- Added case to appointment tracker to monitor and confirm access.

### Negotiated Outcomes

- Patient received a medical assessment related to wheelchair access.
- DOC agreement regarding third-party reports and medical assessment expectations.
- Patient received their specialist consult, surgery, and was referred for post-op physical therapy.

# OCO ACTION – CUSTODY

## Correctional Industries Job Termination

**Reported Concerns:** Terminated from CI employment for not having or pursuing a GED. GED classes for people requiring English as a Second Language (ESL) were not offered at AHCC at this time due to instructor vacancy.

### OCO Actions

- Identified AHCC lacked a facilitator for GED classes for ESL learners.
- Communicated the concern to facility staff, CI staff, and education staff. Assisted DOC staff in gathering to review the concern.
- Recommended that the individuals be allowed to work in CI without pursuing their GED until a facilitator is hired.

### Negotiated Outcome

- DOC agreed to reinstate both peoples CI employment.

# OCO ACTION – CUSTODY

## Improper Infraction 551

**Reported Concerns:** A 551 infraction was documented against an incarcerated person for lying to hearings staff about having a valid Health Status Report (HSR) to allow him to receive the lighter fare alternative meal plan. The incarcerated person reported to OCO that he did have a valid HSR and requested OCO intervene/assist.

### OCO Actions

- OCO staff reviewed documents including the incarcerated person's historical HSRs and the infraction hearings records.
- Verified the person did have an active HSR for lighter fare meals.
- Communicated with DOC facility staff including the Associate Superintendent.
- Recommended that the infraction be dismissed.

### Negotiated Outcome

- DOC agreed to dismiss the infraction.

# OCO ACTION – TRIAGE

## Safety Concerns

**Reported Concerns:** External person reported to the OCO that their loved one had concerns for his safety if his scheduled transfer was to take place.

### OCO Actions

- Identified that the individual was currently housed in a safe harbor.
- Communicated the concern to DOC Classifications at Headquarters and asked for a full review of safety concerns.
- Recommended that the individual's transfer be halted until after the review.

### Negotiated Outcome

- DOC agreed to cancel the transfer and allow the individual to stay at the safe harbor facility.



# OCO ACTION – TRIAGE

## Negative BOE

**Reported Concerns:** An incarcerated individual reported he was given a negative Behavior Observation Entry (BOE) for asking for the OCO phone number.

### OCO Actions

- OCO staff reviewed the negative BOE and verified the concern.
- Communicated the concern with the Associate Superintendent.
- Recommended that negative BOE be removed immediately.

### Negotiated Outcome

- DOC agreed to remove the negative BOE.

