



## Memorandum

**To:** Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu  
**From:** Champ Thomaskutty, Director – Health and Community Services  
**Subject:** Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center — Youth Conflict Resolution Workshops Contract  
**Date:** JULY 2, 2026

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Attached is a contract between Whatcom County and Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center for your review and signature.

- **Background and Purpose**

This contract provides funding for the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center (WDRC) to provide conflict resolution workshops for youth. Youth experience conflict daily and many lack the skills, awareness, and support to effectively navigate these challenges. Conflict resolution skills can help decrease destructive responses which can negatively impact students, families and their communities, creating harmful ripple effects, including increased juvenile delinquency and school violence. Conflict resolution education is a critical part of enhancing students' essential social-emotional skills, yet school staff are often unable to meet this demand due to being stretched to meet a myriad of competing needs and deadlines. This program provides Whatcom County youth with the skills necessary to navigate conflict in healthy, constructive ways and reduce risks associated with poor mental health and substance use. In 2025, the WDRC directly served 2,034 youth through partnerships with schools, juvenile court, community organizations, and families, including 1,945 students across all seven Whatcom County school districts and youth-serving institutions, as well as youth participating in diversion programs.

- **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this contract, in an amount not to exceed \$35,000, is provided by the Behavioral Health Program Fund. These funds are included in the 2026 budget. Council approval is required as total cumulative funding for this contract is expected to exceed \$75,000 in future renewals.

- **Differences from Previous Contracts**

This is a new contract, however, WDRC has held contracts for these services since 2018. This contract slightly revises reporting requirements from the previous contract (WC Contract #202207011), changing reporting from monthly to quarterly. This adjustment is intended to reduce the risk of duplicate participant reporting for individuals completing a workshop series that spans multiple months. Quarterly reporting will capture participants who complete either a stand-alone workshop or a series of workshops during the reporting period.

Please contact Ann Beck, Community Health & Human Services Manager at 360-778-6055 ([ABeck@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:ABeck@co.whatcom.wa.us)) if you have any questions or concerns regarding this request.