



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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March 13, 2020

Statewide Family Council
Via email to SFC

RE: DOC/Vera Partnership Briefing and Listening Sessions

Dear Statewide Family Council:

Thank you for your letter dated March 9, 2020. We appreciate your interest in wanting to participate in our partnership with Vera. The department values the views and input of external stakeholders, in particular the families with loved ones incarcerated in our system. As you know, we had planned on discussing and briefing the Statewide Family Council (SFC) on the WA DOC-Vera Institute of Justice Initiative “Safe Prisons, Safe Communities: From Isolation to Dignity and Wellness Behind Bars” at the SFC meeting on March 21, 2020, and we also had planned to engage family members in other ways in the future. At this time, our resources and efforts are focused on COVID-19 and keeping our staff and incarcerated population safe, so unfortunately we will have to postpone the March 21, 2020 meeting. Deputy Director, Jeneva Cotton will be reaching out to reschedule this meeting.

Once we have navigated COVID-19 and state operations return to normal, we commit to provide, in partnership with Vera, a detailed briefing on the Department’s restrictive housing reform efforts, including what we’ve accomplished since the start of our partnership and what we look forward to implementing. We would also like to conduct listening sessions with members of the SFC, to provide an opportunity for DOC leadership and Vera to receive input from the SFC on the department’s restrictive housing reform plans and identify other ways to meaningfully engage with the SFC moving forward. We will be in touch to schedule the briefing and determine the process for identifying the members to participate in the listening sessions.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Stephen Sinclair, Secretary

SS:cg