

Corporate Outreach Plan



2019 Report to the Governor

As required by Executive Order 16-05

Building Safe and Strong Communities Through Successful Reentry

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Department of Commerce



Lisa Brown, Director
Department of Commerce
lisa.brown@commerce.wa.gov

Stephen Sinclair, Secretary
Department of Corrections
stephen.sinclair@doc.wa.gov

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Corporate Outreach Plan

Department of Commerce: Executive Order 16-05 Summary

In Executive Order 16-05, Governor Inslee directed the Department of Commerce (Commerce) to build a corporate outreach plan with the Washington Department of Corrections' (Corrections) Correctional Industries (CI) to:

- Identify workforce needs that may be met with appropriately trained individuals with criminal backgrounds; and,
- Build commitment within the business community to remove barriers for qualified applicants with criminal records so that they may compete for living wage jobs.

Currently, there are over 19,000 individuals confined under Corrections' jurisdiction and more than 96 percent of them will be released back to their communities. The Office of the Governor released a report in May 2017 outlining various state agencies' efforts engaged in addressing barriers to successful reentry of individuals with justice system involvement.

Outreach Plan

As agencies whose missions are to strengthen communities and expand marketable job skills, Commerce and Corrections are well positioned to connect trained individuals with barrier-free reentry back into their communities throughout the State of Washington. Through collaboration, education and innovative ideas, skilled and motivated individuals releasing from incarceration can be seen by employers as promising candidates for employment.

Outreach Plan Goals

1. Build commitment within the business community and state agencies to remove barriers for qualified applicants with criminal records so they may compete for living wage jobs;
2. Communicate the skills, abilities and talents of individuals releasing to employers, job placement organizations, job coordinators, recruiters, and industry groups; and
3. Identify available jobs, sectors in need of talent, and careers for people releasing from incarceration.

Outreach Strategies

- Identify key sectors in need of a workforce through Commerce sector leads;
- Identify policy barriers, i.e., housing, employment, professional licensing;
- Obtain any data available related to the utilization of Certificate of Restoration of Opportunity (CROP) from the Department of Labor;

- Identify key stakeholders at state agencies to implement further hiring policies intended to encourage full workforce participation of motivated and qualified justice involved persons;
- Identify and engage influential business and other community leaders;
- Identify and participate in existing events or forums appropriate for the subject, i.e., CI's Discover Washington's Hidden Workforce employer engagement events; correctional facility-based career fairs;
- Identify locations and media for advertising (radio, video, magazines, podcasts); and,
- Plan and design multi-agency outreach materials.

Target Audiences/Stakeholders

Corrections and Commerce are actively educating Washington State employers about appropriately trained individuals to meet their workforce needs in addition to potential incentives for removing barriers to employment. Many employers do not realize that justice-involved individuals are returning to our communities with technical and soft skills, education, pre-apprenticeship training, job search and interview skills to name a few. Many employers can also benefit from information on potential tax credits and bonding programs available for hiring individuals with justice system involvement. Corrections and Commerce are targeting all Washington State:

- Employers;
- Public and private employment agencies;
- Local labor organizations;
- Associate development organizations like Workforce Development Councils, Rotary Clubs and Chambers of Commerce; and
- Public and private service providers.

Core Activities and Actions

- Statewide Reentry Council executive director has attended quarterly Commerce sector-led meetings to cross-pollinate employer information to Corrections;
- Corrections, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and Commerce actively seek ongoing opportunities to collaborate on new employment partnerships;
- Work with media outlets to develop a positive, third-party validated story;
 - *Suggestions: Drew Mikkelsen, KING5; Monique Ming-Laven, KIRO; Austin Jenkins, KNKX*
- Newspaper story highlighting activities (i.e., mock interview fair); and,
 - *Suggestions: Puget Sound Business Journal; The Seattle Times; Seattle Business Magazine; Spokane Journal of Business*

- Collaborate outreach at future employer events or conferences hosted by Commerce and/or Corrections.

