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Why join? "I have a voice. My peers have a voice, and I can be a voice for the union," said Marlanea.



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PUBLIC SAFETY PROTECTION PROGRAM

Washington Federation of State Employees | AFSCME Council 28

WFSE/AFSCME Members Only Benefits offers a legal defense program to our law enforcement members.



This program, called the Public Safety Protection Program, is the same offered by Washington FOP, but at half the price with added benefits.

WHAT IS THE WFSE PUBLIC SAFETY PROTECTION PROGRAM (PSPP)?

WFSE/AFSCME Members Only Benefits offers a legal defense program – Public Safety Protection Program – that is the same one offered by Washington FOP – but at half the price with added benefits – to our law enforcement members.

24-hour access to legal representation for on-the-job civil and criminal action administered through the Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) Legal Defense Fund. PORAC is the largest and most successful legal defense fund in the country for public safety officers. You must be an active member to receive services.

The WFSE First Response Program grants you twenty-four hour access to legal representation for departmental investigation under the collective bargaining agreement when you are involved in a critical incident involving a serious injury, death, shooting of another person, or whenever a firearm is discharged during the course of an employee's official duties.

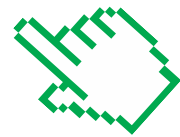
- Chris Coker, Attorney at Law: 360-791-6736

Project Help offers support free of charge for injured workers in any phase of the workers' compensation process, from initial filing of a claim to claim closure.

- Project Help: 800-255-9752 or ProjectHelpWA.com

How do I sign up?

Learn more and sign up at www.wfse.org/public-safety-protection-plan, or scan this code with your smartphone to learn more.



“We take risks every day to ensure public safety. We need legal back up. This legal defense fund is critical for law enforcement officers to have peace of mind at work. I will be encouraging my fellow officers to sign up for this program. We need legal back up to protect the future of law enforcement professionals.”

Bill Copland,
Community Corrections Specialist
Washington Department of Corrections
WFSE Member

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TONJ@WFSE.ORG | 360-480-1699**



THINGS I LEARNED FROM GETTING ACTIVE IN OUR UNION

By Marlanea Aspden, Corrections Specialist

I became active in our union in 2016. I became a Shop Steward because I wanted to assist my co-workers. Some were having a hard time. Shortly after, I became involved with the Regional Union Management Communications Committee with the goal of accessing the local jail. I worked with the law enforcement labor advocate to get that contract signed. This impacted my office's ability to get our job done and greatly improved our office morale, as we were no longer driving hours on end to book individuals.

As I became more involved, and learned more about how our agency works, and the power that our union has, this became a fascinating journey. I have testified in the legislature about bills that impacted our members and I have been involved in demand to bargain that have directly impacted the day-to-day operations of our agency.

Last fall, I was selected to be a member of the negotiations team for our contract. Later in the fall I was selected to become the co-chair and the labor representative to the Security Advisory Group.

I also was selected to participate in the use of force work group that is a team selected by labor and management to re-do our use of force policy for the community. The goal of this group is to update our use of force policy to be in compliance with the recent law changes set forth legislatively and to protect our members at the same time. None of these opportunities would have been available to me without getting involved. My involvement with the union has benefitted me professionally by getting me experiences and knowledge that I would not have had otherwise.

The more involved I became, the more I began to understand how our agency works, and the importance of having a voice in the direction our agency is moving. From my experience being on the use of force work group, and how our administration pushed out a flawed policy they knew would put officers in danger, reminded me again of the complexity of the organization and of negotiations. Our union, the Washington Federation of State Employees, has the technical knowledge, experience, and relationships to best represent us.

IT'S YOUR UNION. DON'T TRADE IT FOR THEIR SOCIAL CLUB.

Most DOC employees want a strong, member-run union where they can play a role in advocating for their safety at work and ensure financial security for themselves and their families.

But a small group of DOC employees have requested to change union representation from WFSE/AFSCME Council 28 to the Washington Assoc of Fraternal Order of Police (WAFOP).

