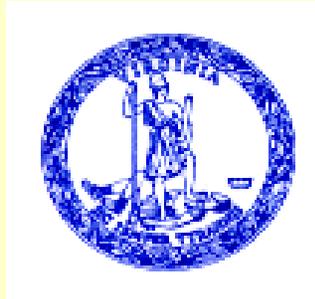


Virginia Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative



Employment and Education
Subcommittee Status Report

July 2006

Federal Fidelity Bonding

State Agencies purchasing bonds and coordinating program

Alabama State Employment Service
Alaska Department of Labor – Employment Security Division
Arizona Department of Economic Security
Arkansas Employment Security Department
California Employment Development Department
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment
Connecticut Department of Labor
Delaware Department of Labor
D.C. Department of Employment Services
Florida Department of Labor
Georgia Department of Labor
Hawaii State Employment Service
Idaho Department of Labor
Illinois Department of Employment Security
Indiana Department of Employment and Training Services
Iowa Department of Employment Services
Kansas Department of Human Resources
Louisiana Department of Employment Security
Maine Department of Labor
Maryland Dept. of Economic & Employment Development
Massachusetts Division of Employment & Training Admin.
Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth
Minnesota Department of Economic Security
Mississippi Employment Security Commission
Missouri Division of Workforce Development
Montana Department of Labor and Industry
Nebraska Job Service - Division of Employment
Nevada State Employment Service
New Hampshire Department of Employment Security
New Jersey Department of Labor
New Mexico Employment Security Department
New York State Department of Labor
North Carolina Employment Security Commission

North Dakota Job Service
Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction
Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
Pennsylvania Bureau of Workforce Investment
Rhode Island Department of Employment and Training
South Carolina Employment Security Commission
South Dakota Department of Labor
Tennessee Department of Employment Security
Texas Workforce Commission
Utah Department of Workforce Services
Vermont Department of Employment and Training
Washington State Department of Employment Security
West Virginia Bureau of Employment Programs
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Services
Wyoming Department of Employment

U.S. Territory

U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Labor

U.S. Associating Commonwealth

Puerto Rico Bureau of Employment Security

States In Which No State Agency Serves as Federal Bonding Coordinator*

Kentucky
Oregon
Virginia

**In each of these states, a few local organizations and agencies purchase a small number of bonds specifically for use with their clients. In most areas of these states, however, Federal Bonds are unavailable*

Federal Bonding information to:

- VEC
- WIA One Stops
- Local Offender Re-Entry and Transitional Services Agencies (formerly "PAPIS")
- DOC

FEDERAL FIDELITY BONDING



Fidelity bonding is a form of business insurance purchased to indemnify employers for loss of money or property sustained through the dishonest acts of their employees (i.e., theft, forgery, larceny, and embezzlement). This "employee dishonesty insurance" is generally considered a good business management practice, and is purchased by many employers in industries such as hospitality, retail, construction, warehousing, food service, commercial cleaning, and convenience stores. However, insurance companies that issue commercial fidelity bonds typically will not bond an ex-offender.

The Federal Bonding Program was created to bridge this gap, providing fidelity bonding for ex-offenders as an incentive to employers to hire at-risk applicants. Employers receive these bonds free-of-charge. Bonds are for \$5,000 of coverage for a 6 month period, with no deductible amount to the employer. There are no forms or other papers for the employer to sign, and no processing to delay matters - the insurance can be put into effect instantly.

Bonding is a unique and innovative tool that can be used to market an applicant to an employer. As an employer incentive, it conveys a businesslike approach. The employer gets the worker's skills, abilities and knowledge without taking risk of potential employee dishonesty. Bond issuance represents a mark of confidence in a jobseeker who is experiencing difficulty in securing an opportunity to show that he/she can be a productive worker.

Federal Fidelity Bonds can be purchased by ANY organization (non-profit or profit) that provides job development services to ex-offenders (and/or other at-risk job applicants). Bonds must be purchased in quantities of 25 or more (minimum purchase = \$2,450). To learn more, visit: <http://www.bonds4jobs.com>

SPECIAL PROJECT NOTICE:

The Department of Correctional Education is sponsoring the purchase of a limited number of Federal Bonds as a pilot project to assess the impact of bonding on the employment of former students who participated in Correctional Education programs while they were incarcerated. If your organization is working with a job seeker who has been incarcerated in a state correctional facility in Virginia and the job seeker has been offered a job for which he/she is required to be bonded, contact:

Morris Dews, Assistant Vocational Director
Department of Correctional Education
phone: (804) 371-6033
e-mail: Morris.Dews@dce.virginia.gov



This information is for agencies and organizations who perform job development and placement for ex-offenders. Please do not give this handout directly to job seekers.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

- Information provided to offenders in ***Productive Citizenship*** curriculum
- WOTC information provided to new employers in welcome letter from VEC
- Information provided to all employers in quarterly tax letter from VEC

Welcome, we are glad you are doing business in Virginia!

