

**CJC Reentry Standing Committee  
Hamilton County, Ohio**

County Administration Building, Room 603

December 8, 2009

12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Sub-committee progress reports.
  - Business plan subcommittee
  - Cost subcommittee
  - Programs subcommittee
2. Employer Breakfast, Jan. 2010 (presentation by Michelle Merrett, U.S. Probation Office)
3. Connection of Reentry Planning to CityLink planning. (Short- and intermediate-range reentry steps.)
4. Public Relations subcommittee.
5. Grant for Local Reentry Committees.
6. Reentry Handbook (Cuyahoga Model)
7. Member comments.
8. Reentry Committee Calendar for 2010.
9. Agenda for next reentry committee meeting.

Next Reentry Meeting:  
**Tuesday, January 5, 2010**  
**12:30 – 2:00 p.m.**  
**County Administration Building, Room 603**

## Attendance

Tom Berghausen, Talbert House; Kevin Bonecutter, Hamilton County Probation; Dan Brooks; City of North College Hill; Richard Brooks, Adult Parole Authority; John P. Bruggen, County Administration; Jen Gehring, Board of County Commissioners; Bobbye Gregory, Central Clinic/Court Clinic; Stephen JohnsonGrove, Ohio Justice and Policy Center; Shirley Maul, Community Action Agency; Diana McIntosh, Mental Health and Recovery Services; Mary Carol Melton, Cincinnati Union Bethel; Michelle Merrett, US Probation; Wendy Niehaus, Pretrial and Community Transition; Cynthia Price, Emerging Workforce; Karen Price, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office; Stephen Tucker, Urban League

## Notes

- 1.1 Dan Brooks introduced a draft business plan for the committee (attached). The plan is based on a corporate model, substituting service for profits, with the goal of decreasing recidivism. The plan outlines a variety of constituents who have roles to play in the success of the reentry task force.

The plan assumes 11-15 citizens will serve on a board of directors, with a majority of private rather than public in order to maintain the stability of the board. The board will appoint a CEO.

Among the first steps of the board is to secure a site for a reentry center. Brooks requested an inventory of vacant government property in the county.

Stephen JohnsonGrove voiced the connection of this item to agenda item #3, regarding CityLink's work toward establishing a one-stop shop, the same goal as the reentry committee. JohnsonGrove asked if we might consider partnering with CityLink.

Richard Brooks said that in Dayton a partnership model is working well.

Mary Carol Melton ask if we might consider other partners and other models.

Kevin Bonecutter noted that CityLink is further along than the reentry committee toward this goal. It has hired a director, has planned service areas and offers a virtual tour of its center.

Cynthia Price said that the Community Action Agency (CAA) has a similar model.

Shirley Maul said that CAA is experiencing a lot of expansion in microenterprise services, employment services, and its Blueprint for Success. CityLink is not yet in place.

S. JohnsonGrove noted that CAA is almost a one-stop shop. He asked if there might be a branding issues in partnering reentry programs with the agency's existing programs.

S. Maul said that she say two issues. Head Start could have damage issues with the ex-offender brand. CAA would need to add some new things to become a full service center, including filling some health and wellness gaps. It is working toward a new health center by June 2010.

K. Bonecutter noted that a one-stop shop is intended to bring together many providers.

D. Brooks compared it to having products by various organization under the reentry corporation. The single CEO and single board would establish a clear reentry path with issues stopping at the

CEO's desk.

S. JohnsonGrove asked if the standing committee is intended to be the reentry board.

D. Brooks said that the intention with the reentry board is to avoid the political climate and infrastructure by taking it to the private sector. At this point the committee hasn't begun to tap the resources available to it. The reentry committee will design a system to create a non-for-profit corporation to implement the reentry plan.

M.C. Melton said there would be some crossover between the board and the committee.

R. Brooks said that in the short term, in Cuyahoga County, the reentry group received a grant from the city for salary and office space to keep a constant focus on creating a reentry center, then grow from that. Then we might begin to solicit funding. We should start small and grow. The reentry focus is not to provide services, but to connect to services.

Michelle Merrett noted that the federal government should be included at the table.

S. JohnsonGrove said that we are applying for Second Chance Act funding, and the plan is an important lead-up step.

D. Brooks said we should continue to look at other models: Delany Street, Dayton, Cleveland, CityLink.

Stephen Tucker that the reentry board might serve as program evaluators and make recommendations for improvements.

M.C. Melton said that we should not lose sight of the notion of a partnership rather than the creation of a new entity. It is easy to get lost in large entities.

R. Brooks said that programs with federal funding are large collaborators.

Tom Berghausen said that we can establish a separate organization or not-for-profit under an existing organization.

R. Brooks also noted that federal funding requires strong performance measures.

M. Merrett noted that programs must change outcomes to meet minimum requirements.

M.C. Melton noted that we can have a separate location for a reentry center and still be affiliated with another organization as our fiscal agent.

D. Brooks suggested devoting business planning sessions to the committee's issues.

- 1.2 The cost committee is still working with the numbers presented by Eli Braun of the Ohio Justice and Policy Center at the last committee meeting.
- 1.3 The program committee presented its recommendations at the last committee meeting. S. Maul

said that a common data base of programs discussed at the Hard-2-Hire network in a concurrent effort, also dedicated to integrating services.

- 2.0 M. Merrett from the US Probation Office said that in January 20 at 12:00 pm at Crossroads Community Church there will be a meeting with employers to educate them about the benefits of hiring ex-offenders. Call 564-7556 re: attendance or to refer an employer.

M.C. Melton said that we could provide the feedback from our employer focus groups to Merrett.

R. Brooks suggested inviting community leaders to the session; that Judge Dlott is very supportive.

Jen Gehring said that its important that politicians can defend the policies of their own jurisdictions.

- 3.0 S. JohnsonGrove suggested that we add a CityLink representative to the next reentry agenda.

