

# Department of Labor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **US DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR AND JUSTICE AWARD \$59.4M IN GRANTS TO IMPROVE REENTRY OUTCOMES FOR CURRENT, FORMERLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

*Awards support jail-based job centers, overcoming impacts of criminal justice records*

WASHINGTON— The U.S. Department of Labor announced today an investment of \$6.4 million in grants to provide currently and formerly incarcerated individuals with important job skills and resources by establishing additional American Job Centers inside correctional facilities, and create an online clearinghouse – in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice – to make information needed to expunge criminal records more readily available to further remove barriers to employment.

At the same time, the Justice Department is also announcing over \$53 million in Second Chance grants to help state, local, and tribal government agencies, and community organizations serve formerly incarcerated people in their communities. The funds awarded today are part of the Obama administration's ongoing efforts to reduce recidivism and promote reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics report the nation's more than 3,000 county jails release over 11 million people each year. Many of these individuals have few job skills and struggle with transitioning back into local communities and obtaining gainful employment. Research shows that providing improved education and more job opportunities to these people can reduce recidivism and remove many barriers to success – making our communities safer.

"America has always been a land of laws and opportunity, that's why this administration is doing everything it can to move beyond locking people up and instead working to unlock their potential," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez. "These grants will help people – who have paid their debt to society – transition from prison to prosperity by contributing fully to our nation's economy and way of life."

"If we expect the millions of Americans who come into contact with our justice system to become contributing members of our communities, we have a responsibility to give them the skills and support they need to succeed," said Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs Karol V. Mason. "By providing critical job training, helping to clear criminal records, and offering an array of services to ease the transition back into society, we are tapping a large vein of human potential that can lead us to greater public safety."

These grants are part of an ongoing series of new actions taken by the Obama administration to reduce recidivism and promote reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals.

### **Linking to Employment Activities Pre-Release**

To help integrate government services offered by correctional facilities with federally funded workforce development programs and assist soon-to-be-released inmates transition to working

life in their communities, the department is awarding approximately \$4.9 million in grants to 10 organizations that operate specialized American Job Centers inside correctional facilities. Approximately 2,500 American Job Centers are located in communities throughout the country, funded by the department and administered by local workforce investment boards.

This is the third round of LEAP grants. Grantees are local workforce development boards that have demonstrated partnerships with their county or municipal governments and their county, municipal, or regional correctional facilities. Today's awardees are located in communities in 10 states. To date, the department has awarded approximately \$20.3 million to 41 grant projects in 19 states. The goal of these grants is to strengthen communities by better integrating workforce and judicial services already available in the community.

<b>Linking to Employment Activities Pre-Release Grantees</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
County of Hudson	Jersey City	NJ	\$500,000
Suffolk County Dept. of Labor, Licensing & Consumer Affairs	Hauppauge	NY	\$489,901
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County	Seattle	WA	\$500,000
Lane Workforce Partnership	Eugene	OR	\$500,000
Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County	Visalia	CA	\$500,000
State of Alaska, Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development	Juneau	AK	\$500,000
Region 5 Workforce Board Inc.	Greenfield	IN	\$427,327
Dallas County Local Workforce Development Board	Dallas	TX	\$500,000
Pasco-Hernando Workforce Board Inc.	Spring Hill	FL	\$499,904
Pima County	Tucson	AZ	\$492,441

### **National Clean Slate Clearinghouse**

The departments of Labor and Justice together will provide \$1.5 million to the Council of State Governments Justice Center to support the development and implementation of a National Clean Slate Clearinghouse. Clearing a criminal record can be a long and arduous process, and the clearinghouse will remove many of the barriers associated with record cleaning. It will also provide information and resources to reentry, legal services and advocacy organizations that help individuals overcome the negative impacts of juvenile and criminal records.

The clearinghouse will host and update a national website that provides, among other things, state-by-state information on sealing, expungement, and other related legal services.

### **Second Chance Act**

The Justice Department is awarding grants worth \$53 million under 11 specific programs to reduce recidivism among adults and youth returning to their communities after confinement. Second Chance Act programs and technical assistance – administered through the Office of Justice Programs' Bureau of Justice Assistance and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention – support states, localities, tribes and community organizations in their efforts to reduce recidivism, provide reentry services and research programs. The awards are listed at <http://ojp.gov/funding/Explore/OJPAwardData.htm>

SCA funding covers a broad range of services, training, mentorship and technical assistance programs. Grants include, but are not limited to Reentry Program for Adults with Co-Occurring Substance Abuse and Mental Disorders, Adult Mentoring Program, the Smart Reentry Program,

and the National Adult and Juvenile Reentry Resource Center. The NRRC award to the CSGJC of over \$6.5 million includes \$500,000 for employer-focused technical assistance on fair hiring practices to address the many employment-related barriers experienced by people with criminal records. For juveniles and youth the grants include support for community supervision through the Second Chance Act's Implementing Statewide Plans to Improve Outcomes for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System, and Strengthening Relationships Between Young Fathers, Young Mothers, and Their Children programs.

Many of these grants align closely with the administration's "My Brother's Keeper" initiative which seeks to close opportunity gaps still faced by too many young people and often by boys and young men of color. In addition, the departments of Labor and Justice are members of the Federal Interagency Reentry Council, which the President officially chartered in April. For more on the council, see the recent report, "The Federal Interagency Reentry Council: A Record of Progress and a Roadmap for the Future."

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