



FIND A JOB AFTER INCARCERATION

A How-to Guide Worksheet

Follow these 5 steps to plan a successful reentry and job search.

In these steps you will:

- ✓ Find resources for housing, legal help, cash assistance & more
- ✓ Learn about careers & self-employment
- ✓ Explore job training
- ✓ Get ready for job applications
- ✓ Search for job openings & apply

STEP 1. FIND RESOURCES & GET READY TO JOB SEARCH

Build your foundation for reentry success by learning about local programs and resources.

A. Find local reentry programs.

- Visit [ReEntry Program Finder](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-reentry-programs.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-reentry-programs.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-reentry-programs.aspx)) and look up programs in your area. Reentry programs help people with records find good jobs and reintegrate into their community.
- From your list of programs, select or click the ones you want to learn about.
- Read about the organization, and enter their name, website, and phone number below.

	Organization name	Website	Phone
1			
2			
3			

B. Find more local assistance.

- Visit [State Resource Finder](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-state-resources.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-state-resources.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-state-resources.aspx)) and look up resources for job search help, health care, benefits, legal assistance, and more.
- Note details on the organizations you want to follow up with.



	Organization name	Website	Phone
1			
2			
3			

C. Need documents? Learn how to get copies of your birth certificate, driver’s license, or criminal record. You might need them for your job search.

- From the [State Resource Finder](#), select the “Documents and Vital Records” drop down bar.
- Record the information for getting copies of any documents you need.

1			
2			
3			

D. Get legal help about your record and more.

- Visit “[Work ready checklist](#)” ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/WorkChecklist/work-ready-checklist.aspx](#)) and select “Seal or expunge your criminal record” to learn about the process and see if you are eligible.
- Visit [State Resource Finder](#) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-state-resources.aspx](#)) and select “Legal Assistance.”
- Note the contact information for free legal assistance in your state. You could also do an internet search for “How to expunge a criminal record + (name of your state)” and list your next step below.

1			
2			

STEP 2. EXPLORE CAREERS

When you work in a career you like, you’re more likely to succeed and be recognized for your skills. Explore different careers and choose a direction that fits what you like and can do.

A. Assess your interests.

- Visit [Interest Assessment](#) ([CareerOneStop.org/InterestAssessment](#)) to identify your work interests.
- Follow directions to answer 30 questions about how well you like or don’t like certain activities.



B. Learn about your highest interests and job ideas.

- On the results page, look for the “Your interests” box.
- Select “What does my score mean?” Read about your 2-3 highest scoring categories to complete the table below.

Here’s an example of how your interests can help you find the types of job that may be best for you:

INTEREST CATEGORIES <i>(List your top 3)</i>	QUALITIES THAT FIT YOU	ACTIVITIES YOU LIKE	JOB IDEAS YOU LIKE
1) Investigative	Curious, quiet, scientific	Learning for fun, work independently	Biology lab, research, medical work
2) Artistic	Creative, musical	Drawing, writing, painting	Write stories, photographer
3) Social	Friendly, patient, helpful	Volunteering, helping friends, teaching	Teaching, social services

Fill out your own interest chart below:

INTEREST CATEGORIES <i>(List your top 3)</i>	QUALITIES THAT FIT YOU	ACTIVITIES YOU LIKE	JOB IDEAS YOU LIKE

C. Find your career matches.

- From the “Your Interests” page, select “Back to results.”
- Take a look at the career matches in your results and click on any career title to learn more and watch a video about the career.
- Also check out [Career videos](#) ([CareerOneStop.org/CareerVideos](#)) to see what people in different careers do, typical pay, education needed, and more.
- Visit [Common first jobs](#) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/ExploreCareers/LearnAboutCareers/common-first-jobs.aspx](#)) for ideas on entry-level jobs you could do after incarceration. Click on “Learn more” to see a profile, and “View job listings” to get an idea about job openings in your area.
- Interested in working for yourself? Get ideas for [Self-employment](#) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/ExploreCareers/LearnAboutCareers/self-employment.aspx](#)) to see what might be best for you.