# OCO ACTION – UNEXPECTED FATALITY REVIEWS

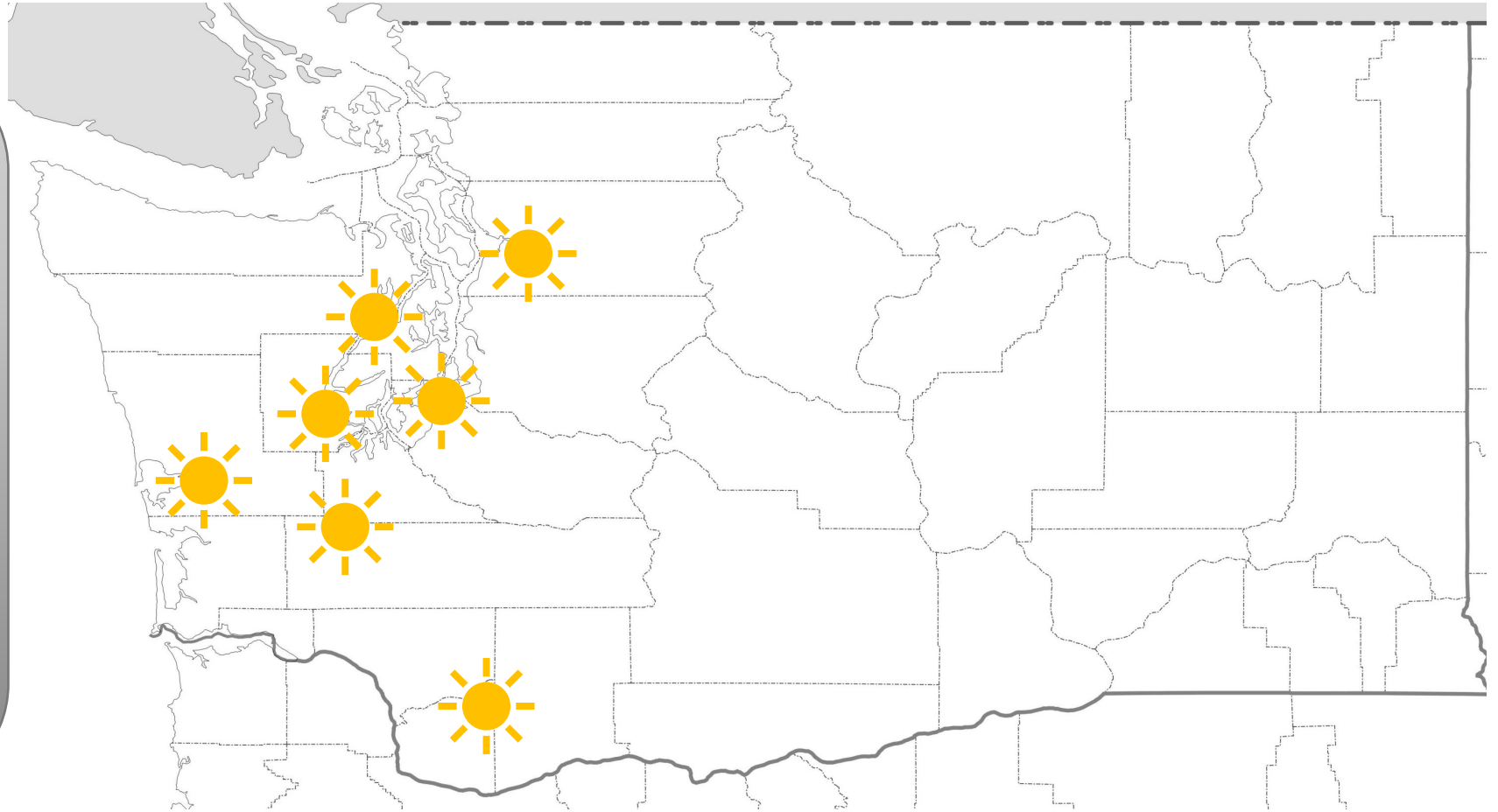
The OCO participated in nine UFRs including deaths attributed to accidental overdoses (fentanyl), vascular diseases, and death by suicide.

## EXAMPLES OF OCO RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Reentry Centers:** One positive fentanyl result should receive a referral for a substance use disorder assessment and development of a person-centered plan for individual support.
- **Alternative Housing for Medical Isolation:** A weekly multidisciplinary team meeting should be conducted to ensure that the continued placement in alternative housing is appropriate and that the individual's medical, mental health, and safety needs are being met. The team will include representatives from medical, mental health, classification, and custody.