We are committed to sharing and dispersing critical information to all DOC represented employees about what each organization has to offer—resources, structure, accomplishments, and more—because this is a critical decision and facts are needed. Our perspective is clear: there is no scenario in which being represented by WAFOP would be a positive step forward for DOC employees.

The lack of resources, structure, political clout and knowledge about DOC are too great for a small organization like WAFOP to be successful. They currently represent less than 200 law enforcement members in Washington under a union contract.

Most concerning is the lack of oversight DOC employees would have in their union if they join WAFOP. That's because there's a difference between a union and a fraternal order.

Unlike the Teamsters, Longshoremen, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, WFSE, etc., WAFOP is not a part of the AFL-CIO (12 million members) or the Washington State Labor Council (500,000 members).

The structure of the FOP would not allow for participation by all DOC employees.

Only sworn law enforcement officers are eligible to hold office and vote, according to the FOP's constitution. This would place all non-law enforcement officers at DOC in a second-class position where they wouldn't have the voice or ability to represent themselves and their co-workers at the bargaining table and beyond.

A lot of strange things can happen when a union functions like a social club – when members are not truly in control.

If you encounter a co-worker that is supporting WAFOP, or if you go to a WAFOP meeting, ask them:

- **Would all DOC employees have the right to participate in WAFOP by holding office and voting on contracts?**
- **How many members in Washington State are covered under a union contract negotiated by WAFOP?**
- **Would WAFOP bill me for legal representation if I'm a non-member?**
- **Has WAFOP ever negotiated its own contract?**
- **Why would I have to make an "Oath of Obligation" to the FOP? If I am expelled from membership for breaking the oath, would I still be represented equally under the contract?**
- **How much money is actually given to police officers and their families by the WAFOP Memorial Foundation? Has any legal action been taken against the WAFOP Memorial Foundation?**

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IT'S YOUR UNION. DON'T TRADE IT FOR A SOCIAL CLUB. CONT.

What's next?

The Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) will now review the change of representation petition to make sure it meets the criteria to trigger an election. If they have submitted the required minimum of 30% signed cards of the entire bargaining unit, then the petition will proceed and election details and logistics will be worked out by all parties involved.

Over the coming months we will make sure we share accurate, up-to-date information on all of the election details and processes. You deserve to have your questions and concerns addressed fully by both organizations and we look forward to an open and honest conversation about the critical issues facing DOC employees.

—Ton Johnson
Law Enforcement Labor Advocate/DOC



THE DISGUSTING TRUTH OF BARGAINING

Managers within the Department of Corrections have little power in establishing wages or salaries. That includes the Secretary of the Department of Corrections. The Office of Financial Management (OFM), otherwise referred to as State Human Resources, has that exclusive authority and responsibility. OFM has few checks and balances, and as you will see, we are not permitted to bargain many of the decisions or work that are foundational in bargaining as a union. This creates an uneven playing field and gives OFM the advantage. We're not taking that.

We are going after those changes legislatively that are necessary to even the playing field and ensure members are credited with the work they are assigned to do in terms of classification and compensation.

Classification

Classification is solely at the discretion of OFM. The union is limited to submitting written statements addressing concerns. These documents are written, and the accuracy of this foundational information is completed by those who have little or nothing to do with work you do every day. Unfortunately, that is apparent in your classification description.

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TONJ@WFSE.ORG | 360-480-1699

THE DISGUSTING TRUTH OF BARGAINING CONT.

This creates a deficit in terms of the foundational information used to compare salaries with other states. Supervision is not supervision when comparing the requirements of supervision in Washington State compared to supervision in Wyoming. The supervision model in Washington is focused on behavioral change and recidivism reduction. Wyoming is a surveillance, apprehension, and confinement model. The work you do, each day, requires higher level skills and abilities.

