

# Pre Booking Diversion Options



Prepared by the LEAD National Support Bureau—Washington State team

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**This is to provide immediate options for law enforcement to implement the pre-booking diversion framework for drug possession offenses set out in [SB 5476](#), as enacted by the State Legislature.**

Many Departments are asking for more information about Section 13 of the law, which requires law enforcement to offer a referral to assessment and services instead of arrest when encountering an individual who would otherwise be subject to arrest for simple possession. The offer to refer must be made a minimum of two times before an arrest for

possession or referral for prosecution can be made, and officers are authorized to make additional diversion efforts beyond the first two.

Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to work with existing programs and providers to identify and create police referral systems to comply with Section 13. New regional positions called Recovery Navigators will be established in the coming months, through the Health Care Authority, but local strategies are critical until these Navigators are in place. These local resources can still be used even after the state-funded Recovery Navigator resources come online, if they prove to be workable solutions.

Existing co-response, LEAD & Arrest and Jail Alternatives programs should be used

There are a number of Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) programs, Arrest and Jail Alternative programs, and similar diversion programs in Washington State.

Staff from these programs work closely with law enforcement to accept referrals and coordinate care to divert individuals with behavioral health issues from the criminal system. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to work with their local LEAD, AJA or other diversion program to take referrals pursuant to 5476. Here is contact information for those programs:

### Mason County

LEAD Project Manager  
Abe Gardner  
[agardner@co.mason.wa.us](mailto:agardner@co.mason.wa.us)

### Olympia

AJA Project Manager  
Neil Hilton  
[neilh@ccsww.org](mailto:neilh@ccsww.org)

### Port Angeles

AJA Project Manager  
Scott Brandon  
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### Snohomish County

LEAD Project Manager  
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### Thurston County

LEAD - Public Health and Social Services Senior Epidemiologist  
Mary Ann O'Garro  
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### Walla Walla

LEAD Case Management Supervisor  
Everett Maroon  
[e.maroon@bmh2h.org](mailto:e.maroon@bmh2h.org)

### Whatcom County

LEAD Project Manager  
Vanessa Martin  
[VMartin@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:VMartin@co.whatcom.wa.us)

In **Seattle, Burien, White Center/unincorporated North Highline**, and in **Metro Police** enforcement zones, officers and deputies may use existing LEAD referral channels:

- 24/7 arrest referral “green light phone” 206-455-0386 (respond in the field for a “warm handoff” for any referral in lieu of arrest)
- Social contact referral form for proactive follow up in the absence of probable cause:  
<http://bit.ly/LEADSCR>

For more information, contact Senior Project Manager Tiarra Dearbone, [tiarra.dearbone@defender.org](mailto:tiarra.dearbone@defender.org)

There are over twenty **co-response programs** or **field response programs** in Washington State that partner behavioral health professionals with first responders in police and fire departments. Offering to connect an individual to a behavioral health professional or peer who works with local police or fire also constitutes a diversion attempt for the purpose of 5476 until Recovery Navigators are in place.

Local resources in several communities willing to take your calls

These agencies have offered to accept police referrals during their hours of operation and in their service areas:

### Asotin County

Blue Mountain Heart to Heart  
509-931-0462

### Benton-Franklin County

Blue Mountain Heart to Heart  
509-676-3414

### Lewis County

Gather Church 8:30AM-5PM  
Meta Hogan, Program Administrator  
360-827-5707

*One hour call back window, if not immediately available due to other client interactions*

### Pacific County

Willapa Behavioral Health  
Raymond Washington Location 8 AM-7 PM  
360-942-2303

### Pierce County

Referral Information Contractor  
David Venes  
253-778-3674

### Okanogan County

Pivot to Employment-Wrap Around Services 8 AM-5 PM  
Kristi O'Neill  
509-505-7519

### Thurston County

Olympia Bupe Clinic, Capital Recovery Center  
Krystal Pierce  
360-451-0619  
krystal@crcoly.org

## 24/7 backup plan: Washington Statewide Recovery Helpline

In the absence of an immediately available local response resource:

**Washington Statewide Recovery Helpline.** Police and deputies in the field may call the 24/7 Washington Statewide Recovery Helpline at 866-789-1511 as a way to connect people to substance use disorder and mental health services. Offering to connect an individual to an operator at the Recovery Helpline or sharing a Recovery Helpline Card constitutes a diversion attempt for the purpose of 5476 until Recovery Navigators are in place.

## Considerations during the referral process



### Optimal

Law enforcement officers may facilitate a person to person “warm” handoff in the field, directly connecting an individual to a service provider (this is the LEAD or AJA model). An officer may offer transport and drop-off to a sobering center or triage center if the individual requests that.



### Preferred

Law enforcement officers may facilitate a phone conversation in the field, directly connecting an individual to a service provider who will follow up at a later date.



### Acceptable

Law enforcement officers may share information about an available resource by sharing a card or other printed material.

Individuals have the right to decline efforts made to connect them to behavioral health or other diversion services. An offer to refer to services is sufficient to adhere to 5476; there is no requirement to complete a connection to a service, and under no circumstances should officers pressure individuals to accept assistance or make an arrest when an offer is refused.

*The resources listed above are not intended as a comprehensive list. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to work with local programs and providers to develop referral systems that meet the needs of local communities. Important note: these resources do not take the place of existing crisis systems; nothing in 5476 effects the use of BH-ASO crisis resources in emergent situations.*