Did you know that the Virginia Employment Commission can help you find qualified applicants to fill your job vacancies, provide labor market information, tax credit information and other services? **Let our team help yours!** The VEC wants you to have the information you need. Our website, www.vec.virginia.gov, describes many services and contains valuable information and links to related websites. All of our publications, including those listed below, are available on line under **Employer Services Publications**.

You can get address and telephone information for the nearest VEC field office on our website or by dialing 1(800) 897-5630. If you decide to call a field office, ask for a field Tax Representative. TTY or TDD users (deaf and hard of hearing): can access the VRC by dialing 1-800-828-1120 or 711 then request the operator to dial 1(866) 835-6058.

To learn more about business Federal and State taxes, you can view on line education, go to <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=99021,00.html> or contact the Internal Revenue Service at (804) 916-3895 to determine when a **workshop** will be available in your area.

To obtain information related to **filing your Virginia taxes (both employment and state)** online please visit <https://www.business.tax.virginia.gov/BusinessLogin.jhtml>.

If you don't have access to the internet or you wish to obtain a hard copy of any of the following publications, you may complete the form below and mail it to: Virginia Employment Commission, Employer Accounts – Room 108, P O Box 1358, Richmond VA 23218-1358.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is offered to employers as an incentive to hire individuals who, as members of a targeted group, have traditionally faced significant barriers to employment, e.g., ex-felons who are members of a low-income family. More information is available on our website or dial (804) 786-4468.

Please print your employer account number here

Your Mailing address

Is this address a change from the address we mailed this letter to? **Yes** Do you wish to change your mailing address to the address above? **Yes**

Please check the box next to the publications you would like:

- Employer Handbook
- Virginia Unemployment Compensation Act
- VEC Rules and Regulations Affecting Unemployment Insurance

Allow three to four weeks for delivery

***The VEC is an equal opportunity employer/program
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities***



Important Information for Job Seeking Ex-Felons: W.O.T.C. (Work Opportunity Tax Credits)

What is it?

W.O.T.C. is a tax credit offered to employers as an incentive to hire individuals who are members of a targeted group, which have traditionally faced significant barriers to employment. There are eight (8) categories of eligible people; ex-felons are one of the eight targeted groups

Who qualifies?

Ex-felons who are members of a low-income family; convicted of a felony under any statute of the United States or any state. The period of eligibility lasts for the full year after the ex-felon's release from prison (the *hire* date must be within the year of release).

Who doesn't qualify?

- > No tax credit can be claimed for wages paid to relatives
- > No tax credit can be claimed for federally subsidized on-the-job training. However, wages paid after the subsidy expires can qualify for the credits.
- > Any individual who previously worked for the employer and does not meet the definition of "qualifying re-hire."

How much is the tax credit for the employer?

- > An employer who hires an eligible ex-felon can receive a tax credit of *up to* \$2,400 for each new hire that remains employed by the company for over 400 hours (full time work). For employees who work 120-399 hours (part time work), the credit can be up to \$1,500. The employer receives no tax credit if the employee works less than 120 hours.
- > There is no limit to the number of new hires who can qualify an employer for the tax savings.

How does one apply?

Employers must apply for and receive certification from their state employment security agency that their new hire is an ex-felon who qualifies for this program. To apply for certification, employers must:

1. Complete the one-page IRS Form 8850, "Pre-Screening Notice & Certification Request for the Work Opportunity and Welfare-to-Work Tax Credits," by the date of the job offer, and
2. Complete one of the following one-page U.S. Department of Labor Forms, as appropriate:
 - > ETA Form 9061, "Individual Characteristics Form," if the new hire has not been given a conditional certification, or
 - > ETA Form 9062, "Conditional Certification Form," if provided to the job seeker by a participating agency, such as the Job Corps, and
3. Mail the signed and dated IRS and ETA forms to the State Employment Security Agency's (SESA) WOTC Coordinator not later than 21 days after the new hire's employment start date.

To get IRS Form 8850, download it from www.irs.ustreas.gov/prod/forms_pubs/forms.html or call 1-800-829-3676

To get ETA 9061 download it from www.workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/employ/WOTC.asp, see contact list for phone number.