Salary Survey

The statute governing negotiations gives OFM the sole responsibility of conducting or contracting for a salary survey. Unions are not permitted to negotiate this. The salary survey utilizes the classification description to compare positions in other states. Yes, the same classification that we are not able to negotiate which uses generic terms to create the foundation of comparisons. The law requires the analysis include eight (8) Western states. You would think they would compare you with other states with closest comparisons related to cost of living, the economy, and the actual requirements of the job. That isn't the case. They use Wyoming and other states with lower costs of living, then they "adjust" based upon the cost of living—and the hill becomes steeper. They refused to look at comparisons for classifications working in the same agency, doing the same job, in the same state.

Labor Negotiators

Despite labor law precedent, labor negotiators are not given the authority to negotiate compensation without approval. What occurs is the old telephone tree: labor articulates their justification and position. This is often complex because of the work you do, and it appears to get lost in translation to those behind the scenes who actually have the authority to make the decision.

It's government, so you can rest assured they aren't talking to each other. That's exactly what came out in arbitration when put on the stand. Responses are slow or may not come at all, it's a demoralizing experience for participants on both sides of the table. Of course, they are quick to point out the classification description and salary survey in defending their position but not funding it.

The Washington Federation of State Employees fought and won interest arbitration for the Community Corrections.

Arbitration

Imagine presenting a complex legal case with multiple crimes. Remove the criminal aspects and replace it with certified articles of the contract. Arbitrations are complex and full of legal challenges. The room is full of subject matter experts: our attorneys and theirs. Each party is attempting to educate and sway the arbiter. In some circumstances that's not difficult. Certain positions are universal. Others are not. This is where supervision is not supervision in terms of an apple-to-apple comparison. Yes, it just came full circle. They rely heavily on the classification description and salary survey—but this is where the historical and current knowledge of your work pay dividends. Arbitrations are expensive and can easily exceed \$75,000. The award is binding.

Funding our Contracts

OFM has to declare the totality of all contracts are economically viable for the State of Washington. They cannot approve one or another. They are either adopted in their entirety or declined in their entirety. These are heavy lifts in which this union leads, and another example of our legislative power. That's why it's so important to participate in legislative efforts to fund our contracts.

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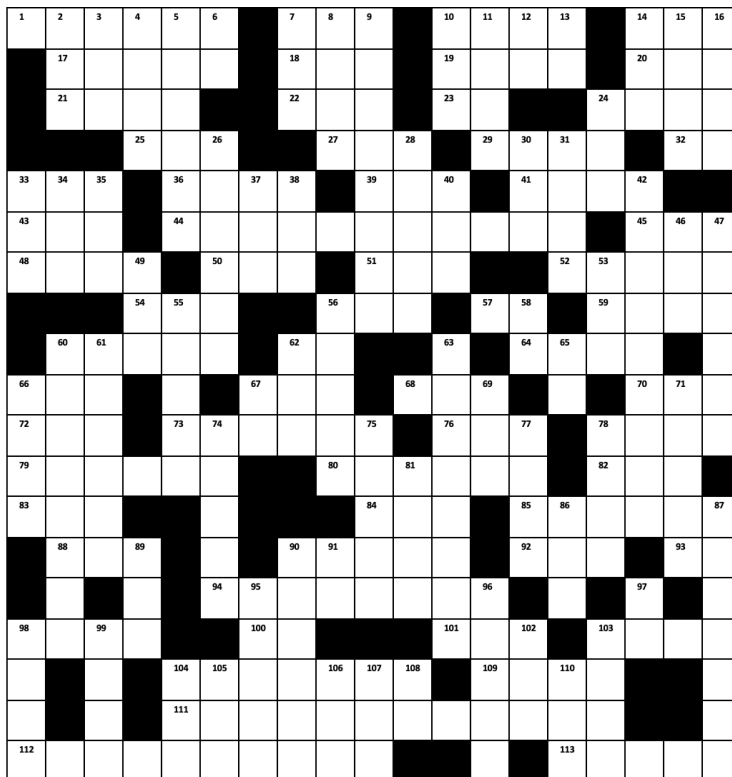
THE DISGUSTING TRUTH OF BARGAINING CONT.