Tools or Measures to Assess Progress

- All people leaving a state correctional facility or Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) facility receive electronic and/or hard copies of necessary documents to include certificates of completion, medical information, voter registration forms, etc.;
- Corrections and JR will pilot technological solutions that improve safe and successful transition to the community;
- The Office of Financial Management (OFM) will work with state agencies to reduce barriers to state employment;
- Department of Licensing has now established a mechanism to provide a Washington State identification card to individuals leaving a state correctional facility;
- Department of Social and Health Services will develop mechanism to pre-screen qualified individuals for federal and state benefits before leaving a correctional facility;
- Employment Security Department (ESD) will facilitate access to the WorkSource system to allow Corrections and JR staff to input employment and training information obtained by incarcerated individuals;
- SBCTC will create a post-secondary education and apprenticeship pathway in collaboration with Corrections, JR, and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- SBCTC and CI will identify both apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities within correctional facilities;
- State Cybersecurity Office will recommend secure internet-based reentry tools for Corrections and JR individuals such as ESD's job search system, library materials for education programs, housing information, college information, etc.;
- Health Care Authority shall develop a process that allows Medicaid benefits to suspend rather than terminate upon an individual's incarceration;
- Count of new contacts, by name and organization;
- Develop a cross-sector employer advisory group;
- Count number of employers willing to hire formerly incarcerated individuals;
- Count of facility or employer tours;
- Post-release employment via data sharing agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with ESD;

- CI established a documented process to regularly review labor market data developed by ESD that includes top occupations, skills, certifications, wage reports, etc.;
- CI established a documented process to compare Standard Occupational Classification codes to labor market data developed by ESD;
- Sustainable relationships/contracts or new activities that resulted from outreach;
- Identify and deploy best practices in employer engagement;
- Develop employer needs survey for businesses that employ formerly incarcerated individuals;
- Target growth in more difficult to enter fields and measure activity;
- Count apprenticeship participants;
- Assess longevity/retention;
- Identify median wage jobs;
- Improved competition for living wage jobs;
- Count of outreach that included Commerce sector leads and CI each year; and
- Count of Commerce sector leads and partner employers attending mock interviews or other Corrections/Commerce collaborations.

Agency Contacts

Department of Commerce:

Christopher Poulos, Executive Director, Statewide Reentry Council

Chris Green, Assistant Director, Office of Economic Development and Competitiveness

Department of Corrections:

Danielle Armbruster, Assistant Secretary, Reentry Division, Department of Corrections

Sarah Sytsma, Director, Correctional Industries, Department of Corrections

Appendix

Outreach Efforts to Date

- Participated in Dave’s Killer Bread Foundation Employer Summit, Summer 2017;
- Presented a collaborative, cross agency Employer Forum with Commerce, Corrections, and SBCTC, Fall 2017;
- Reentry Council executive director met with founder of Dave’s Killer Bread, MOD Pizza representative, Defy Ventures executive director, Pioneer Human Services, Workforce Foundation CEO, 2018-2019;
- Reentry Council executive director attended first national convening of formerly incarcerated attorneys and legal professionals to address barriers to professional trades including licensure;
- Reentry Council executive director attended TRAC groundbreaking ceremony at Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women, 2018;
- Held annual CI Mock Interview Fairs in state correctional facilities statewide; and
- Organized tours by CI at the following:

Monroe Correctional Complex tour attendees:

Cary Retlin, Commerce

John Thornquist, Commerce

Dr. Joseph Williams, Information and Communication Technology Sector Lead, Commerce

Joshua Grice, Washington State Institute for Public Policy

Brian Hatfield, Commerce, Forest Products Sector Lead

Emily Grossman, Commerce

Stafford Creek Correctional Center tour attendees:

Christopher Green, Commerce

Joel Getzendanner, Employment Security

Stephen Dunk, Commerce

Andre “Dru” Garson, Grays Harbor Inc.

Joseph Meyer, Grays Harbor Inc.