- 4.0 J. Gehring reported that David Pepper thought the public relations subcommittee was a good idea so long as it is not duplicating services.

D. Brooks suggested talking to the Municipal League.

M.C. Melton suggested that we might be able to obtain pro bono strategizing for reentry from existing components of the committee.

S. JohnsonGrove said that we shouldn't plan any campaign launch until the committee has a clear message.

D. Brooks suggested that the subcommittee be revisited and formed as needed.

- 5.0 The Ohio Office and Criminal Justice Services reentry grant will be released on December 10, with a bid conference on December 17. Per J. Gehring the grant should be written as if the reentry committee is the county's board.

S. Tucker said that Hard-2-Hire Network would like to collaborate with other groups on grant proposals.

S. JohnsonGrove suggested a working group for grant and bid conference coverage.

J. Gehring said she is attending the bid conference and including Teri O'Brien from Hard-2-Hire. She will report back to the committee.

- 6.0 R. Brooks talked about the pros and cons of a printed reentry handbook along the Cuyahoga County model. He said that it's good to have something concrete, but in reality the library and internet can make a digital version available.

Diana McIntosh suggested that a handbook might be recreating things that groups are already doing on websites. 211 already has a reentry category. She also suggested that the one-stop shop could be a virtual place where all of the resources are available. Perhaps the committee might focus on making the internet more accessible; improving access for everyone.

S. JohnsonGrove said that print and online versions of a handbook are not mutually exclusive. 211 and state resources could be pulled together into a printed resource guide.

S. Tucker noted that 211 is also available over the phone.

D. McIntosh suggested helping to make 211 more complete.

R. Brooks said that 211 is the expert resource, and that it is routinely checked and updated. He said clients like to leave with a book. The feedback that he receives from offenders is that it gives them more information to chose from.

S. Maul agreed that the resource needs to be online in the future. Cuyahoga received a very generous grant to produce its paper guide.

7.0 J. Gehring said that the Policy and Structure Committee meeting on December 10 will include Cathy Jones with the US Marshals Service regarding its safe surrender program to address old warrants. The program might also apprehend serious criminals.

8.0 The next meeting of the reentry committee is scheduled for January 5 and the 2010 calendar was included with the December agenda.

9.0 D. Brooks said the next meeting would concentrate on the business plan and how it might be crafted to meet grant requirements. It also should include a representative from the Hard-2-Hire network.

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## **2010 Meeting Schedule Reentry Committee**

(First Tuesday after first Monday of each month)  
12:30 pm, 603 County Administration Building  
138 East Court Street, 45202

January 5

February 2

March 2

April 6

May 4

June 8

July 6

August 3

September 7

October 5

November 2

December 7

## RE-ENTRY BUSINESS PLAN

### 1. Initial step – Form business structure based upon corporate model

#### A. Ascertain essential roles needed to make project successful

Faith	State Gov
Legal	County Gov
Marketing	Municipal Gov
Finance	Cincinnati Gov
Program development	Judges
Education	Prosecutor
Criminologist	
Ex-Offender	
Housing	

#### B. Form Board of Directors (11 – 15) with private/public sector individuals

Private sector having majority membership thus insuring continuity regardless of political climate.

Board of Directors appoint CEO. That person is responsible for carrying out directives as set by the Board.

2. Investigate current programs both local and national.

3. Secure site for first step “center” as outlined.

4. Speak to Commissioner Pepper regarding current buildings that are unoccupied and available.

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**From:** Stephen JohnsonGrove [sjohnsongrove@ohiojpc.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 05, 2009 11:38 AM  
**To:** undisclosed-recipients  
**Subject:** FW: Minnesota passes employment law reform for ex-offenders

-----Original Message-----

Date: Wed, Nov 4 2009

The 2009 legislative session brought some truly positive changes regarding the treatment of ex-offenders in the State of Minnesota.

This legislation was developed by the Council on Crime and Justice and supported by members of the Second Chance Coalition, a group of organizations with a commitment to the fair treatment of ex-offenders so that they may become fully-contributing members of their communities. The legislature passed three bills that directly and positively impact ex-offenders seeking employment and/or higher education.

1. "Ban the Box" - Minn. Stat. § 364.021 (authored by Senator Ron Latz and Representative Sheldon Johnson)

On August 1, 2009, Minnesota began to require all public employers throughout the state to wait until someone has been selected for an interview before inquiring into his or her criminal history. This legislation takes its name from the ubiquitous box on job applications that must be checked if the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime. As a result of this legislation, such a box will no longer appear on public employment job applications of non-exempted employers (approximately 200,000 positions statewide). The goal of this legislation is to provide individuals who have criminal records with more opportunities to be evaluated based upon all of their skills and qualifications, not just their criminal record. It also provides employers with a more diverse applicant pool. This law appears in Chapter 364 which contains other legal mandates regarding the hiring of ex-offenders.

2. "Safe Hiring" - Minn. Stat. § 181.96 (authored by Senator Mee Moua and Representative Bobby Champion)

Effective on August 1, 2009, this law begins to both clarify the liability of employers for hiring someone with a criminal record and limit liability regarding certain records. Minnesota is one of thirty- six states that holds employers liable for the negligent hiring of individuals with violent backgrounds. The goals of this legislation are to provide accurate information on such liability in order to encourage the hiring of individuals who could be hired safely and to limit such liability as a matter of law.

Minnesota Statute section 181.96 limits the admission of evidence of an employee's criminal record against an employer if: (1) the duties of the position did not expose others to a greater degree of risk than that created by the employee interacting with the public outside of the duties of the position or that might be created by being employed in general; (2) a court order sealed any record of the criminal case; or (3) the record did not result in a criminal conviction.