Why is supervision in Washington State not the same supervision in Wyoming? What are the implications of that? These two questions are formidable in advocating for fair compensation and comparable worth. This is what we are going after: a change in statute allowing for unions to negotiate classification descriptions and salary surveys. This is how we compare apples to apples moving forward. This is how we impose truth in the classification system, and fairness in relation to salary surveys.

Visit WFSE.org/news and click on Lobbying: Fund our Communities and Contracts! to send a message to your elected official.



CORRECTIONS CROSSWORD



Across

1. New supervision model based on graduated re-entry principles
7. Dosage amounts for medicine, plural
10. Largest Union representing WA state employees (47,000+)
14. Sea, in French
17. Rabbits closest relatives
18. Batman's enemy played by Michelle Pfeiffer, ___ Woman
19. Word following spear, pepper or Chocolate Chip
20. 2010 Denzel Washington Film, "The Book of ___"
21. Horse feed, or gruel cereal
22. Safety glasses, exam gloves or ballistics vests, for example, abbr.
23. Card for storing files and photos
24. Unit of electrical resistance (plural)
25. Taxpayers ID
27. bird that was asked "How many licks to get to the center of a tootsie pop?"
29. Smell

CORRECTIONS CROSSWORD

Across cont.

- 32. Corral with a famous gunfight led by Virgil Earp
- 33. 2018 law to implement a process from incarceration to the community
- 36. Bread cooked in a Tandoori oven
- 39. “___, O, U and sometimes Y”
- 41. Regular meeting with WFSE union members & DOC leadership to discuss issues and priorities, abbreviated
- 43. Rowboat necessity
- 44. Dispute resolution that ends in a binding agreement, like the WFSE/DOC contract
- 45. Word between, ready and fire
- 48. WA state agcy responsible for handling union disputes and elections
- 50. Disney animation frame
- 51. Degree for orthodontists
- 52. Lead in to a song or essay
- 54. Union contract, abbreviated
- 56. ___ Arizona, naval carrier sunk in Pearl Harbor
- 57. Common opioid danger
- 59. Antagonist in the Lion King
- 60. Fancy yellow mustard
- 62. Off counterpart
- 64. When repeated, a response to someone droning on and on
- 66. Cash machine code
- 67. Evidence-based treatment to help incarcerated individuals understand the thoughts and feeling that influence their actiont, abbr.
- 68. Airport Code for the 49’ers
- 70. Binding agreement between DOC and WFSE between contract cycles, abbr.
- 72. Summer hrs. in Philly
- 73. They can be Ham, Shortwave, AM/FM or Satellite (plural)
- 76. Agcy that approves new drugs
- 78. TikTok or Facebook popular content
- 79. Nike, Levi’s, and Coke, for example
- 80. Why the bar went out of business?
- 82. ___ winning streak (2 words)
- 83. Popular lighter company
- 84. ___ & Stimpy, 90’s Nickelodeon cartoon
- 85. A dozen in a year

Across cont.

- 88. Classic Pontiac muscle car
- 90. Knights’ horse
- 92. ___ -mo cam
- 93. ___ a glance
- 94. type of job change allowed by our DOC union contract, article 4.7
- 98. Convenient Cash Options
- 100. word with Niño or Chapo
- 101. Caviar
- 103. Facebooks new parent company
- 104. Braided bread on the Shabbat
- 109. ___ no good (2 words)
- 111. The official power to make legal decisions and judgments
- 112. Formal charge or accusation of a serious crime
- 113. It can be probable or reasonable

Down

- 2. Comedian Margaret ___
- 3. 1999 WA state law passed to reduce the risk of felony offenders reoffending
- 4. Painting, Sculpture, Music and Literature
- 5. Popular small craft airplane company
- 6. Stadium ___, (abbr) Secondary Education in Tacoma
- 7. Individuals on supervision released from prison, abbr.
- 8. Guitar accessory, or rank in the mafia
- 9. Union members trained to enforce the DOC/WFSE contract
- 10. WFSE is currently pushing legislation for union rights for this excluded group at DOC
- 11. Cliched dog name that means “I am faithful” in Latin
- 12. Coast Guard E-3 Seaman, abbr.
- 13. Spielberg Hit Movie about phoning home
- 14. Just okay
- 15. Ticklish Sesame Street Character
- 16. Word that goes with flight, security or management
- 24. Hobbit foe

CORRECTIONS CROSSWORD

Down cont.

