STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES
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Workforce Services Guidance – Delivering Reentry Services to Justice-Involved Individuals - WIOA

Effective Date: November 30, 2017
Duration: Indefinite

Subject:
Guidance and best practices for implementation of reentry services by Local Workforce Development Boards through utilization of WIOA formula funds and Wagner Peyser allowable activities. More information on formula funds can be found in ***Workforce Services Re-allotment of Formula Funds TN-WIOA (16-15)***. Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, (2016, November 18). *Workforce Services Policy - Re-allotment of Formula Funds TN WIOA (16-15).* Retrieved from URL http://tn.gov/assets/entities/labor/attachments/WFS_Policy_-_Reallotment_of_Program_Formula_Funds_-_WIOA_2017.pdf

Scope:
Adult Education (AE), American Job Center (AJC), American Job Center Operator (AJC Operator), American Job Center Access Point (AJC Access Point), Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO), Division of Workforce Services (WFS), Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), Office of the Governor, Office of Registered Apprenticeship (RA), Rehabilitation Services (RS), Regional Council (RC), State Workforce Development Boards (SWDBs), Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TDECD), Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS), Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD), Tennessee Eligible Training Providers (TETPs), Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Workforce System Subrecipients (Subrecipients), Workforce System Partners (Partners)

References:

20 CFR 680.900; 20 CFR 681.510; 20 CFR 1010; 38 U.S.C. 4215; WIOA Section 3(2); WIOA Section 3(15); WIOA Section 107(d)(10)((E); WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B); WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(C); WIOA Section 129(c)(2); WIOA Section 132; WIOA Section 133(b)(2)(B); WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(A)(i); NACO Second Chances: http://www.naco.org/resources/second-chances-safer-counties-workforce-development-and-reentry; TEGL 08-15; Workforce Services Co-Enrollment Policy TN-WIOA (17-7); Workforce Services Minimum Participant Cost Rate TN-WIOA (17-11); Workforce Services Re-allotment of Formula Funds TN-WIOA (16-15); Workforce Services Veterans and Eligible Spouse Priority of Service Policy TN-WIOA (17-5)

I. Background:

Approximately one in three adults in the U.S. has a criminal record, and men with criminal records account for about 34% of all nonworking men ages 25 to 54. Nationally, there is a total estimated loss to the economy of $78 to $87 billion every year as a result of people with criminal records being unemployed or underemployed. Policymakers across the political spectrum recognize the scope and importance of this issue, and employment has been identified as a key reentry issue that must be addressed to reduce recidivism and improve public safety. National Reentry Resource Center, (2017, May). *What Corrections and Reentry Agencies Need to Know.* Retrieved from URL https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/6.13.17_WIOA_What-Corrections-and-Reentry-Agencies-Need-to-Know.pdf

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) has provided Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) an opportunity to improve public safety, reduce government spending, and grow the local economy through work-based reentry programs. Lowering the recidivism rate through work-based programs diminishes incarceration costs, increases tax revenue, and provides local businesses with the additional skilled labor they need.

WIOA defines "ex-offenders" as a subgroup of individuals who face a significant barrier to employment; however, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) and Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC) chose to designate this group as justice-involved individuals (JIIs). The term "offender" is superseded by "justice-involved individual" because JII:

- Uses people-first language which aims to avoid dehumanization.
- May more accurately represent the scope of "ex-offender" as defined by WIOA:
  - Ex-offender in common parlance refers exclusively to those who were convicted of a crime and then released from incarceration.
  - JII encompasses those awaiting trial through those on parole.
    - JII does not imply guilt or conviction when marketing participants to potential employers. This could improve the entered employment

rate (EER).

- JII promotes the inclusion of all stages of the criminal justice process (including those currently in incarceration) during local planning.
  - For example, LWDBs might develop strategies to better assist those on parole to fulfill obligations which may increase the ERR.

