From the Correctional System to the Workforce: How State Policies Can Support Reentry

Webinar
May 18, 2017
Today’s webinar

• Overview of opportunities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
• Correctional education (State example: Kansas)
• WIOA planning (State example: Pennsylvania)
• WIOA Title I funding (State example: California)
• Resources for state policy advocacy
Using WIOA to Support the Employment of Adults with Criminal Records

Sherri Moses
Council of State Governments
Justice Center
About the Council of State Governments Justice Center

• National nonprofit, nonpartisan membership association of state government officials from three branches of government

• Provides practical, nonpartisan advice informed by the best available evidence on criminal justice topics

www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org
Reentry is a major challenge for communities across the country

10 million adults in the U.S. return from incarceration each year*

74 million adults nationwide have a criminal record

* 600,000 people released from state and federal prisons, plus 9 million people released from jails

87 percent of employers conduct criminal background checks
EEOC guidance prohibits blanket bans on hiring people with criminal records

Employers must consider:
1. Nature and gravity of offense
2. Time elapsed since offense
3. Nature of the job sought

26 states and over 150 cities and counties have fair hiring policies

Corrections and workforce development systems have overlapping populations and goals

Make the most of limited time and resources

Break the cycle of reincarceration and/or joblessness

Prepare people to be productive, successful, tax-paying, community-minded citizens
State plans are required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA*

* “Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers….”

SOURCE: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2015
Opportunities to leverage WIOA for adult correctional and reentry programs via:

- One-stop centers (American Job Centers)
- Correctional education
- Special initiatives
Delving deeper into WIOA: One-stop centers (American Job Centers)

- What resources are available?
- Do referral systems exist?
- How do job centers encourage access for people with criminal records?
Correctional education (WIOA Title II)

- Allowable categories of education under the WIOA statute include:
  - Adult education/literacy
  - Special education
  - Secondary school
  - Integrated education and training*
  - Career pathways*
  - Concurrent enrollment*
  - Peer tutoring*
  - Transition services*

  *new in WIOA
Funding special initiatives through governor’s 15% “set aside” in WIOA

- Expand successful programs
- Adapt existing workforce strategies to the needs of people with criminal records
- Test innovative strategies

- Supported by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, with guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor

- **Purpose:** Bridge and integrate best practices from the reentry, corrections, and workforce development fields

By sorting people based on risk and job readiness, we can connect them to appropriate workforce services.

**Step 1: Assess Risk and Needs**
- Low or “Lower” Risk
- Risk and Needs Assessment with Objective, Validated Tool
- Moderate/High or “Higher” Risk

This assessment measures individuals’ risk of reoffending and related needs, and helps inform supervision policies and non-employment referrals/program placements that address criminogenic risk and responsivity needs.

**Step 2: Assess Job Readiness**
- Lower Risk/More Ready (GROUP 1)
- Lower Risk/Less Ready (GROUP 2)
- Higher Risk/More Ready (GROUP 3)
- Higher Risk/Less Ready (GROUP 4)

**Step 3: Deliver Targeted Services**
- Integrated Risk and Job-Readiness Packages
  - GROUP 1: Employment Program Components
  - GROUP 2: Employment Program Components
  - Less Intensive Application of Service-Delivery Principles for Groups 1 and 2

- Integrated Risk and Job-Readiness Packages
  - GROUP 3: Employment Program Components
  - GROUP 4: Employment Program Components
  - More Intensive Application of Service-Delivery Principles for Groups 3 and 4

**Cognitive Behavioral Interventions**
Collaboration is key to successful outcomes

- Establish systems to share information across agencies
- Share best practices across fields
- Create referral system across agencies
Engaging the business community to promote employment opportunities

- Educate businesses on benefits and legal requirements about hiring people with criminal records
- Partner with chambers of commerce or other business organizations
- Share employer and employee success stories

“Getting ahead of workforce issues like [reentry and employment] is part of what the Birmingham Business Alliance does to foster economic development.”