These forms and a directory of SESA WOTC Coordinators are also available through Fax-on Demand at 1-877-828-2050. To access this service you may call from a fax machine or your touch-tone

Who can I call for assistance?

Virginia Employment Commission
WOTC/WTW UNIT
P.O. Box 1358
Richmond, VA 23218
(804) 786-4468
Contact Person: Tim Hunt

**Note to Ex-Felons:*

You can help by obtaining copies of all the required forms and filling them out for your employer's review and signature. Your employer will appreciate you making this process and easy as possible for him or her, and you'll make a great impression as a motivated, responsible, and helpful employee!

Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign



The Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign seeks to highlight reentry issues and efforts using the power of media to motivate and mobilize community action. The Campaign will expand public awareness and work in partnership with local organizations and initiatives to foster public safety and support healthy communities. Its media resources are designed to facilitate discussion and decision making about solution- based reentry programs.

The Campaign incorporates several public television documentaries that span a time period of at least two years. The stepped broadcast dates for the various productions support a comprehensive campaign that will effectively reach multiple audiences. All productions incorporate the theme of reentry into family and community by individuals who were formerly incarcerated. The campaign hopes to engage the following groups: faith and secular organizations, parole and probation departments, departments of correction, government agencies, community leaders, advocates and crime victims, policymakers working to improve public safety and strengthen families and communities, and formerly incarcerated men and women seeking to lead productive lives. Key campaign issues are education and employment, health, housing, family, public safety, and faith.

Media Gallery

**OMAR
AND
PETE**



This documentary explores the web of social and economic barriers that low-income African-American men face in the context of incarceration and release; examined are existing support structures, and those that are needed, to help former prisoners successfully re-enter their families and neighborhoods. This compelling and highly personal film challenges the public's perceptions, and reveals the individual, family, and community pathways that can lead to social change.

DCE Mock Interview Events and Job/Career Fairs

- **Mock Interview Event:** Employers provide interviewing experience to inmates who will soon be released to the job market. Inmates participate in 30 minute interviews and receive feedback on their performance. Many actual job offers have resulted from these “mock” events.
- **Job/Career Fairs:** Employers, education providers in the community, and social service agencies provide job market information and contact opportunities that can lead to job interviews, further education and training options, and provide access to community services upon release from prison. These events resemble Job Fairs and Career Fairs held in the community.



Employment Barriers

SAMPLE PAGE:

Commonwealth of Virginia



Restrictions to Employment
for Individuals with Criminal Histories

Prepared by:
The Virginia Department of Correctional Education
"Fighting Crime Through Education"
Updated December 2005

Please note that the information contained in this document was obtained from Occupational Licensure Board websites, the Code of Virginia, The Legal Action Center, and other sources. Its accuracy is not guaranteed, as laws, policies, and regulations change frequently. We advise that you check with the source noted in this information to ensure that it is current and correct. We welcome and appreciate any information that you can provide to further this cause. Contact Jason Piccone: (804) 786-9790, Jason.Piccone@dce.virginia.gov

Occupation	Agency	Criminal Record /Related Restrictions	Rights and Appeals
Alarm Respondent	Board of Criminal Justice Services	No person with a criminal conviction for a misdemeanor involving (i) moral turpitude, (ii) assault and battery, (iii) damage to real or personal property, (iv) controlled substances or imitation controlled substances as defined in Article 1 (§ 18.2-247 et seq.) of Chapter 7 of Title 18.2, (v) prohibited sexual behavior as described in Article 7 (§ 18.2-61 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2, or (vi) firearms, or any felony shall be (a) employed as a registered or certified employee by a private security services business or training school, or (b) issued a private security services registration, or certification, except that, upon written request, the Director of the Department may waive such prohibition. § 9.1-139 (§ 9.1-145): Subject to fingerprinting.	The Director of the Department may waive such prohibition.
Ambulance driver	SEE EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN		
Architect/ Landscape Architect	Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation APELSCIDLA Board	Any felony or misdemeanor, which, in the judgment of the board, adversely affects the person's ability to perform satisfactorily within the profession. <i>18VAC10-20-20:</i> Must be of "good moral character" (a lack of history of dishonest or felonious acts). <i>18VAC10-20-750:</i> A person licensed to practice profession in other jurisdiction must be in good standing in every jurisdiction where licensed and cannot have the license suspended, revoked or surrendered in connection with a disciplinary action or who has been subject to discipline in another jurisdiction.	<i>18VAC10-20-20:</i> Applicants found ineligible for some reason may request further consideration by submitting in writing evidence of additional qualifications, training, or experience. The Board makes a determination whether the applicant is unfit or unsuited to engage in the profession or occupation by applying the criteria set forth in § 54.1-204. All case decisions may be appealed to circuit court in accordance with the Administrative Process Act.