II. How to Fund Re-entry Services and Jail Programs:

LWDBs must consider how they will utilize WIOA Title I funds — for the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs — to provide effective services to JIIs while also drawing down WIOA funds according to which stream has the most funds. Funds used to provide WIOA Title I services to JIIs must balance the needs of the individual with the availability of monies from the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

Once the service provider has determined program eligibility they must then decide which WIOA Title I funding stream is most appropriate for providing services to JIIs. An individual who is twenty-three (23) years of age and not currently attending school qualifies for either Adult or Out-of-School Youth programs. In this scenario, staff must look at funds available through Adult and Youth programs to determine which program requires more allotment or expenditure. For example, if Adult funds are nearly exhausted and Out-of-School Youth funds are at risk of recapture by the State then it is imperative that the JII be provided services under Youth funding. TDLWD suggests that services be provided according to which stream needs to be drawn down to avoid recapture of funds. LWDBs and service providers must be strategic and base their decisions on the LWDB's forty percent (40%) minimum participant cost rate and eighty percent (80 %) obligation rate. ***Workforce Services Minimum Participant Cost Rate TN-WIOA (17-11)***

LWDBs and service providers may use the criteria referenced below to determine eligibility for each Title I program. If a JII meets the criteria of one of these groups, LWDBs may use the funding stream provided to enroll and provide services to the individual.
Dislocated Worker: ***WIOA Section 3(15)***
Adult: ***WIOA Section 3(2)***
Out-of-School Youth: ***WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)***
In-School Youth: ***WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(C)***

States can also use Wagner-Peyser funds to support program evaluation and the development of linkages with related services provided under other federal or state programs. Funded activities may be provided through self-service, facilitated self-help services, or staff-assisted services. Assessment of skills levels, career

guidance, job search workshops, and referral to training may also be provided.

III. Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC):

TDOC is responsible for supervision of incarcerated offenders and offenders on community supervision (i.e. probation, parole, community corrections). All offenders receive orientation upon entry into the department. Preparation for release begins upon entry; reentry release plans are developed in conjunction with the offender and must be approved prior to release.

TDOC utilizes an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to reentry to include education, health care, behavioral health, employment, mentoring, and family engagement to develop targeted assessments for offenders that focus on transitional reentry services — such as career assistance, securing industry-recognized certifications, and development of career-focused work ethics — in order to help offenders attain and sustain meaningful employment necessary for post-release success.

Transitional reentry services are available at facilities throughout the State and at TDOC Transition Centers, Community Resource Centers (CRC) and Day Reporting Centers (DRC). These locations help TDOC to ensure that continuity of the programming and services provided from incarceration through community supervision. TDOC has also established partnerships and collaborations with other state agencies and with community service agencies that provide transitional reentry services to JIIs.

Recommendations from TDOC

Below are recommendations from TDOC as to how LWDBs and their service providers can collaborate with TDOC to improve reentry services in their respective Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) through:

- Continued coordination, communication, and leveraging of state resources;
- Effective utilization of existing resources (e.g. state, NGOs, nonprofits, and faith-based community resources);
- Consideration of reentry and rehabilitative services when allocating resources;
- Increased employer engagement in employing JIIs;
- Assessment of obstacles and burdens associated with reentry;
- Work with employers to create work experience and training opportunities; and
- Consider incentives to encourage employer engagement in training and in hiring JIIs.

TDLWD strongly encourages LWDBs and their One-Stop-Operators to connect to the TDOC community centers, facilities, and probation offices within their LWDAs to establish partnerships both inside and outside of the American Job Center.