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

STEP 3. JOB TRAINING OPTIONS

Short-term job training can help you qualify for a career with higher earnings and a good chance of advancement.

A. Find training options

- Visit the [Local Training Finder](#) (*CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-local-training.aspx*) and enter the name of a type of work you’d like to train for (like “cook” or “forklift”) and your location, and select “Search.”
- You’ll see training programs in your area. To see the shortest programs, under “Award or degree”, select “Certificate, less than 12 weeks” or “Certificate, 12 weeks to less than 1 year.”
- Below record the names of any programs you want to explore further.

Certificate program name	College or training provider	Provider location
1		
2		
3		



B. Learn about certifications.

- Earning a certification can help you qualify for certain jobs, such as welding, HVAC, auto repair, technology support, graphic design, and more.
- Visit [Certification Finder \(CareerOneStop.org/FindCertifications\)](https://www.careeronestop.org/FindCertifications) and enter a keyword or type of job that interests you. Certifications with a chili pepper next to them are in demand by employers.
- Below record the names of certifications you might want to get.

	Certificate program name	Certifying organization	Provider location
1			
2			
3			

C. Learn about apprenticeships.

- Apprenticeships pay full time wages while you train and work in a skilled profession, such as plumber, electrician, carpenter, automotive service, pharmacy technician, and others.
- Visit [Apprenticeship Job Finder \(Apprenticeship.gov/apprenticeship-job-finder\)](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/apprenticeship-job-finder) to look up apprenticeships in your area. You'll get more results if you try different names for the type of work you want to do.
- Keep track of apprenticeships you are interested in below.

	Apprenticeship title	Company	Location
1			
2			
3			

D. Learn how to pay for training.

- On the [Financial aid](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/GetTraining/PayForTraining/financial-aid.aspx) page, ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/GetTraining/PayForTraining/financial-aid.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/GetTraining/PayForTraining/financial-aid.aspx)) learn about different ways to pay for job training.
- You may be eligible for free training funds. To find out, contact your nearest [American Job Center \(CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx\)](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx) to ask about WIOA training funds. Try contacting a few nearby AJCs to ask about services they offer. Record what you learn on the next page.



AJC name	Phone number	Services offered
1 _____	_____	_____
2 _____	_____	_____
3 _____	_____	_____

STEP 4. JOB SEARCH PREPARATION

These activities will help you get ready to put in job applications and interview.

A. Make a resume.

- Follow the guidance to [Write a resume](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/PrepareYourResume/your-resume.aspx). ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/PrepareYourResume/your-resume.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/PrepareYourResume/your-resume.aspx)). Organize your information in the order listed.
- Check out the [Sample resumes](https://www.careeronestop.org/JobSearch/Resumes/ResumeGuide/MoreSampleResumes/more-sample-resumes.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JobSearch/Resumes/ResumeGuide/MoreSampleResumes/more-sample-resumes.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JobSearch/Resumes/ResumeGuide/MoreSampleResumes/more-sample-resumes.aspx)) to get ideas for how you could present your resume.
- Work on your resume in a document separate from this worksheet.

B. Prepare your references.

- Learn how to line up [Job references](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/PrepareYourResume/references.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/PrepareYourResume/references.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/PrepareYourResume/references.aspx)) who can talk about your work readiness. Read tips on who to ask to be your reference.
- Below, list 3-5 people you want to ask to serve as job references for you.

Reference name	How known	Email & phone number
1 _____	_____	_____
2 _____	_____	_____
3 _____	_____	_____
4 _____	_____	_____
5 _____	_____	_____

C. Get ready to interview.

- Read [Interview tips](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/interview-tips.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/interview-tips.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/interview-tips.aspx)) to prepare for how a job interview will go.
- Practice answering common interview questions so you become comfortable before you interview.
- [Practice for job interviews](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/your-conviction.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/your-conviction.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/your-conviction.aspx)) and get tips on how to talk about your conviction. You can use the example below to help you write a draft of how you want to speak about your conviction here.