3. Notice to Students Regarding Possible Impact of Criminal Records

- Minn. Stat. § 135A.157 (authored by Senator Ron Latz and Representative Sheldon Johnson)

This law requires public and private postsecondary educational institutions within the State of Minnesota to give notice of potential effects of criminal convictions on future employment for people applying for certain degree programs. This legislation was recommended by the Collateral Sanctions Committee of the Minnesota Legislature in response to the stories of a number of students who made their way through college, spending time and money, only to find that their criminal record prevented or inhibited them from finding a job within their field of study. By giving future students the notice required by this law, such students will know that their options may be limited in certain fields before they invest time and money in a particular area of study.

For more information go to: <http://www.crimeandjustice.org/councilinfo.cfm?pid=23>

or contact Mark Haase, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, Council on Crime and Justice, 612-353-3020,

haasem@crimeandjustice.org .

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: EXPERIENCES OF 80  
PROBATIONERS IN THE U.S PROBATION OFFICE, DISTRICT OF  
DELAWARE**

Christy A. Visher, Nicole Smolter, Daniel O'Connell

Center for Drug and Alcohol Studies  
University of Delaware

November, 2009

This project was supported by the U.S. Probation Office, District of Delaware. Address all communications to the first author at [visher@udel.edu](mailto:visher@udel.edu).

# **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: EXPERIENCES OF 80 PROBATIONERS IN THE U.S PROBATION OFFICE, DISTRICT OF DELAWARE**

## **Background**

Individuals returning home from prison face several common issues including finding housing, creating ties with family and friends, finding a job, abstaining from alcohol and drug abuse, resisting peer pressure to continue involvement in crime, and supervision requirements (Petersilia 2001; Seiter & Kadela 2003). One issue that has been receiving increased attention is employment and job readiness. Previous research has identified unemployment as an important predictor of recidivism (Seiter & Kadela, 2003; Uggen 2000; Visher, Debus, & Yahner 2008). However, for many ex-offenders, finding a job after being released from prison can be a very stressful and difficult process. In some cases, they may have not had a legitimate job prior to incarceration, or they may have not been able to keep a legitimate job for a long period of time. Sometimes they may lack the necessary education or skills to obtain employment that will provide them enough income to sustain themselves. The additional burden of a criminal record also limits their prospects for many types of jobs. These individuals also face difficulties staying employed; adjusting to a new schedule, changing attitudes, and dealing with a greater level of responsibility can often be very challenging (Buck, 2000; Harris & Keller, 2005; Holzer, Raphael & Stoll, 2002).

Over the past several years more research has been geared toward program evaluation and outcome assessment to determine what types of prisoner reentry programs, policies, and services work and which do not. Results from these studies help to develop evidence-based practices that can lead to great efficiency and accountability for programs aimed at assisting men and women in their transition from prison back into the community. One specific program developed for ex-offenders is the federal Workforce Development Program. This initiative has been piloted in several federal probation offices and involves providing men and women under community supervision with assistance to increase their job readiness (including education and vocational skills), identify potential employers, and develop resumes and interview skills with the goals of obtaining full-time employment and reducing recidivism. While this initiative is still fairly new, preliminary research has found the program to increase employment and reduce recidivism in several jurisdictions including Missouri, Louisiana, and Vermont. In late 2006, the U.S. Probation Office, District of Delaware in Wilmington, Delaware decided to implement this program to improve employment and decrease recidivism for a group of higher risk probationers. Several recent reports on reentry programs and policies suggest that targeting high-risk individuals is an important component of an evidence-based reentry strategy (National Research Council 2007; Solomon et al. 2008).

The purpose of this report is to present results of a pilot study to track the progress of federal probationers<sup>1</sup> under the jurisdiction of the Delaware office after one year of being involved in the workforce development program, and assess the program's effects on employment and recidivism. The report includes a description and assessment of the Workforce Development Program in Delaware and a comparison of the Workforce Development participants with probationers in two districts without workforce development programs. The Center for Drug and Alcohol Studies at the University of Delaware compiled the data and conducted the analysis.

The majority of data on the Delaware probationers were collected from probationer cases files, including paper files and the online data management system, PACTS. These files are maintained by the supervising probation officer and provided information on demographics, criminal history and risk factors, rearrests, and noncompliance with supervision conditions, as well as information about workforce development involvement and employment. Monthly supervision reports completed by the probationers provided additional detail and verification of employment and income. Data regarding workforce development involvement was collected from program records with the assistance of the Community Resource Specialist who oversees many aspects of the program. Data on the comparison group were compiled specifically for this analysis by the Bureau of Prisons and the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

### **Workforce Development Program Description**

In 2006, the U.S. Probation Office, District of Delaware began taking steps to create a workforce development program that was intended to help men and women obtain and improve their employment as a path to reducing recidivism in both the short and long term. The program was modeled after other evidenced-based workforce development programs around the country. The probation officers began networking with and outreaching to local organizations and businesses to learn more about the services and resources available, including unions and apprenticeship programs. These activities also provided an opportunity to promote the benefits of hiring individuals who were under the supervision of the Delaware Federal Probation Office.

When the program received funding in 2007 participants were able to receive a number of different services to help them find or improve their employment. The program offers paid vocational and skill training and hired a part-time Community Resource Specialist to provide employment-related services such as individual job counseling, job referrals, and help with job searches. The program also offers workshops where participants can learn about interview skills, creating a resume, and other job readiness skills such as choosing professional clothing. In mid-2008, the program also added a Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) component. This includes a 22-week program focused on helping ex-offenders change their criminal thinking. While analysis of the CBT

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<sup>1</sup> The sample includes individuals on probation as well as individuals on supervised release who are under the supervision by the Wilmington Federal Probation Office. We will use the term probationer for the remainder of the report to refer to both groups of participants.

component will not be analyzed in this report it has become another important part of the workforce development program.