IV. Guiding Principles:

Employment is widely seen by practitioners, researchers, and policymakers as crucial to successful reentry by reducing the risk of recidivism. Meaningful employment can help individuals succeed in the community after release from incarceration because it refocuses their time and efforts on pro-social activities. Improving local reentry outcomes requires TDLWD, TDOC, LWDBs, and other partners to better align and integrate services across the criminal justice and workforce systems. LWDBs and the AJC system should utilize the State Enterprise approach to partner and leverage resources with all applicable State agencies when developing reentry/jail based programs. The guiding principles of reentry services are:

1) **Team-based Case Management:** Participants will develop a joint reentry plan with all program partners that include pre-release vocational training and AJC services during incarceration and transition. These "hand-off" services are carried out through partnerships with TDOC, probation and parole, and AJCs.
2) **Empowerment and Ownership:** Peer-to-peer learning models, entrepreneurial development, career coaching, and data informed assessments provide workforce services the tools, resources, and support for a successful reentry process driven by the JII.
3) **Targeted Job Development**: Job development must focus on employers willing to hire the formerly incarcerated and should be focused on pre-release services that will turn into post-release jobs.
4) **Work Release Programs:** During incarceration approved incarcerated individuals are allowed to return to the community to pursue gainful employment or learn new, job-specific skills while working.
5) **Established AJC Access Points:** Where available, local jails — which are equipped with computers with internet access — will allow incarcerated individuals without barriers to use Jobs4TN to browse jobs, post a resume, or make informed decisions on career options by accessing labor market information.
6) **Education:** Many jails across the State have developed partnerships with local Adult Education to provide on-site training and administration of the HiSET examination to those lacking a high school diploma. Partnerships with TCATs have also provided on-site training to obtain industry-recognized certifications.

7) **Programs Carried out for Individuals with Disabilities;** including programs carried out by State agencies relating to: intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities, activities carried out by Statewide Independent Living Councils established under ***Section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 796d)***, programs funded under ***Part B of Chapter 1 of Title VII of such Act (29 U.S.C. 796e et seq.)***, and activities carried out by centers for independent living, as defined in ***Section 702 of such Act (29 U.S.C.796a)***.
8) **Mental Health and Substance Abuse:** ***20 CFR 681.510*** states that comprehensive guidance and counseling provides individualized counseling to participants. This includes drug and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and referral to partner programs, as appropriate. When referring participants to necessary counseling that cannot be provided by the local youth program or its service providers, the local youth program must coordinate with the organization it refers to in order to ensure continuity of service. When resources exist within the local program or its service providers, it is allowable to provide counseling services directly to participants rather than refer youth to partner programs.

   Jail based programs should incorporate a mental health and substance abuse component. LWDBs should partner with appropriate State agencies (Tennessee Department of Health, etc.) to supply services to JII who need assistance with mental health or substance abuse issues.

V. Service Delivery Model for Jail-Based Programs:

LWDBs should join forces with county governments to deliver reentry programs that provide services to individuals who are currently or were formerly incarcerated. Key county justice partners include the county jail, sheriff and probation department. The partnership between the county justice system and LWDBs with reentry programs provides an opportunity to connect workforce development services to the justice involved population. Based on a review of best practices of existing jail based programs across the nation, the county justice system assists local workforce boards with reentry programs by providing in-reach opportunities, logistics, and coordination assistance with providing space, assigning inmates to programs, providing resources, etc. to align and assist with on-site programs and services.

County governments and local communities benefit directly from reentry programs. The average per daily cost to incarcerate an individual in a local jail in Tennessee is roughly $60.00 per day. The average Tennessee county has a recidivism rate ranging between 60-70%. Statistics show that individuals participating in reentry programs have a much lower recidivism rate that is less than 15% on average. Employment is one of the best ways to reintegrate

formerly incarcerated individuals, as it reduces recidivism and allows them to contribute to their families and communities. Staff will coordinate directly with the local AJC network to ensure a strong handoff to the designated post-release AJC.

LWDBs may refer to the consumer choice requirements in ***WIOA Section 107 (d)(10)(E)*** and consider utilizing specialized service providers for services targeted to specific groups with barriers to employment, such as reentry.

Mobile AJC Units - LWDBs should direct their One-Stop-Operators to utilize and coordinate with the Mobile AJC units to assist in providing reentry services at jails, facilities, court houses, etc.