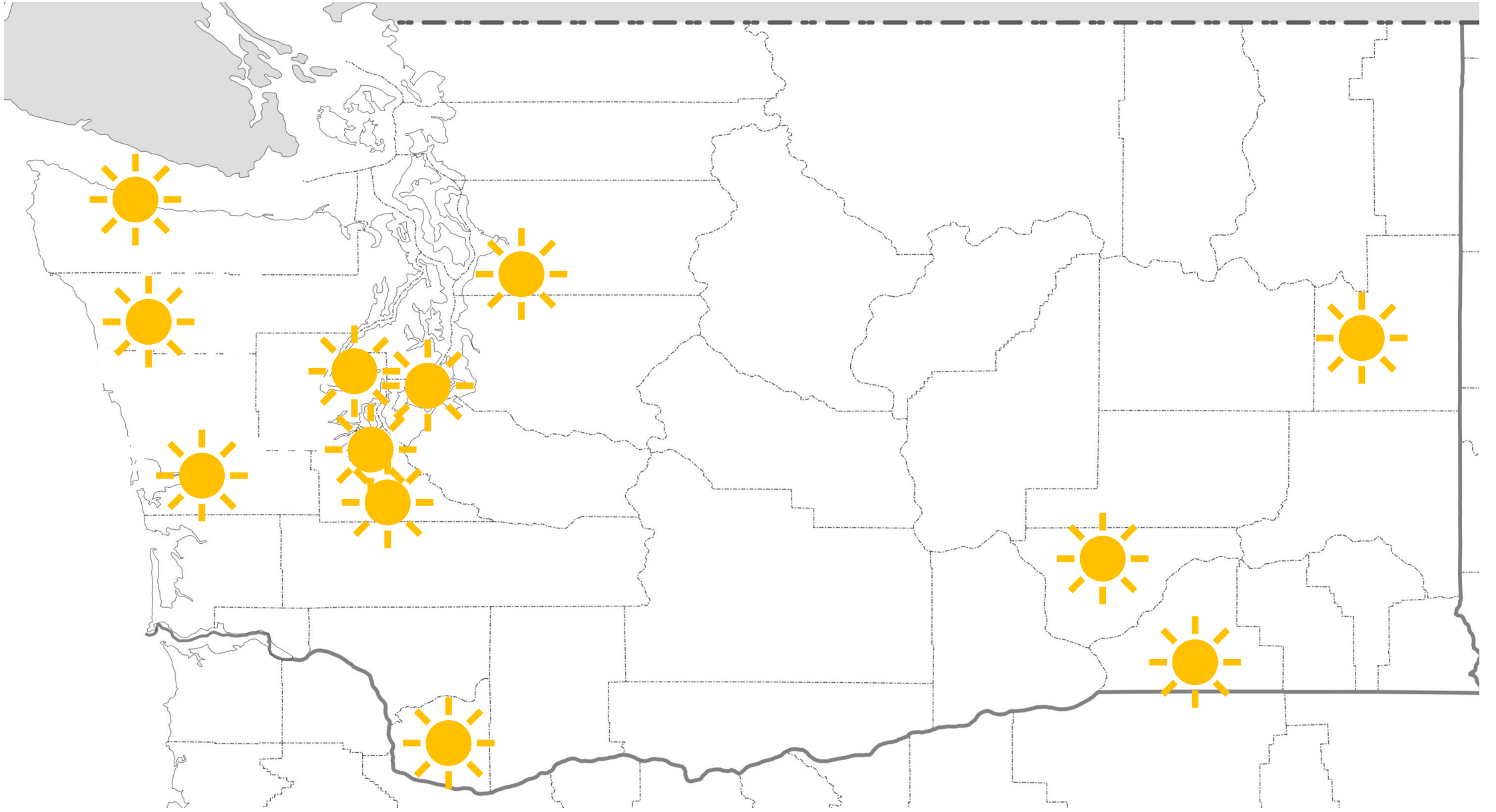
**20**

**Facility Visits  
in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter**



Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants.

- Justice Louise Brandeis (1914)



# OCO Quarterly Public Meetings 2023

January 6<sup>th</sup> : WCC

April 7<sup>th</sup> : MCC

July 7<sup>th</sup> : TBA

October 7<sup>th</sup> : TBA

# OFFICE OF THE CORRECTIONS OMBUDS

**Confidential**

**Hotline:** (360) 664-4749

**Mail:** PO Box 40009  
Olympia, WA 98504

**Online:** [www.oco.wa.gov/submit-complaint](http://www.oco.wa.gov/submit-complaint)