- 26. Naloxone brand name
- 28. Prospective Customers in sales lingo
- 30. One less than a trio
- 31. DOC official electronic file, abbr.
- 33. Political party currently in control of the US House of Reps
- 34. Sally Field movie "Norma ____"
- 35. Make a mistake
- 37. Pres Lincoln aka Honest ____
- 38. Zero in Soccer speak
- 40. Word commonly misused both with and without an apostrophe
- 42. Specific geographic area supervised by a CCO or field office
- 46. Roth 401k alternative
- 47. ____ Furniture for Less, west coast home furnishing stores
- 49. Individuals on supervision released from jail, abbr.
- 53. DOD agency based in Fort Meade, MD
- 55. The B in BIA or BoD
- 56. A group of workers joining together to negotiate with their employer
- 58. 1971 infamous hijacker Cooper, that parachuted into WA wilderness
- 60. Made amends
- 61. Together
- 62. Luke's uncle Kenobi
- 63. Person who commits an illegal act
- 65. Gulf Coast state between TX, AR, MS
- 66. State employee healthcare org, with a WFSE representative on the board
- 67. After cassette, but before MP3
- 69. Tribute Poem
- 74. A house or car is usually a persons main one
- 75. Common lip ailments
- 77. 2nd amendment right to bear these
- 78. Not stereo
- 81. What's for dinner?
- 86. Word before spice or news
- 87. Odd (or DOC boss)
- 89. Word after special or black
- 91. South of KY, north of AL
- 95. Supply with new weapons
- 96. Wins decidedly

Down cont.

- 97. Pickleball class
- 98. 135 acre beach park in West Seattle
- 99. Type of ring to see how your feeling
- 102. ____-pen
- 103. Matriarch on 'Who's the Boss?'
- 104. One of six, DOC non-residential facilities providing services and monitoring for offenders
- 105. Pizza or Jabba
- 106. Tutoring center at Seattle Central Coll.
- 107. Major name in Home Security
- 108. State where 56 acr. Is located
- 110. List of titles or parts in a book, abbr.

TOP 10 DEMANDS TO BARGAIN

By Ton Johnson, DOC Labor Advocate

This will be a recurring article; it's not meant to be all inclusive but will define larger changes. Revisions are being made to the website so you will have access to all demand to bargains filed.

GRE:

The Washington Federation of State Employees advocated for, the Teamsters concurred, and the Department of Corrections agreed to migrate GRE and work that was being performed in Prisons to CCD. The three primary factors driving the change had to do with controlling the mechanism preparing and releasing offenders to GRE. It was evident that this bargaining unit traditionally performed many of those direct services. The reliance on others resulted in less transition into the community. We began to lose full-time employees (FTEs) in GRE and the implementation of I-Coach. We are currently monitoring to see if the projected offender pool of those eligible was over estimated. The migration has caused significant working changes which are being monitored. There are multiple demands to bargain open. Once management settles on a policy we will negotiate the impacts. The changes may impact classifications and compensation.

I-Coach:

The development of I-Coach was a collaborative effort between labor and management. The supervision model is predicated on the principles of GRE. The Department has been given additional positions to roll out. We also negotiated a slower roll out due to current workload. There are several open demands to bargain. We have a tentative agreement to jointly request a classification review. This was strategically designed to create direct comparisons to elevate compensation levels. We are tracking those changes for bargaining.

Use of Force Outside Prisons

The Security Advisory Committee designed and Co-Sponsored by Ton Johnson and Mac Pevey completed their work. It was not included in the policy in error. The union immediately filed a demand to bargain. Our team has been at the table for the last month. The department accepted most of the proposed changes. Negotiations occurred informally. The policy is being reviewed by the Attorney Generals Office. The demand remains open until such time as it's posted and the training is delivered.