In most cases participants were recommended to the workforce development program by their probation officers to help them find employment or improve their employment. Others heard about the program and asked their probation officer to get them enrolled. In a few cases, participants were mandated to participate in the program because of continued unemployment or non-compliance. Because the resources were limited, the officers did make an effort to target higher risk offenders and those who were unemployed or underemployed. The enrollment process required each probation officer to submit a workforce development referral form. All participants who received vocational training had some form of mandated treatment (drug, alcohol, or mental health). To be considered for vocational training, participants were required to write a formal request detailing what type of skill training they wanted and how it would benefit them. The program also had no formal end date for any of its participants so once individuals were enrolled in the program, they were able to utilize the services as often as needed, if they became unemployed again, or were interested in finding a better employment opportunity.

### **Sample Characteristics**

Analyses are based on a group of 80 probationers who enrolled in the Delaware workforce development program between 9/4/06 and 7/31/08. All participants were tracked for one year after they enrolled in the program. Individuals whose supervision expired before the one-year mark as well as individuals who joined the program after 7/31/08 were excluded from the sample. Almost half of the probationers enrolled in 2007 and the other half enrolled in 2008 with two probationers being enrolled in 2006.

#### WFD Start Dates

2006	2	2.5%
2007	39	48.8%
2008	39	48.8%

This sample (see table) had an average term of supervision of 45 months with 84 percent of them beginning supervision after an average term of incarceration of 59 months. The majority of probationers were enrolled in the workforce development program during their first or second year of supervision. Participants ranged from 22 to 61 years old with an average age of 34.5 years old. The sample was predominantly male (84%) and African-American (78%).

<b>Subject Characteristics (n=80)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Gender	
Male	83.8
Female	16.3
Race	
White	18.8
Black	77.5
Other	3.8
Supervision Start Date	
2003	2.5
2005	12.5
2006	16.3
2007	35.0
2008	33.7
Supervision Term (mean in mths/range)	45.8 (12-120)
Incarceration Term (mean in mths/range)	58.9 (1-240)

### **Criminal History and Risk**

The probationers who participated in the workforce development program were considered higher risk, which was demonstrated by a number of factors. In terms of their criminal history and risk, the average for this sample was 7.7 prior arrests and an average risk predictor index score (RPI) of 5.0. As a comparison, the average number of prior arrests for the entire office caseload is 6.1 and the average RPI for the office is 3.7. The top three offenses of conviction were drugs (45%), firearms (28%), and fraud including embezzlement, racketeering, and other financial crimes (20%). The top three offenses for the office were drugs (37%), fraud and financial related crimes (33%), and firearms (21%).

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Range<sup>2</sup></u>
Risk Score	4.96	0-9
Prior Arrests <sup>3</sup>	7.68	0-25

<u>Offense of Conviction</u>		
Drug	36	45.0%
Firearms	22	27.5%
Robbery	4	5.0%
Assault	1	1.3%
Escaping Custody	1	1.3%
Fraud*	16	20.0%

\* Including embezzlement, false claims, bribery, racketeering

<sup>2</sup> A risk score of zero is possible, usually for first-time offenders placed on probation (no incarceration) with no other risk factors.

<sup>3</sup> Prior arrests refers to the number of previous arrests a person had before the most recent arrest that resulted in incarceration and supervised release or probation.

A qualitative review of the files indicated that individuals with convictions for firearms and fraud convictions had a particularly difficult time finding a job. Many of the individuals with firearms convictions were previously convicted felons, making their criminal record more extensive. Those convicted of fraud and other financial crimes often had employment restrictions which prevented several probationers from returning to their previous type of work. After one year those with drug offenses and fraud/financial related offenses had similar rates of employment (61% vs. 63%) while only 50% of those with firearm offenses were employed and 100% of those with other offenses (assault, robbery, escaping custody) were employed. Of those who were employed, the majority of participants with drug, firearm, and other offenses were employed full-time (82%, 73%, and 67% respectively) and only 40% of those with fraud offenses were employed full-time.

### **Other Demographics and Risk Factors**

Individuals on supervision, especially those released after a term of incarceration, face a number of obstacles. This sample in Wilmington was no different. The vast majority of probationers were single (93%) and over a quarter of them were labeled as having unstable housing (28%). Additionally, 80 percent had a history of drug abuse and almost half had a history of mental health issues. However, only about 30 percent of the probationers had less than a high school diploma or GED when they began supervision, which may be due to the completion of their GED while incarcerated.

Lack of stable employment prior to incarceration is also an issue with this sample with only 25 percent of probationers having stable employment prior to their incarceration or supervision. Lack of stable employment was determined by the probation officer when completing a probationer’s initial case plan for supervision using employment records and contacts with former employers provided in the pre-sentence investigation report. Probationers who had no long-term employers, been unemployed for long periods of time, or been fired multiple times were considered to have unstable prior employment. Despite the lack of stable employment history, almost 43 percent were employed at the start of supervision. This is most likely due to many being placed in half-way houses and pre-release centers before their probation started, which allowed them to find employment while still serving their sentence.

<b>Subject Characteristics (n=80)</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Highest Level of Education	
Less than High School	7.5
Some High School	23.8
HS Diploma/GED	56.3
Some College	7.5
College Degree or more	5.0

Stable Employment Prior to Supervision	
No	75.0
Yes	25.0
Employed at Start of Supervision	
No	57.5
Yes	42.5

### Workforce Development Program Involvement

While one of the goals of the workforce development program is to help probationers find employment, many of the probationers who are working are underemployed. The services and vocational training offered by the program are also aimed at helping these individuals improve their employment and wages, as well as maintain stable employment. At the time of enrollment in the workforce development program, 40 percent of the sample was employed.

