



BELLINGHAM MUNICIPAL COURT

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Court Administrator

January 2017 Update on Bellingham Municipal Court Jail Alternatives to Incarceration

The City of Bellingham entered into contracts with the Yakima County Correction Center and Friendship Diversion Services in 2016 as a part of Bellingham's Reduction Incarceration Challenge, (**BRIC**), to help address the request from the Whatcom County Sheriff to reduce the City of Bellingham's inmate population in the Whatcom County Jail.

There were 143 defendants who were transported to Yakima to serve their sentences in 2016 serving more than 3,200 days of incarceration. In July of 2016, the City was required to begin transporting pre-trial inmates as well as those whose cases had been adjudicated. Video Conferencing was arranged to hold Court remotely from Yakima to Bellingham Municipal Court. These hearings began in July of 2016 and continue to be held on a weekly basis.

To ensure that defendants were being adequately represented, the City hired a local Yakima attorney to assist City of Bellingham defendants in court hearings in the Yakima Corrections Center. All transportation to and from the Yakima Corrections Center is currently being provided by Yakima and is included in the daily bed rate of \$57.50 per day.

There were 212 defendants that completed serving their jail sentences on electronic home monitoring through Friendship Diversion Services, (FDS), in 2016. They served 3,099 days in total. The City supplemented 111 of these defendants with the cost of the monitoring. The cost per defendant per bracelet per day is \$14.50. The total amount paid by the City in 2016 was \$14,757.21 for the defendants who completed their sentences. Had those defendants served those 3,099 days in the local Whatcom County jail at last year's daily bed rate of \$98.00 per day the cost to the City would have been \$303,016.00.

Being placed on electronic home monitoring with the City allowed those defendants serving their sentences through FDS to leave their residence for school, work, treatment, counseling, probation/parole, medical/dental appointments, scheduled court hearings, attorney appointments and essential child care needs when verified by the program manager.