Use of Force Outside Prisons Transportation

Unlike the Community Corrections Division, the community transportation unit's chain of command attempted to capitalize on the policy by informing staff they need to adhere to Use of Force Prisons Policy. Apparently, they don't understand the difference between the 4th and 8th amendments. Simultaneously, they informed members they are not to engage in CCD training or seek equipment through CCD. Efforts to resolve this failed. Please review my notice sent to members.

Work Release

The change in title to Re-Entry Centers is a preliminary step in changing the scope and practices. We have an open demand to bargain and are monitoring the changes. This to open the lines of communication. Each change will be evaluated and negotiated as necessary. The following demand is an example.

Amend

Amend is a Norwegian Model. I placed the demand to bargain to access what is being changed. Because the implementation will be developed by each facility more, demands to bargain will follow. This one is focused on getting the information, familiarizing myself and members, and identifying impacts. This has the potential for sweeping changes, subsequently this demand will open and be informal for a period of time.

Continued on next page

TOP TEN DEMANDS TO BARGAIN - CONT.

Mandatory Arming

This change was agreed to in contract negotiations. We are working collaboratively with management to determine the necessary steps for full implementation. This will include changes to hiring practice, position descriptions, classification, and training. One of the impacts will be the hiring process. The academy will take longer, increasing vacancy rates. This will increase difficulty with recruitment and retention, positioning us for contract bargaining.

Hearings Officers

Reasonable cause determinations will be transitioned back to the Hearings Unit. This is based on an Attorney General opinion. The development of the plan is being monitored and the final date has not been determined. We are actively seeking IT solutions to off-set workload. This will increase workload and may require a desk audit to ensure the position description and classification summary is updated.

Records

We received notice that vacant positions are being eliminated. Records is one of the most complex areas within the matrix of work comprising supervision. Historically they have been under funded. We are pending information on the reduction.

Workload Study

The workload study is in the final stages of completion. The union and management jointly proposed the study to the legislature. We worked collaboratively on the design and implementation. I am updated every two weeks as the product required extensions due to the complexity of supervision. The initial data looks good. We will be bargaining projections and assumptions based upon the implementation of I-Coach.

STRAIGHT TALK: WHY THE WASHINGTON FEDERATION OF STATE EMPLOYEES IS THE BEST REPRESENTATION FOR COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

By Ton Johnson

Warning! Don't make this decision lightly; your livelihood, security, and professional interests are stake. Have you read the FOP's Grand Lodge Bi-Laws? Have you thought about the promises being made by the FOP?

Here are four examples and there are a lot more to come.

You will be subservient to Grand Lodge. You're excluded from electing one of your own into a leadership position within the Grand Lodge. In order to be eligible, you must be fully commissioned.

The allegiance of the Fraternal Order of Police is to fully commissioned Law Enforcement. Subsequently, issues conflicting with the interests of fully commissioned Law Enforcement will not be prioritized.

The FOP claims they can provide better services at less cost. The facts are members will be personally responsible for the administration of the lodge, finances, and any expertise will have to be contracted at members' expense, or you will simply go without.

The FOP is imposing a guaranteed cost of living increase in their dues. This increase is unspecified, so it could be any amount.

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STRAIGHT TALK- WHY THE WASHINGTON FEDERATION OF STATE EMPLOYEES IS THE BEST REPRESENTATION FOR COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS - CONT.

The work of representing Community Corrections is complicated. It takes a village of expertise to adequately represent Community Corrections in Washington State. We have specialists with years of experience immersed in their specialty. I'll name a few with a commitment to release more information about their credentials. These WFSE staff comprise your representational support. You should compare that to the FOP staff who would comprise your representational support.

Ton Johnson (Law Enforcement Labor Advocate), Chris Coker (Attorney), Jenn Thomas (Labor Advocate), Teresa Parsons (Classification and Compensation Labor Advocate), Dennis Eagle (Lobbyist), and Ed Younglove (Attorney) are recognized experts in their fields. They have gained profound knowledge of the work of Community Corrections. You can't replace our experience and knowledge simply by going to law school. Each of these staff are proven experts who have worked, in the State of Washington, for years. Not only are we/they familiar with processes but the rules. More importantly, each of us has established relationships with our counterparts. Not everything is a legal matter. Most are not. Those relationships assist in our ability to meet the needs of the members within the Department of Corrections. That is at stake in this vote.