Paid vocational training was provided to almost two-thirds of participants (62.5%). This training allowed them to gain skills and certification for specialties including commercial driving (CDL), auto repair, carpentry, and cosmetology. The majority of the probationers received some individual job counseling (65%) in addition to help with job searches (61%) and job referrals (65%). The referrals were often made to employers and businesses with which the office had developed relationships. These connections allowed the office to know when jobs were available and helped with the hiring process because the office could provide some accountability and reassurance for the employers. A smaller group received additional training on interview skills (31%) and resume building (24%), mostly because these workshops were only offered a few times each year.

With one exception, employed and unemployed probationers at the start of the program received similar services (see table). Probationers who were employed at the start of the program were more likely to receive vocational training.

Type of Services Received	Employed (n=32)	Not Employed (n=48)
Vocational Training*	78.1%	52.1%
Job Counseling	62.5%	66.7%
Resume Building	21.9%	25.0%
Interview Skills Training	21.9%	37.5%
Help with Job Search	50.0%	68.8%
Job Referrals	62.5%	66.7%
Received Services only (No vocational training)	21.9%	45.8%

Received Vocational Training only (No services)	12.5%	10.4%
Received Services and Vocational Training	65.6%	43.8%

\*p=.02

### Employment Outcomes

The main objective of the workforce development program is to help probationers obtain and improve their employment with the long-term goal of reducing recidivism. After one year of participation in the workforce development program, 61.3 percent of the sample were employed, an increase of 21.3 percent. An additional 3.7 percent were enrolled as full-time students. Of those who were employed, over two-thirds (69.4 %) were employed full time. Those who were employed earned a monthly income between \$800.00 and \$2,693.00, with an average monthly income of \$1,580.37.

Slightly over half of the sample were employed in labor or construction (54%) which included work in warehouses, road flaggers, and specialty work such as electrical, automotive, and carpentry. Another 20 percent of the sample worked in customer service or retail positions. Other types of work included food services, administrative and clerical work. Several participants found work as truck drivers after receiving vocational training to obtain commercial driver’s licenses (CDL).

Employment Outcomes (n=80)	Percent
Employment Status 1 year after WFD	
Not Employed	35.0
Employed	61.3
Full Time Student	3.7
Full or Part Time Employment	
Part Time	30.6
Full Time	69.4
Type of Employment	
Labor/Construction	53.1
Driver (CDL)	8.2
Food Service	10.2
Customer Service/Retail	20.4
Admin/Secretarial	8.2
Monthly Income (mean/range)	\$1,580.37 (\$800.00 - \$2,693.00)

Although 61.3 percent of the sample was employed after one year in the workforce development program, only 1 in 6 (16.3%) had not been employed at any point during the

first year in the program. Probationers who had been employed at some point in the program worked an average of 7.4 months during the first year, at an average of 1.5 jobs. Of those who were employed after one year in the program, 16.7 percent went from part time to full time jobs and four in ten (40.7%) increased their monthly employment during their time in program. Additionally, of the 67 participants who were employed at some point during the first year, 14.9 percent were terminated from at least one job during that time.

<b>Employment Experiences After One Year</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Entire sample (n=80)</b>	
Total months worked (mean)	7.43
Total number of jobs (mean)	1.51
No job during WFD	16.3%
Enrolled in school	3.7%
<b>Of those employed (n=67)</b>	
Terminated from any job	14.9%
Increased hours	16.7%
Increased income	40.7%

To better understand these employment outcomes among WFD participants, we examined whether participant characteristics were related<sup>4</sup> to employment status after one year. Men and women were equally likely to be employed at one year, as were white and black WFD participants. Those who were incarcerated before probation supervision were more likely to be employed (65%) than those who only received probation (46%), but this difference is not statistically significant. While being employed at the start of supervision was not significantly related to employment after one year in the program, having a stable employment history prior to incarceration or supervision was significantly related to being employed (71% with prior stable employment and 45% without prior stable employment). Participants were also classified into low (0-3), medium (4-6), and high (7-9) risk based on their risk prediction index score; however, employment status was somewhat varied across these three groups with the biggest difference between medium and high risk participants (62%, 69%, 50%, respectively). Other demographic and risk factors were not

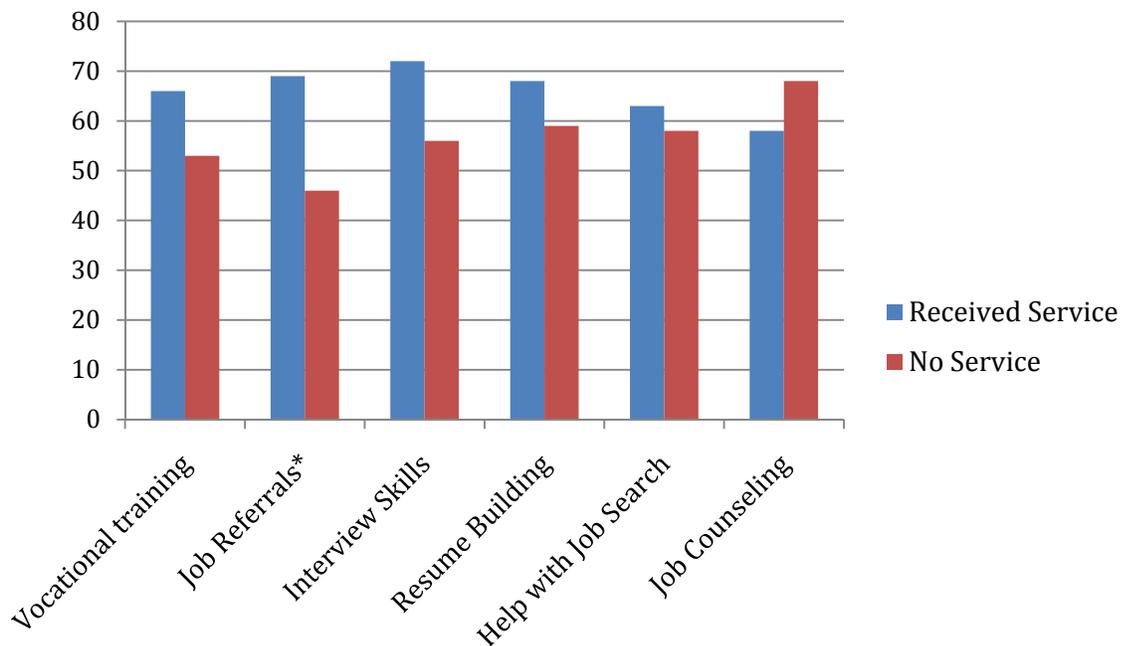
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<sup>4</sup> A note about statistical significance: In this report we use the term “related” to denote a statistically significant relationship between two variables. For this study we use a cutoff value of  $p < .10$ . This allows us to be fairly confident in generalizing the findings from this sample. There are several instances where there is a large percentage difference between two groups but the relationship is not statistically significant. While there may appear to be a relationship between two variables in this sample, we are limited by the small sample size in this pilot study and cannot confirm that the relationship would be present in a different sample.

