

**Council on Offender Reentry Meeting Minutes**  
**September 20, 2018 @ 1:30pm – 3:30pm**  
*WI Department of Corrections, Secretary's Conference Room*  
*Madison, WI 53707*

**Present:** Karen Cumblad (Family Services), Karley Downing, (Dept. of Corrections), Daniel Gabler (Parole Commission), Robert Koebele (Faith-Based Organization), Antwayne Robertson (County Dept. of Human Services), Carolyn Stanford-Taylor (Dept. of Public Instruction), Dashal Young (Dept. of Children and Families), Steve Laesch and Becky Kikkert (Delegates for Dept. of Workforce Development)

**Not Present:** Jerome Dillard (Expo, Dane County), Beth Dodsworth (Dept. of Health Services), Michael Knetzger (Academic Professional/Criminal Justice), Constance Kostelac (Dept. of Justice), Angela Mancuso (Victim's Rights/Services Agency), Jon Nejedlo (Law Enforcement), Sue Opper (District Attorney), Ann Perry (Dept. of Transportation), Paul Rifelj (State Public Defender), Stephanie Rothstein (District Court Judge)

**Guests:** Steve Laesch (DWD/DET), Becky Kikkert (DWD/DET), Seth Lentz (WDBSCW), Ray Woodruff (DOC), Jennifer Brikowski (DWD/WDA 10), Dave Shaw (WDA 11), Anna Neal (DOC), Wendy Tougas (Employment and Training Association), Brent Sanderfoot (FVWDB)

**Minutes:** Michele Krueger (DOC)

**AGENDA**

**Call to Order**

Silvia Jackson called to order the quarterly meeting of the Council on Offender Reentry at 1:30pm on September 20, 2018.

**Introductions**

Members of the Council and guests were greeted by Ms. Jackson and introduced themselves.

**Approval of Minutes**

Review Minutes from June 21, 2018 meeting. Motion was made by Daniel Gabler to approve the minutes, seconded by Dashal Young. The minutes were unanimously approved.

***Preparing for Employment upon Reentry – Part 1***

**DWD/DET – Overview of the Collaborative Efforts with DOC as it Relates to the OCI Job Center**

*Steve Laesch, Assistant Administrator, Division of Employment and Training*

*Becky Kikkert, Office Director, Office of Special Initiatives, Division of Employment and Training*

In spring 2018, DWD/DOC entered into a MOU for a number of initiatives, including the Oakhill Job Center project; a new Industrial Maintenance Mechanic Diploma program at Redgranite Correctional Institution (RGCI); two additional mobile labs; and instructional costs for the new mobile labs.

Implementation of the Oakhill Job Center is scheduled for this fall, with a press event to be held on November 12, 2018. DWD funds were used to partially fund this project. Several agencies and programs were involved in the creation of this Job Center, including the Department of Workforce Development's Division of Employment and Training, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, as well as the Wisconsin Development Board of South

Central Wisconsin, Workforce Development Area 10 and the Department of Corrections. Additionally, inmates were brought in to paint a large mural and other artwork on the Job Center walls.

The Oakhill Job Center Project will include the following services:

- Labor market information
- Creation of Job Center of Wisconsin accounts
- Referrals – to any other services that may be useful for the individual
- Assessments
- Employment plan development
- Case management
- Program enrollment

Another initiative currently underway is the implementation of the Industrial Maintenance Mechanic Diploma at RGCI. The first cohort will begin between in January 2019. DWD funds were used to purchase most of the equipment needed for this program. Inmates who complete one semester will receive a 16-credit industrial maintenance certificate, and those who complete the second semester will receive the 26-credit full technical diploma.

A third initiative is the procurement of two additional mobile training labs – a welding lab and an industrial maintenance lab. The welding mobile lab will be operational in January 2019 and will be placed at Taycheedah Correctional Institution. The goal is to move this lab to Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution in 2020. The Industrial Maintenance lab will be fully operational by April-May 2019, and will be placed at Jackson Correctional Institution. The goal is to move this lab to New Lisbon Correctional Institution in 2020.