The reentry program design includes tiered levels of services:

Tier 1:

This program is designed to provide universal job seeker services, including but not limited to:

- **Orientation**: All referred participants will receive an overview of program services;
- **Intake/Eligibility:** All participants must meet eligibility requirements, as described in ***WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(A)(i)***, and the General Program Application;
- **Assessment:** All participants must complete the work-readiness pre and post assessment;
- **Access:** To computer resource lab for job searching and resume posting, when this access is permitted;
- **Workshops:** Facilitated group services such as resume building, interview skills, mock interview, and other job readiness activities including soft skills workshops; and
- Other services as appropriate to meeting program outcomes and outputs.

Tier 2:

In addition to receiving the Tier 1 set of services, the next tier of service will target participants before release and will provide a more individualized and intensive set of career services. Post-release services will also be coordinated with the AJC network and probation partners. AJC services to participants include, but are not limited to:

- **Enrollment:** Upon determination of eligibility, participants will be enrolled into individualized career services;
- **Case Management:** All participants receiving individualized career services will be assigned a Case Manager;

- **Individual Employment Plans (IEPs):** Participants receiving individualized career services will complete an IEP with assigned case manager describing desired goals from program services;
- **Referrals:** Provision of information and referrals to, including coordination of, activities with other programs and services (including those within the AJC system and other workforce development programs);
- **Employer Engagement:** On-site facility employment seminars, job fairs, and recruitments will be accessible to participants;
- **Job Placement:** Participants will have targeted job placement in sustained employment;
- **Supportive Services:** Supportive services will be available to participants receiving individualized career services on an as-needed basis determined by AJC Case Manager;
- **Follow Up and Retention Services:** All participants receiving individualized career services will require quarterly follow up for one (1) year following program exit.
- **Work Release Programs:** allow a prisoner who is sufficiently trusted, or can be sufficiently monitored, to leave confinement to work at their current place of employment. Prisoners return to the facility when their shift is complete. LWDBs must coordinate this program through the local sheriff.
- **Training Programs:** Local TCATs, Community Colleges, or labor unions can be contacted to provide training services inside jails which will result in industry recognized certifications for inmates while incarcerated.

VI. Recovery Courts:

A Recovery Court is a specialized court, or court calendar, comprised of a multidisciplinary team of individuals serving to address the needs of nonviolent offenders who are veterans, have issues concerning substance abuse, and/or have co-occurring mental health issues. LWDBs should establish partnerships with Recovery Courts in order for the One-Stop Operator and service providers to provide services to this population. Any jail based program should incorporate a mental health and substance abuse component to address these issues.

1) *Drug Treatment Courts*:

A criminal history is often a prohibitive barrier to employment or promotion. Drug Treatment Courts offer alternative sentencing programs which provide intensive counseling to reduce both incarceration and recidivism rates by targeting local issues of concern. LWDBs and AJC staff can partner with Drug Treatment Courts to provide services that include but are not limited to:

- Case management
- Training opportunities
- Supportive services

- Referrals to appropriate local service providers
- LWDBs and AJCs should reach out to each recovery court and establish partnerships

2) *Veteran Courts:*

In some cases, a veteran's criminal action may stem from the stresses of war. Upon return from their time of service, many men and women self-medicate through the use of drugs or alcohol. Tennessee recognizes its obligation to bear some of the responsibility for rehabilitating those who have served in the armed forces. By offering flexibility, close supervision, and mandated treatment the Veteran Treatment Courts provide an alternative solution to traditional criminal justice punishment. Graduates often exit Veteran Treatment Court programs with unsubsidized, family-sustaining employment and a cleaner criminal record. If participants fail to follow the rules of the program they are sent back to their former stage within the criminal court system. ***LWDBs should establish partnerships with all Veteran Courts in their LWDA.***

a) The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the Office of Criminal Justice Services provide funding across Tennessee to provide services to individuals involved in the criminal justice system.

b) The TDLWD, through the Veterans Employment and Training Service Office (VETs), regularly works with the Veterans Treatment Courts and provides services to include but are not limited to:

- Case management
- Training
- Assistance with the recruiting of potential employers for Veterans Treatment Court participants

