

Community Transition Services

DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation Innovative Practice



A young person's success in reentering their community after a period of incarceration depends on participation in effective community-based services. Having least restrictive placement options coupled with therapeutic supports is a critical combination, and this is exactly what the Community Transition Services (CTS) program provides.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, lawmakers established a CTS program through House Bill 1186 to be developed and implemented by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). This program is a further transition from the least restrictive alternatives for community residential confinement for eligible Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) young people. CTS offers access to therapeutic supports and community-based interventions for those reentering their community. Young people participating in the CTS program will be able to complete their legal obligation in their community instead of in a residential setting.

For information on House Bill 1186, visit:

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1186&Initiative=false&Year=2021>.

CTS is a therapeutic and supportive community-based program where:

- A young person serves a portion of their residential sentence (up to 18 months) living in the community outside of a JR institution or community facility.
- Community resources are provided, including access to housing supports (housing vouchers for up to six months), independent living, education, employment, counseling, and treatment.
- Connections to natural supports and family are fostered.
- Young people are allowed community access for up to 16 hours per day.
- JR will identify community providers who reflect the young people being served regarding race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender expression.
- Young people are placed on electronic monitoring for the duration of the CTS program.

A young person is eligible for CTS if:

- They are on a JR sentence and have served 60% of their minimum sentence and no less than 15 weeks.
- Are in a JR facility serving a sentence with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and have a release date before their 26th birthday and have served 60% of their term of confinement and at least 15 weeks. Having DOC Supervision upon completion of their residential obligation does not disqualify them from eligibility for CTS.
- JR has determined that the CTS program is in the best interest of the individual and community using a risk assessment tool and has considered the availability of placement, treatment, and programming. This determination must include consideration of the person's behavior while in confinement and any disciplinary considerations.



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A young person is not eligible for CTS if they:

- Have pending charges or warrants.
- Are on a DOC or JR sentence for a sex offense and classified as a Level III Sex Offender.
- Will be transferred to DOC, are currently in DOC's custody, or under DOC supervision.
- Were adjudicated or convicted of the crime of Murder in the 1st or 2nd degree.
- Meet the definition of Persistent Offender. For more information, visit <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=9.94A.030>.
- Require an out-of-state CTS placement.

DCYF's JR regional field offices oversee the CTS program. Eligibility for CTS will depend on a newly revised risk and needs assessment and other established criteria.

CTS Screening Process

The screening process for CTS takes approximately 90-120 days to complete. After the young person is determined to be eligible, as described above, additional criteria are considered, including:

- Identified needs
- Recent behaviors of concern such as escapes, or escape attempts, positive substance use screens, serious program violations
- The young person's goals for CTS

Once the determination is made that CTS is the best place for the young person to complete their residential sentence, a referral form is filled out and submitted to a multi-disciplinary review committee for consideration. Upon recommendation for CTS transfer, local preparations continue, including community referrals, home visits, community notifications, and testing out the electronic monitoring equipment to ensure a smooth transition when the CTS transfer date arrives.



CTS Implementation Update

CTS launched in May of 2024 with the first participant transferring to Spokane County. As of October 8, 2024, there have been seven additional CTS participants in various counties including King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston.

CTS is now available in all counties across the state. Careful consideration is given to the identified needs of the young person, their goals on CTS, and the availability of community resources and regional capacity to support a successful transfer. JR has the capacity to serve up to 50 young people on CTS and has plans to slowly increase the number of participants over time to ensure a successful and sustainable practice.

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