A fourth DWD/DOC initiative includes staff from the Office of Veterans Employment Services going into the prisons to meet with military veterans who are set to release within 60-90 days. The goal of this initiative is to connect the veteran population to the necessary resources upon release from prison. The DOC gives DWD a complete list of veterans within the institutions who are scheduled for release within the recommended timeframe.

Other DWD initiatives include:

- Mobile Job Center – This outreach center will travel around the state in order to provide individuals with the opportunity to apply for employment, and obtain information and skills to improve their employability. It will benefit those who live in rural areas and have limited access to such services. This mobile job center will be used to recruit veterans, and will also travel to state correctional facilities.
- Advanced Manufacturing Sector Center – This will be located in Milwaukee (location to be determined). DWD is partnering with Milwaukee Area Technical College to provide the services.
- Other Sector Centers – DWD is partnering with Northcentral Technical College, North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, and Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board to introduce an advanced manufacturing mobile lab. This will be a self-contained mobile training lab, which will be able to deliver the advanced manufacturing curriculum. The lab will travel around the northwest and northcentral parts of Wisconsin, including area high schools, businesses and area correctional facilities.
- Commute to Careers – This is a collaborative effort with DOT funded by the Expanded Wisconsin Fast Forward grant program to provide flexible transportation solutions for unemployed, low and moderate-income workers. The Vehicle Grant funds are only available to projects that provide most of their services in areas identified by DNR for traffic congestion and vehicle emissions reduction, which include Milwaukee,

Racine, Kenosha, Waukesha, Washington, Ozaukee, Walworth, Sheboygan, Kewaunee, Manitowoc and Door counties.

- Short Term skill training grants – DWD provided some short-term skills training grants to varied populations through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding. Other grantees include Center for Self Sufficiency, MAXIMUS Racine County Human Services, Milwaukee Area Workforce Funding Alliance, and Wisconsin Workforce Development Association.
- Other – Specialized reentry initiatives are underway in Workforce Development Areas 2, 3, and 5. The focus is on the talent pipeline (from prison to employment), by providing the necessary services to inmates pre- and post-release so they can be connected to employment once they return to their home communities.

#### Questions & Answers:

***Will the Commute to Careers be focused at a certain area in State?*** The actual vehicle purchasing comes from some federal funding focusing on southeast Wisconsin and along the Lake Michigan border. The program will also develop relationships with private sector businesses and non-profit agencies statewide who can provide transportation or transportation options to get employees to work.

***What does case management, referrals and program enrollment involve with the OCI Project? Is there a release plan that helps transition the inmate?*** This project is a work in progress. There will be light case management services provided. The Office of Veterans Services will also provide one-on-one services to qualifying veterans. Additionally, the OCI Project will help connect releasing inmates to the job centers and services offered within their own communities. Within these job centers, there are additional resources relating to housing, financial assistance, etc., to assist the individual.

***Who will be helping the non-vets?*** Other entities will be providing services at the OCI Job Center. They include: Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, which will provide one-on-one services to help individuals become more employable or to help them gain access to services upon their release; Title I services which has case management, as well as light case management services provided by the Job Center staff to help assess their needs and challenges they may face upon release. WIOA Title I programs target adults (including the incarcerated population), dislocated workers and youths. The goal is to engage those releasing from prison to assist with employment, career exploration, retention and support services. There are program dollars to augment some of the other DOC efforts and resources to help the inmate transition back to the community.

### **Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin – Overview of WDBSCW’s Involvement with OCI Job Center**

*Seth Lentz, Deputy Director of WDBSCW*

The Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin (WDBSCW) is one of eleven (11) workforce development boards in Wisconsin.

The workforce development boards connect employers in need of a workforce, with individuals in need of employment. The Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act (WIOA) allows the workforce development boards to be creative and innovative in recruiting a workforce. As such, the WDBSCW provides the pipeline of releasing inmates who have the necessary work skills and experience to fill these positions.

The OCI Job Center will reinforce the existing resources already available to inmates at OCI, as well as provide information to inmates regarding labor market trends, how to take advantage of opportunities available to inmates, and how to manage the transition from prison to the community.

The WDBSCW does not have additional funds or support to operate the OCI Job Center, therefore existing Dane County Job Center staff and contractors will absorb the responsibility of staffing the OCI Job Center for 15 hours per week. Since this is a new and innovative project, there will be a lot to learn along the way. However, this partnership is committed to working through the issues as they arise. The long term investment is important for businesses, inmates, families and Wisconsin communities, and will hopefully have a direct impact on reducing recidivism rates.