Brian Hatfield, Commerce, Forest Products Sector Lead

Emily Grossman, Commerce

Cary Retlin, Commerce

Kris Bitney, Washington State Institute for Public Policy

McNeil Island Stewardship tour attendees:

Joshua Berger, Commerce

Mike Pearson, Commerce

Cary Retlin, Commerce

Washington Corrections Center for Women tour attendees:

Cary Retlin, Commerce

Christopher Poulos, Statewide Reentry Council

Stephen Dunk, Commerce

Emily Grossman, Commerce

Julie Montgomery, Commerce

Kris Bitney, Washington State Institute for Public Policy

Joshua Grice, Washington State Institute for Public Policy

Stephanie Scott, Commerce

High Tech

Stafford Creek tour participant Dr. Joseph Williams, Commerce's Director of Economic Development for the Information and Communication Technology Sector, suggested contacting Unloop, which is training computer coding to men and women aiding their transition into the tech industry after release. Unloop recently received a grant to help coordinate a web-based statewide reentry information portal.

Christopher Poulos met with the creators of Unloop and they presented to the Council's January meeting hosted at Commerce in Olympia. Unloop remains a promising partner for continued collaboration. Christopher Poulos also met with a representative of MOD Pizza and toured and met with Pioneer Human Services staff. Both of these organizations have a mission and reputation as 'fair chance employers.'

Cary Retlin, Commerce, reached out to Margaret Au, the Business Development Manager in the Opportunity Management Center at Microsoft, to begin funding conversations through the foundation and discuss a potential employment pipeline. Brian Walsh, former policy associate with SBCTC, reached out to Microsoft on those topics. Chris Green recommends reaching out to Amazon's public relations department first, then contact the hiring manager/workforce development unit. The Statewide Reentry Council Executive Director, Christopher Poulos, will reach out to Amazon's public relations department and report back to the Council.

At a Statewide Reentry Council meeting, Mauricio Ayon presented "Second Chance Hiring," a new website that provides information for business owners to encourage them to hire people who have been justice system involved. A project with the Washington Technology Industry Association, the website highlights fair chance hiring businesses and encourages other businesses to participate in fair chance hiring practices.

Maritime

CI initiated a series of meetings and tours including Commerce, SBCTC, and a Puget Sound shipbuilder, Vigor, to expand and formalize a partnership to prepare men for work in the maritime industry after leaving Cedar Creek Corrections Center. To date, three meetings have occurred, two at the McNeil Island Stewardship and one at Vigor. Around 10 men currently travel to McNeil Island to support the ferries and other maritime infrastructure that supports the Special Commitment Center and other activities on the island. Currently, SBCTC and CI are exploring more training support so men are ready to be employed by Vigor with specific high demand skills and certifications. The training partnership will be replicated elsewhere if it is successful.

Construction and Demolition

Christopher Poulos met with Mari and Aaron Borrero regarding their company, American Abatement and Demo, an asbestos and lead removal company that employs many formerly incarcerated people. Their goal is to assist people with criminal records by providing employment and mentorship as a way to create future opportunities for their employees. They would like to start working more with Corrections to address the many needs of formerly incarcerated individuals.

In March 2018, the State of Oregon officially recognized CI's Trade Related Apprenticeship Coaching (TRAC) program as a pre-apprenticeship program. The certificate states, "Through the generous gift of your time and energy, you have played an important part in the development of a sound national apprenticeship system and have made an outstanding contribution to apprenticeship and training in Oregon." Women releasing in southwest Washington have an opportunity to continue their future apprenticeship employment opportunities in the trades through the recognition.

Collaboration with Discover Washington's Hidden Workforce Employer Forum

In 2018, for the first time, Commerce and the Statewide Reentry Council collaborated with CI to promote the Discover Washington's Hidden Workforce Employer Forum at the Puyallup Fairgrounds.

Mock Interview Events

Cary Retlin attended multiple mock interviews around the state and Commerce is committed to continuing to help bring new Commerce connections to future events. CI and Commerce will collaborate to grow employer engagement at similar events in the future. Retlin also joined Joshua Berger, the sector lead for the maritime industry, for a mock interview fair for Cedar Creek Corrections Center workers. Commerce has committed to ensuring that all sector leads attend a mock interview to learn more about the needs of men and women reentering the community – and recruit employers to attend those events. Christopher Poulos also attended and presented at a job fair event at the Federal Detention Center in SeaTac.