significantly related to employment including history of drug abuse, history of mental health issues, and unstable living situation.

Participants who received vocational training were more likely to be employed after one year (66%) than those who only received other services provided by the program (53%), although this difference is not statistically significant. In addition, those who received job referrals were significantly more likely to be employed (69%) than those who did not receive referrals (46%). Several other services appeared to improve employment slightly, although these differences were not statistically significant: employment status for those who received interview skills training (72% vs. 56% employed), resume building (68% vs. 59%), and help with the job search (63% vs. 58%). Only 8 participants (10%) received all services offered in addition to the vocational training, which were not enough cases to test the relationship to employment status. Job counseling did not appear to improve employment status (58% vs. 68%). Overall, the services offered by the workforce development program appear to be linked to increased employment in this sample.

**% Employed after One Year in WFD**



\* Difference is statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

Since the vocational training was an important aspect of the program, several additional factors were examined to assess the impact of receiving vocational training on employment (see table). Over half of the probationers received some type of vocational training. Medium risk offenders (RPI scores between 4 and 6) were most likely to receive vocational training (56%). Low and high risk offenders were equally likely to receive vocational training (24% vs. 20%). After one year of involvement in the workforce development program this group was slightly more likely to be employed as those who did

not receive vocational training (66.0% vs. 53.3%). Those who received vocational training showed improvement in full-time work, hours worked per week, wages, monthly income, and total months worked in the first year. However, with the exception of total months worked (8.2 vs. 6.1), these differences are not statistically significant. It is possible that with a larger sample size, these differences would reach significance.

<b>Employment Characteristics</b>	<b>Received Vocational Training (n=50)</b>	<b>No Vocational Training (n=30)</b>
Employed after 1 year	66.0%	53.3%
Full Time	75.8%	56.3%
Increased Hours	21.1%	6.3%
Increased Pay	44.7%	31.5%
Monthly Income (mean)	\$1059.74	\$815.03
Months Worked in 1 <sup>st</sup> year (mean)	8.22	6.13

### **Recidivism among WFD Participants**

According to the U.S. Probation Office, District of Delaware, the primary goal of the WFD program is to reduce re-involvement in criminal behavior, or recidivism. In this study, recidivism is measured by whether the probationer is rearrested or revoked<sup>5</sup> within the first year of program involvement. Data on non-compliance with the conditions of probation was also gathered and analyzed because these events may be an indicator of criminal behavior (see sidebar, *Noncompliance*, at the end of this report).

Rearrest<sup>6</sup> was a relatively minor problem in this sample with 1 in 9 probationers (9 or 11.3%) being rearrested during their involvement in the first year of the workforce development program. An additional 3.8 percent (3 participants) had their probation revoked. Thus, the overall recidivism rate for these WFD participants was 15 percent. Also in the first year, 11.3 percent (9 participants) were re-incarcerated. (Arrests that did not result in re-incarceration include traffic-related offenses such as driving under the influence, which was addressed through additional supervision or mandated treatment.) The most common reason for rearrest/revocation was drug related (36%). Other reasons included fraud, driving while intoxicated, assault, rape/sexual assault, and firearms offenses.

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<sup>5</sup> Probation revocation is being considered as recidivism in this sample because the revoked participants had multiple, serious non-compliance events which resulted in incarceration.

<sup>6</sup> Arrests made by local as well as state and other federal agencies were included in this measure. All traffic-related arrests were excluded, with the exception of driving while intoxicated.

Re-Arrested or Revoked (n=80)	90 Days after WFD Start		6 Months after WFD Start		1 year after WFD Start	
No	78	97.5%	75	93.8%	68	85.0%
Yes	2	2.5%	5	6.2%	12	15.0%

Some demographic and background characteristics were modestly related to whether a WFD participant was rearrested or revoked (see table); however, the small sample size limits the ability to draw conclusive findings. While men and women were equally likely to be rearrested or revoked, 18.5% of nonwhite WFD participants were rearrested/revoked compared to none of the white participants. Being on supervision after incarceration (vs. probation only) was not related to rearrest or revocation. Employment-related characteristics were also not significantly related to rearrest. However, those with a stable employment history prior to supervision or incarceration were less likely to be rearrested/revoked with only 10% of those with stable prior employment being rearrested/revoked compared to 23% without stable prior employment. Being employed at the start of workforce development was also not related to rearrest/revocation. Those with a high school diploma or GED appear *more* likely to be rearrested or revoked than those who do not (20% vs. 4%), but the sample size does not allow for any conclusive findings.

Other demographic and risk factors were not significantly related to rearrest/revocation, including history of drug abuse, history of mental health issues, and unstable living situation. Additionally, risk level based on the RPI score was not significantly related to rearrest/revocation, although those considered low or medium risk had lower recidivism rates than those who were high risk (10%, 11%, and 25%, respectively).