§4.1-225. Grounds for which Board may suspend or revoke licenses.

The Board may suspend or revoke any license other than a brewery license, in which case the Board may impose penalties as provided in § 4.1-227, if it has reasonable cause to believe that the licensee:

Knowingly employs in the business conducted under such license, as agent, servant, or employee, other than a busboy, cook or other kitchen help, any person who has been convicted in any court of a felony or of any crime or offense involving moral turpitude, or who has violated the laws of the Commonwealth, of any other state, or of the United States, applicable to the manufacture, transportation, possession, use or sale of alcoholic beverages;

Proposed Clarification in ABC Retail Licensee Guide:

As of *(insert date)*, the Board has determined that licensees may employ, without penalty of license suspension or revocation, persons convicted of most criminal offenses, with the following exceptions:

Employees convicted within the five years preceding their date of hire of any Virginia law, ordinance, or regulation relating to the manufacture, transportation, possession, use or sale of alcoholic beverages (COV §4.1-300 et seq., § 4.1-400 et seq., § 4.1-500 et seq.).



PRODUCTIVE CITIZENSHIP
A Vision Beyond Survival
Facilitator Manual

*A Pre-Release Program
Produced Cooperatively
by
The Virginia Department of Corrections
The Virginia Department of Correctional Education
and
Pre-Release and Post-Incarceration Services
(PAPIS) Providers*

*2nd Edition
September 2005*

- ***Productive Citizenship*** is taught to over 3,000 offenders each year.
- Preliminary research reflects reduced recidivism and increased post-release earnings among participants.

Business/Education Partnerships

Benefits for businesses:

- Better qualified job applicants & a more highly-skilled workforce
- Reduced time spent on company training & remedial teaching
- Tax credits and charitable contribution tax benefits for employers
- Opportunity to hire talented students they have already met
- Job applicants that understand their company's specific needs, expectations, and requirements

Benefits for DCE vocational programs:

- Employer expertise, technical assistance, training materials, tools
- Support for educational programs by businesses and the community
- Increased awareness of the needs of specific businesses
- Potential donations of time, materials, equipment, or funds
- Assistance with student job development and placement
- Instructors receive innovative business-related professional development

Benefits for incarcerated students:

- Receive training that is highly relevant to the actual work world
- Become motivated to excel in their studies and increased confidence while job seeking
- Offer exploration of career opportunities
- Offer access to mentors and role models beyond school personnel
- Opportunity to learn from those who use the latest technology in their profession



Ford Motor Company recently donated three engines and five rear axles to the DCE Automotive Training Program at St. Brides Correctional Center



Incarcerated Veterans

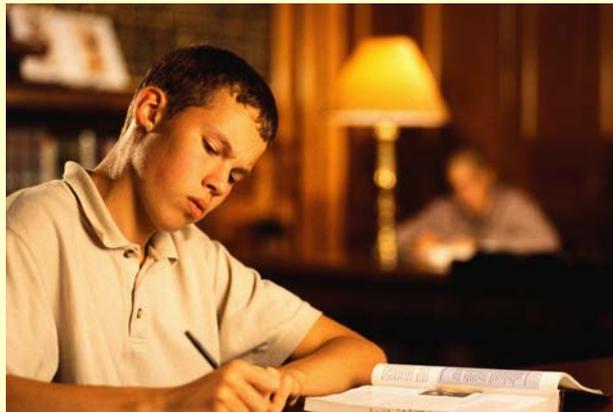


- DCE is helping incarcerated veterans gain access to Veterans Administration Education Benefits and enroll in University courses by utilizing this benefit.
- Universities recruited and DOC is providing key support for program.



College for Juvenile Offenders

- Identified federal funding to offer for college programs in juvenile facilities.
- Classes began at Culpeper Fall semester '05; will begin at Beaumont Fall semester '06.



Career Readiness Certificates

- In December '05, DCE began testing inmates nearing their release dates and awarding Career Readiness Certificates.
- 675 offenders have been tested; 72% have earned gold or silver level certificates!



Bronze level signifies that a recipient possesses skills for approximately 30% of the jobs profiled by WorkKeys in these three specific skill areas.



Silver signifies that a recipient possesses skills for approximately 65% of jobs profiled by WorkKeys in these areas.



Gold signifies that a recipient possesses skills for 85% of jobs profiled by WorkKeys in the three areas.

Questions?

Additional ideas for our subcommittee?



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