

**Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee Appropriation
From 2024 Legislative Session**

(8)(a) \$400,000 of the performance audits of government account—state appropriation is for the joint legislative audit and review committee to:

(i) Review the department of children, youth, and families' juvenile rehabilitation program's existing processes and staffing methodology used for determining adequate staffing ratios to meet the confinement and rehabilitative needs of the juveniles and ensure public safety;

(ii) Review procedures and protocols for professional development, hiring and recruitment, and training for staff serving youth in juvenile rehabilitation institutions, with a focus on how staff are trained to implement rehabilitative practices;

(iii) Review youth access to programming, treatment, and services including, but not limited to, educational programming, treatment and services for youth experiencing substance use disorder, behavioral health treatment, available reentry services such as housing, job training, and other supports, access to technology services, family and community connections, and other programming and services offered by the department to provide youth with rehabilitation and restorative interventions;

(iv) Review existing security and safety measures, including the use of disciplinary procedures for total isolation and room confinement, adopted by the department and their effectiveness in meeting the unique needs of the juvenile population in the custody of the department;

(v) Review how often and how many youth face new juvenile or adult criminal offense charges, convictions, or both while residing at juvenile rehabilitation institutions and potential future consequences that may occur as a result such as sentence extension, likelihood of recidivism, health impacts, and effects regarding criminal records;

(vi) Assess gender equity regarding education, employment, and career options for female youth;

(vii) Review how staffing impacts youth-on-youth conflict and safety;

(viii) Review best practices from other states regarding security and safety measures, programming opportunities, reentry supports, staff training and professional development, and staffing ratios, and identify options that may be feasible to adopt in Washington state to increase public safety and the security, programming options, treatment services, and rehabilitation mission of the department's juvenile rehabilitation institutions;

(ix) Review the department's existing processes for responding to critical incidents, including communication and cooperation with local law enforcement, and identify areas for improvement; and

(x) Review the impacts of changes in average daily population, longer lengths of stay, longer sentences, increases in maximum age of release, increases in more serious offense types and adult sentences, and related effects of chapter 322, Laws of 2019.

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(b) The joint legislative audit and review committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by June 30, 2026. The report shall include recommendations on supporting the juvenile rehabilitation program's efforts to gradually move young people from carceral settings to least restrictive environments to improve positive reentry outcomes.