Institutional Library Services

The Washington State Library will expand and enhance the provision of direct library and information services to incarcerated and hospitalized populations in support of education, literacy, recovery and re-entry.

Library Card Project

In 2017 the Washington State Library began partnering with public libraries in Washington to provide library cards to people before they release, eliminating barriers to valuable resources.

Currently library cards are available through Seattle Public Library, Spokane Public Library, Timberland Regional Library, and Pierce County Library System.

WSL will reach out first to library districts around Washington where people are releasing most often, with the goal of providing library cards to all people no matter where they are releasing.

Reentry Resources

Since 2006, Institutional Library Services has provided accurate and up-to-date information to assist people in planning for their returns to Washington communities.

Through a partnership with the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges and Microsoft Imagine Academy, more reentry resources and digital literacy opportunities will be soon be available offline on laptops in prisons branches.
Access to Information

Washington is the only state where libraries in prisons and state hospitals are branches of the State Library.

This uncommon partnership with the Department of Corrections and the Department of Social and Health Services means high quality library services supported by a world class library system.

Programming

**ILS Reads**—ILS branches facilitate community reading programs and discussions with library patrons. There are also specialized discussion groups for individuals who struggle to read, or are unable to come to the library due to living in segregated units.

**Poetry**—ILS hosts poetry workshops, open mics, performances and presentations in support of incarcerated artists and authors. Support for these programs comes from local poets, Washington Poet Laureates, and Humanities Washington.

**Tablets in State Hospitals**—Western State Hospital library patrons can engage with digital literacy and positive leisure opportunities through meditation, educational, game, and drawing applications.

**Baby Reads**—ILS supports early learning for babies in the Residential Parenting Program Unit at the Washington Corrections Center for Women by providing story-time presentations and reading material in English and Spanish.

For more information about Institutional Library Services, visit our website at [www.sos.wa.gov/q/ils](http://www.sos.wa.gov/q/ils).