

## **Washington Corrections Moves to Nook For Training**

### **Local News**

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Posted on : February 13, 2012 at 8:40 am

OLYMPIA, Wash. - The Department of Corrections is using electronic book readers to save money, reduce paper waste and enhance the learning experience for staff. DOC's Training and Development Unit is now using Nooks, the popular e-reader, to deliver Correctional Worker Core training, the foundation of our training for correctional professionals who work in prisons and with offenders in the community. The six-week course manual includes nearly 1,600 pages of instructional material. The cost to print these manuals is around \$150. DOC purchased refurbished Nooks in bulk which lowered the cost for the e-readers to about \$139 each. While the cost of the Nook is lower than a paper manual, the savings for the Department comes as updates are made to the curriculum. As policies, laws and practices change, -- which is frequently -- the manual must be updated. The high printing cost kept DOC from making frequent updates to the manual. The Training and Development Unit assigned three people, Joe Waddington, Shelley Poston and Alena Dicke, to a temporary e-learning unit to convert the manuals to .epub files so that they could be used on Nooks. The initial conversion to .epub files is time consuming, but the updates are much simpler now. "Now, all it takes is the push of a button to get the manual updated," said Shelley Poston, a member of the e-learning team. "It couldn't be any easier. I'm not a computer genius, and you don't have to be to use the nook."

Not only does the Nook curriculum save thousands of dollars in printing costs, but it also ensures that students are getting the most current training possible. DOC is already considered a national leader in green corrections, which has reduced waste. Thanks to the e-readers, the Correctional Worker Core training is now nearly paperless and the Department will no longer have to print thousands of pages for new manuals and handouts or send the outdated materials to the recycle bin. The Nook has many features that adapt to a variety of learning styles. Students are able to highlight text and make notes in the margins, just as they would in a paper manual. Those who prefer to hear a lesson can choose a function that reads the text aloud. And images, hyperlinks and videos are available literally at a student's fingertips which enhances the learning experience. "Students and instructors love the Nooks," said Training and Development Unit Manager Todd Dowler. "Even people who are initially reluctant to switch over to the electronic technology end up liking all of the features." A short Nook training has been built into the CWC classes so that students can become familiar with the software before using it in the class. Dowler said the use of nooks will soon be expanded to include Supervision and Leadership training and the Basic and Essential Skills for Instructors courses. By the end of 2012 Dowler expects all DOC Academy training to be provided using the Nook/epub format