



# Employment services for offenders

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***Offenders start learning to look for work before leaving prison***

***Services continue after release***

***Community partners also get support***

***Free bonding and job training are available***

The Employment Security Department operates a variety of employment programs for people who have a hard time finding work on their own, such as people who have criminal convictions. The Offender Employment Services unit within Employment Security works to help offenders move successfully from prison into the communities in which they will live.

### **Pre- and post-release services**

Employment Security delivers workshops in prisons and community justice centers across Washington to teach offenders how to find a job. Offenders are pre-registered into the department's client-management system even before they leave prison, and they are encouraged to seek post-release services at a local WorkSource office or from a contracted service provider. (WorkSource is a statewide partnership of the Employment Security Department, local workforce development councils and other service providers.)

Upon release, offenders may receive counseling on how to look for work, get a job and stay employed. They also may receive referrals to job openings, child care, transportation, housing, and other community services and resources they may need.

**Partnership for Successful Re-Entry** ~ Training is provided to individuals and organizations that help offenders reenter the community. A training video developed by Employment Security is available to help service providers, partner agencies and community-based organizations recognize and address offenders' barriers to employment.

**Employee bonding** ~ Some businesses require all employees who handle cash or valuables to be bonded. Employment Security provides free fidelity bonds for workers who are denied coverage from a commercial carrier because of an arrest or conviction record, a history of drug or alcohol abuse, poor credit or a dishonorable military discharge.

**Education and training** ~ Federal grant funds are awarded by Employment Security to public agencies and community-based organizations to provide career and technical education for individuals in correctional institutions. This training helps prepare offenders for high-skill, high-wage careers that are in demand after they are released.

Additional information about employment, education and other community resources for individuals with past convictions is available on the Employment Security Department's Web site at [www.wa.gov/esd/oes](http://www.wa.gov/esd/oes).

### **Contacts**

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