

**WHATCOM COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

**BILL ELFO
SHERIFF**



*PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Bill Elfo, Sheriff
RE: Snohomish County Jail Bed Agreement
DATE: July 20, 2022

Enclosed are two (2) originals of a contract between Whatcom County and Snohomish County Corrections for the use of up to 45 jail beds at the Snohomish County Jail for the housing and care of Whatcom County offenders for your review and signature.

Background and Purpose

The populations at the Downtown Jail and Work Center have rapidly grown since the 1st of the year, to the point that we no longer have space available to appropriately classify and house the offenders. The ADP (Average Daily Population) has increased 29% between January and June of this year, despite the use of booking restrictions which limit the type of offenses that the jail will accept for booking.

A compounding factor is the composition of the offender population. Approximately 42% of the population are classified as SNI (Seriously Mentally Ill), usually untreated at the time of arrest and approximately 80% of the offender population as a whole has Substance Use issues that effect their behavior in custody. Due in large part to behavioral health issues, approximately 20% of the offenders in the Downtown Jail have to be housed alone; this reduces our capacity by 35 beds.

In order to continue to take in new bookings, we are placing offenders in spaces not intended for housing such as the shower room on the 3rd floor of the Jail and a small conference room on the 1st floor. Over the past months, there have been several occasions where we have gone into a weekend with only 1-3 beds available for new bookings. We are seeing no indications that the use level will be dropping in the future.

In order to make space for new offenders, we are requesting to enter into a contract agreement with Snohomish County Corrections to use up to 45 of their jail beds for Whatcom County offenders. They currently have space available and have provided this service to us in the past; we contracted with Snohomish County for approximately 18 months prior to the opening of the Work Center.

Funding Amount and Source

A budget supplemental is being submitted concurrently with this contract at the July 26th Council Meeting. Funding will come from either the general fund as a transfer into the Jail Fund, or, potentially, from the ARPA COVID funding. The amount for the balance of calendar year 2022 will be \$1,200,000.

Differences from Previous Contract

This is a new contract.

Please contact Wendy Jones at extension 6505, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.

Encl. (2)