VII. Priority of Service:

38 U.S.C. 4215 requires grantees to provide priority of service to veterans and spouses of certain veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any job training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by the US Department of Labor (US DOL). The regulations implementing this priority of service can be found at ***20 CFR 1010***. In circumstances where a grant recipient must choose between two qualified candidates for a service — one of whom is a veteran or eligible spouse — the veterans' priority of service provisions require that the grant recipient give the veteran or eligible spouse priority of service by first providing him or her that service. To obtain priority of service a veteran or spouse must meet the program's eligibility requirements. Grantees must comply with DOL guidance on veterans' priority. ***38 U.S.C 4215*** provides guidance on implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in all qualified job training programs funded in whole or in part by the US DOL. See

Workforce Services Veterans and Eligible Spouse Priority of Service Policy TN-WIOA (17-5).

VIII. High School Equivalency and Technical School (Adult Education):

AJC staff provides referrals to Adult Education staff concerning customers who lack a high school diploma or its equivalence. AJC staff maintains a presence within the jails to provide classes in preparation for the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) and are also responsible for administering the exam. Incarcerated individuals who pass this exam are given a diploma which is equivalent to one obtained in a traditional high school. The HiSET can be taken three times within a year for individuals who have not achieved a passing grade. The purpose of allowing incarcerated individuals to obtain the equivalent to a high school diploma is to eliminate a strong barrier to successful, long-term employment. The alignment of education and workforce development is the essence of what WIOA aims to accomplish; this credential will lead to a more stable, better trained labor force.

In some instances, incarcerated individuals may also have access to instruction provided by the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT). Classes prepare incarcerated individuals to earn a certification in a wide variety of courses including, but not limited to, computer repair and mechatronics. Access to higher education leads to positive life outcomes by providing the skills to obtain higher-paying, long-term employment following release from the prison system. Furthermore, stable employment reduces the rate of recidivism.

IX. Outreach to Out-of-School Youth:

The increase in youth directly enrolling in higher education upon completion of high school has created a reduction in the number of eligible out-of-school (OSY) youth participants. Per ***TEGL 08-15*** and the TDLWD Youth Eligibility Policy, LWDB's must utilize at least seventy-five percent (75%) of their youth funds on OSY. In order to reach OSY, and simultaneously address a significant population of the justice system, LWDBs and/or their service providers should be conducting outreach activities and workforce development programs in the local county jails targeted at the OSY population.

Services to OSY who are incarcerated or participating in community supervision programs with TDOC may include but are not limited to:

- Tutoring, study skills, and instruction
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring (must be at least twelve [12] months) that includes:
    - Structured activities where mentors offer guidance, support and encouragement to develop the competence and character of the mentee

- Follow-up services
- Financial literacy education
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling (including drug and alcohol abuse, trauma counseling, etc.)
- Work experience (paid, unpaid, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships)

In order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or entry into post-secondary education and career readiness for participants, all youth programs shall provide services consisting of the fourteen program elements outlined in ***WIOA 129(c)(2)***,

X. Performance and Reporting:

AJC staff and service providers must utilize the Jobs4TN data management system. This includes the entry of individual participant data such as eligibility determination, demographics, activities, case notes and outcomes, and follow-up data. Staff can produce a report which provides data on JIIs registered on Jobs4TN and the resulting list can be used as an outreach tool to contact JIIs and offer services. Timely data entry is required and must be entered within three (3) business days after the date of any individual activity. Outcomes such as enrollment, participation, and completion will also be entered into Jobs4TN to reflect the population of JIIs being served. All required Jobs4TN guidance and policies, along with information provided in Jobs4TN training sessions, must be adhered to. Program Specialists will conduct on-going monitoring to evaluate the use of data system(s). Failure to comply with the required use will result in corrective action and may result in the contract being terminated. TDLWD will provide technical assistance on the data system to AJC staff. Staff providing services must have access to Jobs4TN in order to assign activities provided to participants at the on-site One-Stop.

