



STATE OF WASHINGTON

SENTENCING GUIDELINES COMMISSION

Jefferson Building, PO Box 43124 • Olympia, Washington 98504-3124 • (360) 688-8511

MEETING MINUTES

September 12, 2025 9:00am – 12:00pm

1500 Jefferson Building, Room 2330

Olympia, WA 98516

And Zoom

Members Present:

Hon. J. Wesley Saint Clair, Chair
Jeremiah Bourgeois
Hon. Sharonda Amamilo
Greg Link (proxy: Kate Benward)
Secretary Tim Lang (proxy: Mac Pevey)
Ramona Brandes (proxy: Jeremiah Bourgeois)
Hon. Jeffery Swan
Commissioner Tye Menser
Councilmember Carmen Rivera
Norrie Gregoire
Chief Brian Smith/Chief Kal Fuller
Dr. Vasiliki Georgoulas-Sherry
Dr. Esther Matthews
Kecia Rongen
Rochelle Cleland
Hon. Josephine Wiggs
Senator Claire Wilson
Amy Anselmi
Rep. Lauren Davis
Rep. Jenny Graham

Members Absent:

Jennifer Redman
Jon Tunheim
Hon. Veronica Galván
Hon. Karen Donohue

Guest:

Brad Meryhew, Chair, SOPB
Whitney Hunt, SOPB

Staff:

Keri-Anne Jetzer
Dr. Lauren Knoth-Peterson, PSPRC

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Judge Saint Clair called the meeting to order.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A quorum was not met at the start of the meeting so meeting minutes were not approved.

III. SENTENCING ALTERNATIVES – Sex Offenses

Brad Meryhew, Chair of the Sex Offender Policy Board, and Whitney Hunt, Coordinator of the Sex Offender Policy Board, presented on the findings related to the SOPB's review of the Special Sex Offender Sentencing Alternative (SSOSA) and other sex offense alternatives submitted in its 2022 report *Recommendations for SSOSA reforms; treatment alternatives for certain sex offenses; lifetime supervision; failure to register; washouts; and system improvements*.

Brad Meryhew's presentation noted that WSIPP's 2006 study *Sex Offender Sentencing In Washington State: Special Sex Offender Sentencing Alternative Trends* found that a cohort who received a SSOSA had lower rates of recidivism than a comparison group who did not receive a SSOSA sentence and was sentenced to prison. Judge Swan inquired if there were recidivism studies on individuals who completed treatment while incarcerated versus those who completed it while on SSOSA. Dr. Knoth-Peterson shared that the WSIPP study had included those who received treatment while incarcerated. Brad reported that DOC has limited in-custody treatment beds and, last he knew, only 27% of individuals are given treatment while incarcerated. Mac Pevey reported updated figures stating that DOC is only able to treat 23% identified with a need who are incarcerated in prison and that determination is based on a hierarchy.

Brad Meryhew remarked that the SOPB has strong support for SSOSA and has unanimously recommended that it be protected and preserved. The SOPB also suggested a sliding fee schedule for evaluations and treatment as well as designating funding for work release for incarcerated individuals who received a SSOSA sentence. When individuals are unable to continue employment and cannot pay for treatment, they are ineligible for SSOSA.

Brad talked about why the SOPB decided to separate out "non-contact" sex offenses from "contact" offenses, how the SOPB defined what those are, and briefed commission members on the limited amount of research the SOPB found on individuals who commit "non-contact" sex offenses, which indicated such individuals are not at higher risk than those who commit hands-on offenses.

The SOPB unanimously recommended a sentencing alternative similar to SSOSA for those convicted of offenses related to child sexual abuse images. The SOPB recommended by majority that a sentencing alternative similar to SSOSA be created for those convicted of an internet sting or other case not involving an identifiable victim. They also unanimously recommended that SSOSA and any other alternatives adopted only be available to those willing to take responsibility for their sexual misbehavior and are willing to address those behaviors.

There was discussion about factors that may be behind the reduced use of SSOSA sentences.

Brad Meryhew presented information on lifetime supervision to commission members. He noted that there are several hundred individuals in the community on lifetime

supervision who never served a prison sentence because they received a SSOSA sentence. A majority of SOPB members recommended that those on lifetime supervision be allowed to earn their way off supervision with certain eligibility requirements.

Members discussed the use of risk assessments and what the assessments represent.

Keri-Anne asked member if any additional information/data is needed or, if not, what they would like to say about SSOSA or other sex offense sentencing alternatives in the SGC's final report on sentencing alternatives. Members had some discussion but did not come to any conclusion and will continue the discussion at the next meeting.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

One member of the public addressed the commission and mentioned that Washington is one of seven states that requires lifetime supervision for people with a sex offense with no pathway off.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE SENTENCING GUIDELINES COMMISSION



10/10/2025

Judge J. Wesley Saint Clair (Ret), Chair

Date