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PROGRAMS THAT WORK

Workforce development programs across the country have developed many innovative strategies that successfully address the employment needs of people with criminal records. Some of these programs work exclusively with participants with criminal records while others serve a variety of clients. Below is a list of programs that have been successful. (This list is by no means definitive; certainly there are many other programs of equal merit.)

The **Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO)** in New York City was created in 1978 by the Vera Institute of Justice because many newly released offenders were being re-arrested and it appeared that those who were employed were less likely to be re-arrested. CEO provides transitional employment services to former offenders immediately after release, a critical and the most vulnerable stage of the reintegration process. CEO provides assistance to its participants as well as collaborating employers. The program works with the New York State Division of Parole, New York State Department of Corrections, and the City Department of Probation for adults and youth. CEO helps about 70 percent of its participants find full-time employment within two to three months, with most jobs paying more than minimum wage and providing fringe benefits.

Center for Employment Opportunities
32 Broadway
New York, NY 10006
Phone: 212-422-4430
Fax: 212-422-4855
Website: <http://www.ceoworks.org>

Corrections Clearinghouse is a project of the Washington State Employment Security Department and provides training and technical assistance to assist offenders obtain employment and successfully integrate into the community. Services offered by Corrections Clearinghouse include: Transition to Employment Classes that are held in secure facilities as well as One-stop centers, Community Education Workshops for community organizations and One-stop staff, and Job Search & Placement Assistance for offenders who are re-entering the workforce. Corrections Clearinghouse recently revised their [Offender Re-Entry Guide](#). Contact them to request a copy.

Corrections Clearinghouse
PO Box 9046
Olympia, WA 98507-9046
(360) 407-5151
Website: <http://www.wa.gov/esd/cch>

The **Delancey Street Foundation** was founded in 1971 by Dr. Mimi Silbert and the late John Maher. Delancey Street is described as a leading self-help residential education center for former offenders and former substance abusers in the country. During a two- to four-year stay at Delancey Street, residents learn social survival skills, and equally important, academic and vocational skills. Delancey Street supports itself primarily through a number of training schools, which provide vocational skills to all the residents while generating income through revenues earned from business services. Training opportunities include a moving and trucking school, restaurant and catering services, print and copy shop, retail and wholesale sales, paratransit services, advertising specialties sales, Christmas tree sales and decorating, and an automotive service center, among others. More than 14,000 clients have graduated from the program. Delancey Street operates facilities in New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, and Los Angeles and is headquartered in San Francisco.

Delancey Street Foundation
600 Embarcadero
San Francisco, CA 94107
Phone: 415-957-9800
Fax: 415-512-5186
Website: <http://www.eisenhowerfoundation.org/grassroots/delancey/>

The **Osborne Association** in New York City was founded in 1931. The Osborne Association operates a broad range of treatment, educational, and vocational services for people involved in the adult criminal and juvenile justice systems, including prisoners and former prisoners. It serves more than 6,500 people annually in community sites and courts in New York City as well as in city jails and State prisons.

In 2001, the Osborne Association merged with the South Forty Corporation, the oldest employment organization in New York State exclusively for individuals involved in the criminal justice system. South Forty Employment and Training Services offers comprehensive vocational services to people with criminal records. South Forty provides assessment, testing, career and educational counseling, job-readiness workshops, job training, and post-employment support in adjusting to the demands of the workplace and staying employed. Clients are encouraged to return for referrals for additional services or better jobs after working successfully at their first placement. South Forty secures employment for approximately 300 men and women annually.

The Osborn Association
36-31 38th Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
Phone: 718-707-2600
Fax: 718-303-3103
Website: <http://www.osborneny.org/>



Our Place, DC is a non-profit organization established in 1999 to serve women who are incarcerated or recently released from prison and jail and their families. With the primary goal of preventing re-incarceration, the organization works to assist women in remaining connected to their families while they are incarcerated, help them prepare for their release, and support them as they reenter and reconnect with their communities.

Our Place, DC provides in-prison and post-release services, including transportation services for family members to correctional facilities, support groups, pre-release classes, HIV/AIDS peer prevention and education, legal services clinics, and a program for children and their caregivers. Post-release services include a support center offering employment and housing resources, a safe and nurturing environment, and referrals to other support services necessary to obtain and retain employment.

Our Place, DC
1236 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20003
Phone: 202-548-2400
Fax: 202-548-2403
Website: <http://www.ourplacedc.org/>

Pioneer Human Services (PHS) is an entrepreneurial non-profit organization that improves the lives of its clients through employment and training, social services, and housing. Since 1962, PHS has offered a “Chance for Change” to high-risk populations, particularly adults and juveniles who are former offenders and substance abusers. PHS serves more than 6,000 clients a year and 1,900 individuals at any given time in its employment, training, counseling, community corrections, and housing programs and facilities. PHS’ philosophy is to serve its clients and the community through social enterprise.