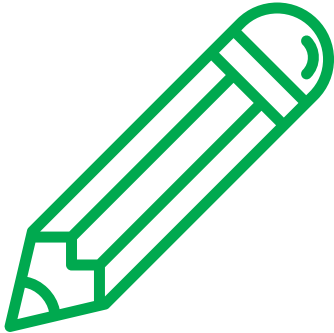
There is power in numbers. Both parties agree: membership strength is foundational in a collective effort. Member supporters of the FOP have campaigned for other members to drop their membership with WFSE. If the roles reverse, what will happen? The FOP set a 75% threshold on membership to continue to provide services.

What does that mean? They stated in a meeting in Everett that non-dues members would be represented and then billed for any services rendered. Despite those efforts to undermine us or handicap us, our union is still advocating, still winning, and we represent everyone. Why? Because we are a union, not a social club.

Here are the facts: The Washington Federation of State Employees provides full scope representation for over 40,000 employees in Washington state service. The Fraternal Order of Police provides contract and representation for less than 1,000 employees working in state service. Think of this in terms of a force multiplier. Because of our collective power, the Washington Federation of State Employees is the only union who has seats on the Select Committee for Pension Policy, State Investment Board, and the Public Employees Benefits Board. That is why we can provide better and more services than FOP.

You will be seeing a lot of information over the next several months. I urge you to ask the difficult questions, remove the emotions, and make an informed decision. If you do that, the only legitimate choice is the Washington Federation of State Employees.





CLERICAL CORNER

As many of you know our clerical staff are some of the hardest working members of DOC. They have struggled for years to get the working conditions, respect, and pay that they deserve.

The passage of our bill 2SSB 5021 was our first big win to change things for our DOC clerical members. 2SSB 5021 not only secured interest-based arbitration rights into law, it extended arbitration rights to all our DOC members.

Our bargaining team was prepared to utilize this change in the law to our members' advantage in 2020 but COVID and the Defund the Police protests meant we were not able to utilize this new law until 2022.

This past summer after OFM refused any increases for DOC members, our bargaining team was forced to go to arbitration to win a fair contract for our members. The impact of 2SSB 5021 would be tested and the difference was immediately evident. Unlike in previous years when the clerical staff was left out of the big wins that arbitration provided, our clerical members won big in 2022.

Here is a summary of some of the wins for our DOC clerical staff:

- Move to CC pay scale 1.3%
- Deemed essential along with the rest of DOC staff 3% pay increase
- No longer lumped w/ GG for recruitment/retention
- Significant job specific increases for most clerical job class (see the Corrections Corner QR code on pg 1 for raise specifics)

Though we made big wins for clerical workers, we need to keep fighting for our support staff to ensure they receive the pay they deserve.

Safety for our Clerical workers has always been an issue. For years our staff have had to deal with belligerent offenders who show disrespect and dangerous behavior as they enter our facilities. Our member leaders' hard work in both regional and statewide UMCCs helped us win protective glass and speaker systems in our lobbies to keep our clerical workers safe.

Things have begun to change for DOC Clerical, and these are significant improvements. We still have lots of work to do, but we are stronger together.

AN UPDATE FROM THE USE OF FORCE GROUP



After the law enforcement laws that were passed in 2020, WFSE and management collaborated in forming a Use of Force Group to rewrite the DOC Use of Force Policy. Once the model policy was provided by the Attorney Generals Office, then the group began to meet. This group was made up of CCO's, CRU Specialists, CCS's, and F.A's, either put forward by WFSE or Management, and the group was co-chaired by Mac Pevey and Ton Johnson.

After meeting several times, and coming up with a draft policy, this was submitted up to management for review. When the policy returned it was not reflective of the work of the Use of Force Group.