Example: *I understand you have questions about my background. I assure you I have learned from my mistakes and have corrected past problems. I have spent time training for this career path because I am more mature now and have a solid plan for my future. If given the chance, I will give your company 100 percent effort. I will be at work early and stay late if necessary. I know you will not be disappointed if you hire me.*

Your draft:

D. Learn about employment checks.

- Once you apply for a job, the employer will likely run some background checks. Read about the different types of [Employment checks](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/employment-checks.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/employment-checks.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/GetInterviewReady/employment-checks.aspx)).
- Make notes here to follow up on any of the tips listed:

STEP 5. FIND & APPLY FOR JOBS

Knowing how to look for work builds confidence. Try using different methods like job banks, networking, reentry programs, job fairs, and more to increase your chances of getting hired.

A. Learn about felon-friendly employers.

- Read about [Who hires people with a record?](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/FindOpenings/who-hires-justice-impacted-job-seekers.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/FindOpenings/who-hires-justice-impacted-job-seekers.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/FindOpenings/who-hires-justice-impacted-job-seekers.aspx)).
- Look up [ReEntry programs](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-reentry-programs.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-reentry-programs.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-reentry-programs.aspx)) in your area to contact and ask about the services they offer. If any seem like a fit for your needs, find out how to register.



Reentry program name	City	Phone number
1 _____	_____	_____
2 _____	_____	_____
3 _____	_____	_____

B. Use your network.

Networking is the way most people find jobs. It's basically talking to people about the type of job and workplace you're looking for.

- Learn how to [Network](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/FindOpenings/networking.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/FindOpenings/networking.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/FindAJob/FindOpenings/networking.aspx)) and start your list of networking contacts to ask about work possibilities.

Key people in your network	How to reach them (phone, email, other)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

C. Plan your elevator speech to use when you ask contacts about work openings.

Here's what to include:

- Your name
- The type of job or company you're looking for work in, and the location
- A couple of your skills that make you good at that job
- Any training or experience you've had related to the job

Your draft:



D. Search for job openings.

- Visit [Job Finder](https://www.CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-jobs.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-jobs.aspx](https://www.CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-jobs.aspx)) and search for job postings.
- Aim to choose 3-4 to apply to each week. You can create a [User account](https://www.CareerOneStop.org/UserAccounts) ([CareerOneStop.org/UserAccounts](https://www.CareerOneStop.org/UserAccounts)) on CareerOneStop to save job postings you find.

Jobs you will apply to this week:

Job title	Company	Location

E. Learn about job openings.

Employers say most job seekers send in incorrect applications. Make sure your applications present you well.

- Complete a [Practice job application](https://www.CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/practice-job-application.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/practice-job-application.aspx](https://www.CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/practice-job-application.aspx)) and learn all the information you'll need for real applications.
- Print out your finished practice application to help when you complete real job applications.

F. Find local help.

In-person support can help you keep looking until you land a job. At an American Job Center, you can get help with job leads, job applications, interview practice, and use computers, phones, and printers for free.

- Find an [American Job Center](https://www.CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx](https://www.CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx)) near you and note the information below. (If you already found AJCs in Step 4D, you can look back for the information there.)
- Record contact information below. When you call or visit, ask about services for people with criminal records, as well as other services you might qualify for.

AJC name	Phone number	Services offered
1		
2		
3		



Congratulations! You've completed the steps to a successful job search after incarceration.

Next steps

For in-person help with your job search, visit your local [American Job Center](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx). ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/Toolkit/find-american-job-centers.aspx))

Wondering about working for yourself? Explore [Self-employment](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/ExploreCareers/LearnAboutCareers/self-employment.aspx). ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/ExploreCareers/LearnAboutCareers/self-employment.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/ExploreCareers/LearnAboutCareers/self-employment.aspx))

[Set goals](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/ExploreCareers/SetCareerGoals/how-to-set-goals.aspx) ([CareerOneStop.org/JusticeImpacted/ExploreCareers/SetCareerGoals/how-to-set-goals.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/JusticeImpacted/ExploreCareers/SetCareerGoals/how-to-set-goals.aspx)) to help you advance toward your long-term career plans.

Contact us

If you have any questions about CareerOneStop.org or would like further information, email us at: info@CareerOneStop.org

Follow us