The PHS employment and training model consists of several manufacturing industries and distribution services. PHS also operates a retail food business and construction service. Pioneer Industries manufactures and finishes light metal parts for aircraft, telecommunication, medical, and power management systems. Pioneer Distribution Services has three business units that operate under this division to provide assembly, repackaging, and transportation services. PHS prepares and delivers more than 750,000 meals annually to Pioneer programs and third party customers. Pioneer Construction Services employs more than 60 people in remodeling and construction projects, including roofing and siding.

Pioneer Human Services
7440 West Marginal Way S.
Seattle, WA 98108
Phone: 206-768-1990
Fax: 206-768-8910
Website: <http://www.pioneerhumanserv.com/>

Project RIO is administered by the Texas Workforce Commission in collaboration with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), the Windham School District and the Texas Youth Commission (TYC). The project provides a link between education, training and employment during incarceration with employment, training, and education after release. Project RIO develops an individualized treatment plan to identify a career path for participating prisoners and to guide placement decisions.

Prior to an inmate’s release, the program conducts a comprehensive evaluation to assess the needs of the prisoner and assist in the selection and placement in Windham College, TDCJ and TYC programs. The multi-step evaluation process includes information gathering, goal-setting, program placement and self-assessment. Unit or facility staff also provides placement services to give prisoners practical work experience in their areas of training.

After a prisoner’s release, Project RIO staff provides participants with individualized workforce development services including job preparation and job search assistance. RIO participants attend structured job search workshops that focus on basic skills such as completing a work application, preparing a resume, and performing in a mock interview.

Texas Workforce Commission
Project RIO Staff
101 E. 15th St., Room 506T
Austin, TX 78778
Phone: 800-453-8140
Website: <http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/ex-offender-employ.htm>

Rubicon Enterprises, Inc. is a support corporation of Rubicon Programs, Inc., which provides vocational rehabilitation and training, as well as transitional employment through its industries. Since 1973, Rubicon has built and operated affordable housing and provided employment, job training, mental health, and other supportive services to people who have disabilities, are homeless, or are otherwise economically disadvantaged. Rubicon works with more than 3,500 participants each year in one or more of its many programs. Innovative and comprehensive, these programs are designed to meet the diverse needs of the participants, whether they be economic, health-related, or both. Rubicon does not specifically target people with criminal records, however many fall into one of the categories it serves. The program offers a myriad of services ranging from basic pre-employment skills, job search assistance, life skills, on-the-job paid training, and job retention support services.

Rubicon Programs, Inc.
2500 Bissell Ave.
Richmond, CA 94804
Phone: 510-412-1725
Fax: 510-235-2025
Website: <http://www.rubiconpgms.org/pages/home.html>

The **Safer Foundation** in Chicago is the largest community-based provider of employment services for former offenders in the United States. Safer helps individuals with virtually every aspect of the community reentry process, pre- and post-release. Safer provides a range of direct services through education, employment, and support services that are delivered as community-based aftercare or to residents of its secured residential facilities.

Safer has helped more than 40,000 participants find employment since its inception in 1972. Safer's collaborations with the Illinois Department of Corrections, employers, and other community-based organizations demonstrate that public-private partnerships can work. Safer provides services from nine locations in Illinois and Iowa with a staff of 250.

Safer Foundation
571 West Jackson
Chicago, IL 60661
Phone: 312-922-2200
Fax: 312-922-0839
Website: <http://www.safer-fnd.org/>

San Francisco Works (SFWorks) was founded in 1997 by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce to coordinate industry-specific training for low-income, un- and underemployed individuals. SFWorks was created to serve San Francisco's welfare/TANF population but expanded its services to include assisting General Assistance recipients, the working poor, people with criminal records, and dislocated workers. By ensuring the relevance and quality of training to employers, SFWorks opens doors previously closed to nontraditional workers. Simultaneously, by engaging employers at the front-end of program development, SFWorks is able to assure low-income clients that they are being prepared for success on the job. SFWorks acts as the intermediary among three important workforce partners: the Northern California Service League, employers, and the City College of San Francisco.

San Francisco Works
235 Montgomery Street, 12th floor
San Francisco, CA 94104-3103
Phone: 415-217-5193
Fax: 415-576-9256
Website: <http://www.sfworks.org/>

Steps-to-Success is designed to provide comprehensive educational, social, and employment services to enable job seekers to gain the skills and qualifications necessary to obtain permanent jobs or to move into a new career. The program is a collaborative partnership among Mt. Hood and Portland Community Colleges, Oregon Adult and Family Services (AFS), Oregon Employment Department, Work Systems, Inc., Human Solutions, numerous employers in the Portland Metro Workforce, and State and local community action organizations.

Steps-to-Success East
1415 SE 122nd Avenue
Portland, OR 97233
Phone: 503-256-0432
Fax: 503-256-5503
Website: <http://dwp.bigplanet.com/steps2success>



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This information is not legal advice and is provided only for reference purposes. If legal advice is necessary, a lawyer should be consulted. Contact a legal aid group for low- or no-cost legal assistance. This information is current at time of publication, July 2004.