Our draft policy had included several changes, including an avenue to return to work after an employee is involved in a lethal situation, so employees are not left staying at home for months on end. This also included an increase in the amount provided by the agency for legal fees, from \$2500 to \$5000, with the Assistant Secretary having the ability to increase if potentially needed. This also included the RCW's which the group referred to in drafting this policy, so employees could see the laws that guided our policy.

Unfortunately, the policy and training moved to implementation without fulfilling the process. Our union was not notified. Management implemented the policy, fearful of missing timeframes established by the legislature. A demand to bargain was filed to protect our timeframes. Because of the relationship, significance of this policy, and the risk related to personnel safety, both labor and management opted for informal resolution. The demand to bargain will more than likely be withdrawn as management agreed to the changes we advocated for and ceased the training.

A separate demand to bargain was filed for the "Use of Force Outside Prisons" specifically related to transportation. Administrators within that chain of command don't seem to grasp the significance of this policy on officer safety. They have intentionally placed staff at risk in pursuit of their own agenda. The union is working with impacted members to file grievances and has not ruled out an unfair labor practice.

After an exhausting and lengthy informal resolution process, which is still ongoing, administration is now in the process of re-writing the use of force policy and attempting to come up with a policy that will support and protect employees. More to come....

—Jim Furchert, Community Corrections Officer,
Union Lead on Use of Force Group

A LETTER FROM WFSE LEADERSHIP

We need to talk. All of us, and all of you. WFSE has made some changes that you may not be aware of, but we think you should be. In the last couple of years, statements were made by some WFSE staff that didn't reflect our values and didn't reflect our commitment to you and the tremendous work that you do, every day, in keeping our communities and our families safe. We want to apologize to all of you for the impact that had on you, your jobs, and your lives. We also want to acknowledge that it shouldn't have been allowed to continue like it did. You continually put yourself on the line, at great risk to your physical and mental well-being. That is not lost on us. The roles you all play in the overall well-being of our state and in the lives of everyday Washingtonians can never be fully expressed, or appreciated.

We also want to take this opportunity to introduce you to our new leadership team, for those who are unaware of the changes that WFSE has made. Since July 2022, when WFSE made a change in our executive director, our current executive committee has engaged in weekly discussions and planning sessions on how to better serve our members and how to improve our union. We immediately started having discussions on reaching out to the members who may have felt ignored or silenced during the last few years and how we can re-engage folks in conversations. We want all voices at the table, because that's the only way we can continue to grow and thrive as a union. We also want to acknowledge that there may be some emotions or a lack of trust in our union due to the actions or statements made by previous leadership. That is completely understandable and valid. That said, we are promising you that your current leadership is committed to you and the work you do. We welcome feedback and want to hear from you. We want you to know that we remain committed to your rights to due process, to a fair contract, and to full representation.

There are always going to be disagreements among members, just like any other organization or even our own families, but we cannot allow those disagreements to be weaponized by outside groups or entities looking to exploit division for their own gain. Those who would tell you that we must choose between a powerful union, effective public safety measures, protecting corrections professionals, or standing up for justice are lying. We can, and will, continue to do all of those things, together.

All workers deserve the opportunity to be members of a powerful, nationally recognized and respected union like AFSCME. That power is what ensures that you have a voice at every table when it comes to your profession, both locally and nationally. And be assured that we will continue to defend you and your profession, like we did as recently as this past July at the AFSCME International Convention where we soundly defeated every offensive, anti-law enforcement resolution brought to the floor. The entire WFSE delegation was unanimous in our public and unwavering support for your profession, and that will not change. We take tremendous pride in the victories we've won for our members in public safety, not just around pay, but around workplace safety, mandatory arming, training, use of force protections, and much, much more. We will continue to fight for you, your jobs, and your families at the bargaining table, at the legislature, and at your worksites.

In solidarity,

Mike Yestramski, President
Kurt Spiegel, Executive Director

CONTACT TON JOHNSON, DEPT OF CORRECTIONS LABOR ADVOCATE:
TONJ@WFSE.ORG | 360-480-1699