Participant Characteristic	Rearrested or Revoked (in %)
Men	14.9
Women	15.4
White	0.0
Non-White	18.5
Prior Employment Record Yes/No	10.2/22.6
Employed at Start of WFD Yes/No	9.4/18.8
Diploma/GED Yes/No	20.0/4.0
Probation Only/Incarceration and Probation	30.8/11.9

History of Drug Abuse Yes/No	15.6/12.5
Mental Health Issues Yes/No	17.9/12.2
Living Situation Stable/Unstable	13.8/18.2

Finally, the type of WFD program component participants received was generally unrelated to rearrest/revocation (see table). Those who received vocational training were less likely to be rearrested or revoked (12%) than those not receiving these services (20%), but this difference was not statistically significant. Similarly, those who received help with their job search or received job referrals had somewhat lower rearrest rates than those not receiving these services (12% vs. 19%). The group of participants who received resume-building services or interview skills training appears somewhat more likely to be rearrested or revoked.<sup>7</sup> The small overall sample size precludes any definite finding about WFD program components and rearrest/revocation.

<b>Type of Services</b>	<b>Rearrested or Revoked (in %)</b>	
	<b>Received Service</b>	<b>Did Not Receive Service</b>
Vocational Training	12.0	20.0
Job Counseling	17.3	10.0
Resume Building	21.1	13.1
Interview Skills Training	16.0	14.5
Help with Job Search	12.2	19.4
Job Referrals	13.5	17.9

To better assess the overall impact of participating in the workforce development program on recidivism, a comparison sample of federal probationers from two Districts without WFD programs was identified. These Districts had no systematic workforce development related services. Each workforce development participant was matched to a federal probationer from a similar jurisdiction based on race, gender, risk level (RPI score), offense, and supervision type (probation or supervised release). Additional details on how the matched sample was created can be found at the end of the report. Rearrest and revocation data were obtained for the comparison sample for a one-year time period.

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<sup>7</sup> To obtain these services participants needed to participate in a special workshop series or they received individual assistance from the Community Resource Specialist (CRS). Often probationers who were unemployed for several months or had not been actively searching for employment were mandated to attend these workshops or meet with the CRS. Individuals who received interview skills training and resume building training were not different from those who did not based on prior employment history or risk level. However, they may have been more non-compliant prior to receiving these services, which then led to them being mandated to attend the workshops or individual sessions by their probation officer.

Workforce development participants in the District of Delaware were less likely to be rearrested or revoked than probationers from other Districts who did not participate in a workforce development program (15% vs. 26%;  $p=.10$ ). This suggests that although some of the individual program components did not have a significant impact on recidivism, participating in the workforce development program and receiving multiple services is modestly related to reducing recidivism, as measured by rearrest or revocation.<sup>8</sup>

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The 80 Federal probationers who participated in the workforce development program were purposely chosen because of their higher average risk than other Federal probationers being supervised in the District of Delaware. Their average risk prediction score of 4.98 was 1.3 points higher than the District average, and over 75 percent of them had a risk score of 4 or higher. This group also had an average of 7.7 prior arrests (1.6 more than the office average). The top three offenses of conviction were drugs (46.5%), firearms (27.5%), and fraud (20.0%). While almost two-thirds of the sample had at least a high school diploma or GED, only 25 percent had a stable employment history prior to incarceration or supervision, and only 40 percent were employed when they started in the workforce development program.

After one year in the program, 61.3 percent of the sample was employed, with the majority being employed full time. This was more than a 50 percent increase in employment, and an absolute increase of 21.3 percent compared to the 40% who were employed at the beginning of the program. An additional 3.8 percent were full time students, and only 16.3 percent were not employed at any point during the year. The participants worked an average of 7.4 months during the year with an average monthly income of about \$1500. Those who were employed after one year in the workforce development program were more likely to have received job referrals, had a stable employment history prior to supervision or incarceration, and had at least a high school diploma or GED.

In a comparison of those workforce development participants who received vocational training ( $n=50$ ) with those who did not ( $n=30$ ), the vocational training recipients showed consistent improvement in several employment measures. Vocational training recipients were more likely than those who did not receive vocational training to be employed after one year (66% vs. 53%), employed full time (76% vs. 56%), had an increase in hours worked (21% vs. 6%), had higher monthly income (\$1060.00 vs. \$815.00), and worked more months during their first year (8.2 vs. 6.1 months). Although the small sample sizes preclude finding differences that are statistically significant (with

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<sup>8</sup> Among those who recidivated, statistically similar proportions were rearrested and revoked in both the workforce development and the comparison groups (27% vs. 42% revoked; 73% vs. 58% rearrested, respectively).

the exception of months worked during the year), the consistency of these findings suggests that the vocational training component of workforce development program operating in the District of Delaware produces added value in improving the employment outcomes of its participants.

This pilot study also examined whether the workforce development program reduced recidivism, as measured by rearrest or revocation. One year after enrollment in the program, 15 percent of the participants had been rearrested or had their probation revoked. This included 12 participants, with 9 arrests and 3 revocations. Overall, 11.3 percent (9 participants) were reincarcerated. These results were compared with a matched sample of probationers from other Districts (as described earlier). Again small sample sizes limit the power of the conclusions, but, overall, participants in the workforce development program were 58% less likely to recidivate than the matched sample of probationers who received no workforce development services (15% vs. 26%, respectively).

These findings suggest that federal probationers enrolled in a workforce development program, especially programs that include vocational training, are more likely to find and maintain employment. These program participants may also be less likely to engage in behavior that can result in an arrest for criminal activity. It is also to be noted that these effects were observed in a higher risk group of probationers. Thus, other U.S. Probation Districts should consider developing workforce development programs for probationers under their jurisdiction.