XI. Co-Enrollment:

Service providers and LWDBs shall make every reasonable effort to refer, and co-enroll, participants post-release in the community-based AJC network. ***Workforce Services Co-Enrollment Policy TN-WIOA (17-7)*** standardizes the procedures for co-enrolling customers into two (2) or more WIOA programs, including special grant-funded programs. Adherence to this policy expands the resources available to assist customers in reaching their career goals. Co-enrollment will allow customers to access a wider array of services that might otherwise be unavailable.

XII. Additional Services:

1) Funds allocated to a local area for adults and dislocated workers under ***WIOA Section 133(b)(2)(B)***, may be used to provide supportive services to adults and dislocated workers, which may include but are not limited to the following (***20***

CFR 680.900):

- **a)** Linkages to community services;
- **b)** Assistance with transportation;
- **c)** Assistance with child care and dependent care;
- **d)** Assistance with housing;
- **e)** Needs-related payments, as described at 20 CFR 680.930, 680.940, 680.950, 680.960, and 680.970;
- **f)** Assistance with educational testing;
- **g)** Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- **h)** Legal aid services;
- **i)** Referrals to health care;
- **j)** Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear;
- **k)** Assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes; and
- **l)** Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.

2) Provide follow-up services including crisis intervention, continued support, and career advancement guidance. Once a participant enters employment or is referred to another agency, AJCs should maintain a professional relationship with the participant. For example:

- **a)** If a participant enrolls in community college then the public workforce system will be there to assist in finding employment after graduation.
- **b)** If a participant finds a suitable job then the public workforce system will be there if the participant decides to launch a career.

3) Further collaborations with WIOA partners centered on reentry:

- **a)** WOTC
- **b)** Federal Bonding
- **c)** Pre-release One-Stops

4) Form collaborations with outside agencies in support of successful workforce development:

- **a)** TCATs
- **b)** Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry
- **c)** Child Support Noncustodial Employment Demonstration Grant (CSPED)
- **d)** Faith-based organizations
- **e)** Community-based non-profits
- **f)** County Governments - http://www.naco.org/resources/second-chances-safer-counties-workforce-development-and-reentry#implementing-wioa

XIII. Federal Bonding and Work Opportunity Tax Credits

Federal Bonding is a program offered to employers who are hesitant to hire applicants based upon involvement in the criminal justice system. The bond insures businesses against employee theft and dishonesty — up to an amount of $5,000 — from the date of hire through the first six (6) months of employment. The Federal Bonding program is at no cost to companies and covers any employer, in any state, for any job position.

Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC) provides employers significant federal income tax credits when they hire individuals with felony and other criminal background issues. LWDBs and their operators should utilize TDLWD's online WOTC portal to assist both job seekers and employers with pre-screening eligibility and registration for WOTC. The TDLWD WOTC page can be accessed through the following link: https://www.tn.gov/workforce/article/work-opportunity-tax-credit.

XIV. Distressed Rural Communities:

It is important to understand the unique challenges offenders face when returning to rural areas. Barriers to employment faced by rural offenders are often more challenging due, in a large part, to the unavailability of support services and the unique features of rural life. There is a significant gap in reentry services and organizational capacity for JIIs in rural Tennessee. The Rural Task Force in Tennessee was created to bring resources together to advance rural communities and economic development throughout Tennessee. The long-term objective of this task force is to implement statewide policies and programs that improve the economy in all rural communities so that fewer counties are at risk and no counties are distressed.

LWDBs in rural areas should reach out to their local sheriff and establish partnerships to deliver WIOA services to these populations during incarceration at local, rural jails as well as the TDOC community supervision program.

