

STAND TALL. STAY STRONG. SUCCEED TOGETHER.

Why Consider Hiring Returning Citizens?

Did you know that:

1. Justice-involved individuals constitute over 20% of Virginia's adult population?
2. Justice-involved have higher retention than the general population?

Justice-involved individuals represent a critical talent pool for employers – especially given the tight labor market. Through policies that facilitate the hiring of individuals that have completed their sentence, sometimes known as second chance hiring, businesses can both meet their personnel needs and support our communities and public safety.

How Does VADOC Prepare this Workforce for Employment?

Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) provides workforce skills training during incarceration, including:

- OSHA
- Servsafe
- Welding
- HVAC
- Barber/Cosmetology
- Electrical
- Solar Installation
- Computer Coding
- Agribusiness
- Construction Trades

A more extensive list of training programs offered can be accessed [here](#).

Who Hires Returning Citizens?

Recently, the Commonwealth's Department of Human Resources issued a state-wide policy to facilitate hiring of justice-involved individuals (online [here](#)). Multiple agencies have since implemented simplified applications with clear language and focus on minimum job requirements (example [here](#)) in addition to apprenticeships for entry level positions.

Hundreds of employers of all sizes and industries throughout the Commonwealth utilize returning citizens to fill their labor needs every day. For example, Goodwill Industries hires justice-involved individuals with varying backgrounds.

How Can I Connect with this Talent Pool?

Virginia Works is a **FREE** state employment service widely used by reentering citizens. Search for talent and post jobs through the [Virginia Workforce Connection](#). Virginia Works can help employers post positions for returning citizen recruitment.

VADOC Workforce Development Specialists (embox@vadoc.virginia.gov) can further assist employers with in-facility interview coordination, participation in VADOC job fairs, and promotion of job opportunities.

VADOC [Probation Officers](#) are assigned to returning citizens and can be a helpful point of contact for questions regarding transportation, identification, and housing of their respective supervisees.

What Incentives Are Available for Hiring Returning Citizens?

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is available to employers who hire individuals with felony convictions within 1 year after release from prison. The tax credit can range from \$1,200 to \$9,600 per employee depending on the number of hours worked in the first year.

Visit [this page](#) for more information on how to claim this tax credit.

Bonding Program

\$5,000 fidelity bonds providing coverage for the first 6 months of employment are issued free-of-charge to employers and helps to offset potential risks with returning citizen hiring. These bonds insure employers from employee theft or dishonesty.

Visit [this page](#) for more information about how to request a bond.