**SIDEBAR: NONCOMPLIANCE**

A non-compliance event is documented when a probationer violates the terms of probation including missing drug treatment or testing, failing to report to the probation officer, having contact with the police (including traffic violations), leaving the jurisdiction without permission, or not submitting or improper completion of monthly supervision reports including details about current employment, income, and living situation. Probation officers are required to document all information pertaining to the probationer in chronological entries including all completed and attempted contacts with the probationer, arrests and police contacts, treatment reports, drug test results, employment information and other related information that would be important for the supervision of probationers.

For a probationer to be counted as non-compliant, the probation officer must have marked non-compliance in the chronological entries. The chronological entries are made any time the officer (or the office) has a contact or attempted contact with a probationer or any time they receive information about a probationer such as treatment reports or arrest checks. Entries are made at least once a month, but most probationers have multiple entries each month.

Total Non-Compliance (n=80) <sup>9</sup>	90 Days after WFD Start		6 Months after WFD Start		1 year after WFD Start	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
0- 1	68	85.0%	55	68.8%	48	60.0%
2 or more	12	15.0%	25	31.3%	32	40.0%

Types of Non-Compliance

(probationers with at least one non-compliance event of those listed)

Drug use	11	13.8%
Missed restitution payments	6	7.5%
Failed to Report	22	27.5%
Problems with monthly Report	12	15.0%
Missed Treatment/Testing	22	27.5%
Contact with police <sup>10</sup>	17	21.3%

<sup>9</sup> The distribution of non-compliance events is as follows: 0 events- 38.7%, 1-2 events- 31.2%, 3-5 events-12.6%, 6-10 events-12.5%, 11 or more events- 5.0%

<sup>10</sup> Based on a qualitative review of the non-compliance events recorded in the files, contacts with the police were almost exclusively traffic stops. Some of these stops were related to traffic violations and others included stops where no citations were issued. Additionally, 26 percent of probationers had some type of “other” violation which frequently included motor vehicle related

The average number of non-compliance events per probationer was 3.5 during the first year. Over half of the sample (64%) had one or more non-compliance events at the end of their first year. However, 31 percent had only one or two such episodes. Non-compliance events for these participants were usually relatively minor such as missing a drug test or forgetting about a scheduled office visit. Only 15 percent of the sample had three or more non-compliance events, with the highest number of events being 45. These participants often continued to receive non-compliance entries for the same issues such as missing treatment or testing and not submitting or incomplete monthly reports. Not surprisingly, those with three or more non-compliance events were 6 times more likely to be rearrested than those with less than three such events (42% vs. 7%).

### **Non-Compliance and WFD Participant Characteristics**

Non-compliance with conditions of probation was generally not related to WFD participant characteristics (see table). Although more men were non-compliant (42%) than women (23%) after one year, this difference is not statistically significant. However, the non-compliance difference between non-white participants (68%) and white participants (47%) was statistically significant. Moreover, not having a stable prior employment history led to more non-compliance than those with a prior employment history (52% vs. 31%). Those who were employed at the start of WFD and those who were unemployed were equally likely to be non-compliant (44% vs. 35%), as were those who held a job after one year compared to those who were not employed (37% vs. 42%). Education (having a high school diploma or GED) was also not significantly related to non-compliance.

Despite some substantial differences in non-compliance events, other demographic and risk factors were not significantly related to non-compliance. Participants with an unstable living situation and those with a history of drug use had higher rates of non-compliance, however these differences were not statistically significant (55% vs. 33%; 42% vs. 25% respectively). Individuals who received drug or mental health treatment had additional opportunities for non-compliance when receiving drug or mental health treatment. Those who received drug treatment and mental health treatment had higher rates of non-compliance, but these differences were also not significant (46% vs. 33%; 49% vs. 30%, respectively). Finally, non-compliance increased significantly with probationer risk level: low risk (24%), medium risk (34%), and high risk (58%).

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issues such as having a suspended or expired driver's license. Contact with the police is counted as a non-compliance event if the probationer does not notify his probation officer of the contact.

<b>Participant Characteristic</b>	<b>2 or More Non-Compliance Events (in %)</b>
Men	41.8
Women	23.1
White*	13.3
Non-White	44.6
Prior Employment Record**	
Yes/No	30.6/51.6
Employed at Start of WFD	
Yes/No	43.8/35.4
Employed at 1 year	
Yes/No	36.7/41.9
Diploma/GED	
Yes/No	40.0/36.0
Probation Only/Incarceration and Probation	30.8/40.3
History of Drug Abuse	
Yes/No	42.2/25.0
Mental Health Issues	
Yes/No	35.9/41.5
Living Situation	
Stable/Unstable	32.8/54.5
Drug Treatment	
Yes/No	45.9/32.6
Mental Health Treatment	
Yes/No	48.6/30.2

\* Significant at p<.05; \*\* Significant at p<.10

### **SIDEBAR: Matched Comparison Sample Selection**

Two federal jurisdictions were chosen for this comparison based on their similarity to the Delaware jurisdiction and because they did not have any type of workforce development program. Each participant in the Delaware sample was matched with a federal probationer from one of the two districts based on five factors: race (white or non-white), gender (male and female), risk level (0-3, 4-6, or 7-9 RPI score) supervision type (probation only and supervised release), and offense category (drugs, firearms, fraud/financial crimes, and other). The matched sample also began supervision during the same years as the Delaware sample (2002-2008). A total of 73 of the 80 cases were matched and used in the analysis for a total of 146 cases.

The comparison jurisdictions provided the rearrest and revocation data for the matched comparisons and included local arrests as well as arrests by other state and federal law enforcement. Traffic related offenses, with the exception of driving while

intoxicated, were excluded from the rearrest count. The one-year time period for the recidivism measure of the comparison group was based on when the Delaware probationer began the workforce development program in relation to when they started probation. For example, if the Delaware participant began the WFD program 6 months after starting supervision, the matched participant's recidivism would be measured beginning 6 months after starting supervision and ending one year later.

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