Attachment I: Best Practices and Success Stories

Contact:

For any questions related to this guidance, please contact Nicholas Bishop - Director of Compliance and Policy – Division of Workforce Services at Nicholas.Bishop@tn.gov

Effective Date: November 30, 2017
Duration: Indefinite

Sterling van der Spuy, Administrator

Attachment I: Best Practices and Success Stories

Several LWDAs in Tennessee have worked with the local prison system to provide services inside local jails. These efforts aim to reduce recidivism and provide the supportive services needed for JIIs to become productive members of society. TDLWD encourages other LWDBs to follow up with these areas to share best practices when reentry programs are being considered:

- **LWDA 3:** Modeled after drug courts, the Knox County Veterans Treatment Court provides an alternative to incarceration by combining rigorous treatment with personal accountability. This program connects veterans to benefits that they have already earned including health, education, and disability. Veterans receive veteran-specific treatment and meet regularly with a veteran mentor. In the course of ninety (90) days in 2016, six (6) veterans received soft-skills development, individualized plans, and targeted employers based on the individual's needs. All six (6) veterans are now gainfully employed.
- **LWDA 6:** This partnership between Workforce Solutions, the Warren County Jail, and the Tennessee College of Applied Technology's McMinnville campus was funded in part by grants from the Second Chance Act Technologies Project and TDOC. This program provided — through the use of $30,000 — a specialized TCAT instructor to come into the jail to conduct courses in Microsoft Office and PC professional repair. Thirty-nine (39) participants earned certifications before social reintegration. Of the thirty-two (32) participants released from incarceration, twenty-four (24) have entered the job market, and twenty-one (21) maintained their employment through the efforts of the program. Individuals participating in the program had a two-and-a-half (2.5%) recidivism rate.
- **LWDA 9:** TDLWD — in partnership with CoreCivic, Child Support Noncustodial Employment Demonstration Grant, Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry, and Project Return — conducted a resource fair and a job fair inside the CoreCivic facility. The resource fair provided information about child support payments, the public workforce system (i.e. AJCs), and training opportunities to earn postsecondary industry-recognized credentials through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program. Additional information provided to offenders covered tax credits to benefit employers who are willing to hire those released from incarceration. The job fair followed two weeks later and provided participants the opportunity to interview directly with employers. During this job fair, thirty-five (35) male participants earned forty-five (45) firm job offers from seven (7) employers, and ten (10) female participants earned eleven (11) firm job offers from seven employers.
- **LWDA 10:** The South Central Tennessee Workforce Alliance partnered with the Maury County Jail to give the inmates an opportunity for a brighter future; in 2015 there were two hundred eleven (211) participants served. Through a partnership with Adult

Education, thirty (30) inmates earned their high school equivalency diploma. The project also allowed for "a first" for the Maury County Jail when seven (7) inmates were able to find a job and start work before they were released. This partnership was also able to pay $500 in fees and court fines, allowing JIIs to recover their driver licenses. As transportation to and from work is a very real stumbling block for JIIs, being able to assist with the return of these documents removed a major barrier to employment. The recidivism rate of the two hundred eleven (211) participants served was seven percent (7%), as compared to seventy-five percent (75%) for the non-participant rate.

- **LWDA 12:** The Northwest Workforce Board, in partnership with the Dyer County Sheriff's Office, established a specialized AJC on the campus of the Dyer County Correctional Work Center (DCCWC). The main purpose of the program is to assist those participating with legal fines upon release. Inmates are also given services equivalent to those offered at an AJC. Participants are also given an opportunity to prepare for and earn their high school equivalency diplomas, National Career Readiness certificates, or twelve (12) hours of community college credit through the local TCAT. This program also offered work release opportunities for inmates. Thirty-five (35) inmates participated in the program and a total of $6,302 county fines were paid.
- **LWDA 13:** The Workforce Investment Network (WIN) — in partnership with the Shelby County Department of Correction, HopeWorks, and the Memphis and Shelby County Office of ReEntry — recently started a pilot program consisting of an on-site, specialized AJC to provide job service to incarcerated individuals. The goal of this program is to reduce the recidivism rate to ten percent (10%) below the statewide average. Through industry recognized skills development in technology based jobs, WIN will seek to certify fifty (50) low to moderate risk JIIs.