

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
Pursuant to P.A. 166 of 2020
Article II, Section 409 (3)
Workforce Development Program Results

Sec. 409. (3) By March 1, the department shall provide a report to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on corrections, the senate and house fiscal agencies, the legislative corrections ombudsman, and the state budget office detailing the results of workforce development program.

While the Department of Corrections most important goal is ensuring public safety, the Department has focused on Offender Success Services to help achieve this goal. The Department has intensified its workforce development efforts statewide to connect more returning citizens to employment readiness programs, training opportunities and employment.

The implementation of the Vocational Villages is the most public example of the Department intensifying its workforce development efforts. The Vocational Village is a first in the nation concept where offenders preparing to return home to their communities participate in an intensive Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming to meet Michigan's need for skilled workers while ensuring a successful reentry to the community.

The goal of the Vocational Village model is to provide a positive learning environment for prisoners who are serious about completing Career and Technical Education by having them live in specialized housing units while maintaining a daily schedule meant to replicate a workday.

As of December 2020, the Vocational Villages results are as follows:

- 64% Employment Rate.
- 1177 Students have graduated the program.
- 567 Students have successfully discharged from parole supervision.
- 4.84% Return to Prison Rate.

In addition, the Department created the Offender Employment and Opportunities Unit in 2018. This is another example of how the Department has intensified its workforce development efforts. The creation of this Unit has given the Department an opportunity to develop and maintain direct relationships with employers, engage in training opportunities for returning citizen and develop programs that lead to sustainable career employment.

The Offender Employment and Opportunities Unit has direct relationships with 660 employers statewide. The breakdown by Region is as follows:

- Region 1 – 18 employers with starting wages between \$10/hour - \$22/hour.
- Region 2 – 31 employers with starting wages between \$12/hour - \$21/hour.
- Region 3 – 12 employers with starting wages between \$12/hour - \$28/hour.
- Region 4 – 177 employers with starting wages between \$10/hour - \$28/hour.
- Region 5 – 28 employers with starting wages between \$10/hour - \$20/hour.
- Region 6 – 27 employers with starting wages between \$13/hour - \$31/hour.
- Region 7 – 60 employers with starting wages between \$10/hour - \$22/hour.
- Region 8 – 35 employers with starting wages between \$10/hour - \$24/hour.

- Region 9 – 29 employers with starting wages between \$10/hour - \$20/hour.
- Region10 – 243 employers with starting wages between \$10/hour - \$28/hour.

The Offender Employment and Opportunities Unit coordinates hiring events with these employers based on their talent needs. Based on the hiring criteria of the employers, the Offender Employment and Opportunities Unit shares this information with Parole Agents, Probation Agents and the Offender Success Administrative Agencies to screen potential returning citizens for the available jobs. In 2020, five large hiring events were planned for and scheduled in Oakland County, Wayne County, Macomb County, Genesee County and Kent County. Due to Covid-19 gathering restrictions throughout the state, these events were postponed until FY21.

Across the nation, truck driving is one of the most in demand trades and this is no different in Michigan. With the growing number of truck driving positions available, the Department developed the Offender Success Truck Driving Program. Parole and probation agents screen potential candidates that have cleared the programs vetting process and the Department works closely with Michigan Works to get these candidates approved for training assistance. This program includes partnerships with several CDL schools such as Pinnacle Truck Driver Training, Fleet Compliance Group, Suburban Truck Driver's Training School, Tri-Area Trucking, Coast to Coast, US Truck Driver's Training and Midwest Truck Driver's Training School. Here are the results of the program:

- 206 returning citizens have been enrolled in training.
- 203 returning citizens obtained their CDL license.
- 194 returning citizens are currently employed or were employed when the successfully completed their parole/probation.
- 94.2% Success Rate.
- 31 trucking companies have partnered with the Department for this program.

In January 2020, the Department revised the process with the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity to bond returning citizens through the Fidelity Bonding Program. In FY20, 47 returning citizens have been successfully bonded for \$5,000 each. This number will continue to grow throughout the year.