- Brian Hilson, President and CEO
Thank you

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Accelerated Career Training in the Topeka Correctional Facility for Women

Dr. Gillian Gabelmann
Project Director, Grants Facilitator
Washburn University
Institute of Technology
Topeka Correctional Facility (TCF)

- Only women’s state correctional facility in KS

- Program started in October 2014
  - Second Chance Act funding from US Dept. of Justice (1 year)
  - Extended to 18 mos. By using equipment from TAACCT grant

- Improved Reentry Education (IRE) grant from US Dept. of Education
  - September 2015-September 2018

- Some state funding comes from Accelerating Opportunities in KS (AO-K)
Preparing women for release

- Average stay at TCF = 90 days
- We work with those who are primarily 12 mo. to 24 mo. from release
- Work with the facility staff to add program to their release plan
- Initially program ran about 8-10 weeks – all students had a GED
- Under IRE grant we are also serving GED students
Educational attainment of inmates

- **PIACC** study data that was recently released.

  - The data also show that on average women inmates have lower numeracy and literary skills than men.

  - Even those who *do* have a GED often have low basic skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data from PIACC study</th>
<th>TCF</th>
<th>Inmates</th>
<th>US Household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than HS diploma</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS diploma</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No HS diploma</td>
<td>49%*</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS diploma</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>No HS diploma</td>
<td>70%*</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*all students TABE scores
Program model – technical program

• Certified Production Technician – credential through MSSC
  – Safety, Process, Quality, Maintenance awareness
  – OSHA-10 and Forklift certification

• I-BEST Model came to Kansas in 2010 as the Accelerating Opportunities grant - we call it AO in KS or AO-K
  – Blend Basic Skills, GED preparation with technical skills
  – Team teaching - 25% overlap of time with both instructors in classroom
  – Case Management of participants
Program model - soft skills

- Job Readiness Coach
  - Communication Skills
  - Resume
  - Conviction Statement
  - Mock interviews
  - Case management

- Work Ethics Curriculum – Bring your “A” Game to Work – The Center for Work Ethic Development in Denver, CO

- Alternative Workforce Specialist – Department of Commerce/Corrections
  - liaison to Workforce Centers across the state
  - liaison to felon-friendly employers
Nonprofit collaboration with state policymakers

Will Heaton
Director of Public Policy and Advancement
Center for Employment Opportunities
The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) is dedicated to providing immediate, effective, and comprehensive employment services to men and women with recent criminal convictions.

Our highly structured and tightly supervised programs help participants regain the skills and confidence needed for successful transitions to stable, productive lives.
CEO’S PROGRAM MODEL

1. RETENTION SERVICES
2. JOB PLACEMENT
3. JOB COACHING & DEVELOPMENT
4. TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT
5. LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION
6. RECRUITMENT & INTAKE
THIRD PARTY EVALUATION

% Convicted of a New Crime

- Recently Released Subgroup (3 year impact)
  - CEO program group: 50%
  - Control group: 60%
  - *22.4% DECREASE* in recidivism

# of Days Incarcerated

- High Risk Subgroup
  - CEO program group: 300 days
  - Control group: 400 days
  - *30% DECREASE* in days incarcerated

BENEFIT-COST ANALYSIS

For every $1 spent on recently released and high risk subgroups, CEO generates $3.30 in savings, or $8,336 per person.
Workforce Partnerships

Map of the United States highlighting states where Workforce Partnerships are active. States include CA, CO, OH, NY, PA, and OK.
Pennsylvania: Engagement through WIOA planning process

- Included Department of Corrections at the table for state planning
- State plan informed local planning
California: Multiple avenues for engagement

- WIOA governor’s reserve (aka “set-aside”)
- California State Workforce Board Accelerator grants
- Partnership with community college to develop tailored certification courses for formerly incarcerated people
When you’re ready to act…

…NSC is here to help.

Technical assistance:

• Policy identification
• Policy development
• Coalition-building
• Strategic communications
• Network mobilization
Resource: Skills equity scans

• NSC members helped identify five “skills equity” policies that help low-skilled adults, including those who are re-entering the workforce after incarceration

• Our 50-state scans show where your state stands on each policy

• Among those is Integrated Education and Training

www.nationalskillscoalition.org/skillsequity
Resource: Skills equity toolkits

- Our skills equity **policy toolkits** showcase examples of states with strong policies & provide a sample legislative template for you to cut and paste

www.nationalskillscoalition.org/skillsequity
Additional publications to help bolster your case.

- *Foundational Skills* report highlights basic skills gaps among service-industry workers.

- *Adult Education & Middle-Skill Jobs* fact sheet emphasizes foundation for career-path jobs.

www.nationalskillscoalition.org/resources/publications
It’s time for your questions!

• Please type them in the chat box at right.