

Copy and paste this email template about Reentry Programs:

Dear Washington State Legislator [Insert U.S. Senator____/U.S. Representative____],

Systemic racism impacts BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) when they exit incarceration and proceed to seek employment, housing and wellness. Not only are previously incarcerated individuals refused employment and housing due their criminal record, but as BIPOC – they face an additional layer of racism which can further prevent them from obtaining these basic needs and face negative health outcomes from the toxic stress and trauma they experience which results in a higher likelihood for high blood pressure, heart disease, anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

Kitsap County has taken steps to address the racial inequities and injustices through the Port Gamble S’Kallalm Tribe re-entry program which is available to tribal members, but we can do better. Not only do they lack funding to provide support to those re-entering the community, but there is a huge lack of resources and funding available for non-tribal residents.

Resources and funding need to be allocated to Kitsap County so as to provide community support and assistance to individuals seeking to return to a normal state of living and functioning. This is especially important for BIPOC considering the impact of systemic racism that disproportionately incarcerates these populations at higher rates and often glosses over them when it comes to resources.

Kitsap County has the opportunity to be a change agent. We can fund organizations that support programs that help previously incarcerated individuals obtain safe, secure housing, a GED, receive job training, secure employment, receive parenting classes, navigate systems to gain custody of their children, receive advocacy and case management for mental health and address the reasons they were incarcerated to prevent a return into the system.

We implore you to do the right thing and help our community construct a positive environment where we support one another in our goal of healthy outcomes for all – including those exiting incarceration. Everyone deserves a chance to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kitsap County Community Member,

[Insert name]