Questions & Answers:

**Are there on-site educators?** Yes, there are seven (7) education staff employed by OCI; there are up to seven (7) social workers who will assist with the pre-release process, and the OCI Education Director will be overseeing the OCI Job Center. Further, Madison College will be providing additional resources as needed.

**Will they assess their reading skills?** Absolutely. The Job Center of Wisconsin will utilize their existing assessment tools, and the DOC utilizes TABE testing and placement testing.

**Is there a clinical component with those who have mental health or substance misuse challenges?** Certainly. The DOC already completes a host of assessments such as the COMPAS risk and needs assessments, the Triage Assessment for Addictive Disorders (TAAD5), as well as psychological and psychiatric assessments completed by the institution’s psychological services unit. The Job Center staff can also refer an individual to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, as well as the DOC psychological services at OCI.

**Job Center Staff**

*Ray Woodruff, DOC Employment Program Manager*

*Jennifer Brikowski, Employment & Training Specialist – Lead, DWD Workforce Development Area 10*

*Dave Shaw, DWD District Director, Workforce Development Area 11*

Ray Woodruff Presentation

OCI was selected as the desired location for the Job Center project as they are not only a minimum security institution, but they are innovative, forward thinking, and willing to take on new things. The OCI Job Center is a one-of-a-kind project and, as such, was built from the ground up. The current priority will be for inmates who release in nine (9) months.

Why this project is different than any other projects in the DOC:

- ❖ As this is a DWD Job Center, it will be completely staffed by external staff (DWD and WDB). These staff will receive the same training that other DOC non-security institution staff receive (i.e. Security Basics training, Boundary Setting training, etc.).
- ❖ The DWD staff will be granted access to the institution, as well as basic access to certain DOC computer programs.
- ❖ This project required the DOC’s Bureau of Technology Management (BTM) to create a website that mimics the actual Job Center of Wisconsin website, without the ability to gain access to other internet sites or email services via that site. Therefore, inmates will receive the same Job Center website as those in the community, with the aforementioned restrictions. DWD also had to create certain restrictions on their site.
- ❖ Each inmate will have a Job Center of Wisconsin account. This account and all the items stored in their account (resume, etc.) can be accessed once they release to the community.

{Video of the OCI Job Center Project}

Jennifer Brikowski and Dave Shaw Presentation

As Job Center employees, their role will be to offer individual case management services to the enrolled inmates as well as group workshops. Some of the services may include: completion of various academic and employment-based

assessments to determine the academic, technical, and vocational needs of the individual; assistance with completing a resume and how to write a cover letter; tutorials on general computer skills; tips for effective interviewing; and addressing long-term employment plans. The staff will also connect each inmate to the WorkSmart Network (for those releasing to areas covered by the WDBSCW).

The OCI Job Center staff will work with local employers and inmates to arrange job interviews for these individuals once they are released from prison. The inmate will continue with the case management services upon release from prison, and will be provided with an appointment to meet at the local Job Center within the first week post-release. The Dane County Job Center has strong relationships with employers in the Dane County community who are willing to hire individuals with a criminal background. For those inmates not releasing to Dane County, the OCI Job Center case managers will connect the inmates to Job Centers or other equivalent services in their home communities.

The OCI Job Center has a total of twelve (12) computer stations. Initially, the OCI Job Center will serve eight (8) inmates with the goal of building up to full capacity. This will allow the two staff members to better serve the inmates, given how time intensive the initial workload will be (assessments, creating Job Center profiles, etc.). The inmates will use their 55-minutes of recreation time to access the Job Center.

The OCI Job Center of Wisconsin has an official opening date of November 12, 2018.

Silvia will send Council members the invite to attend at the grand opening event.

Questions & Answers:

**Will non-DOC staff have access to WICS?** The OCI Job Center employees will only have access to certain inmate demographics such as their release date, their assigned agent, and assigned social worker. They will not have access to protected information.

**What is the capacity of the OCI Job Center on any given week/month?** There are twelve (12) computers, but we are limiting it to eight (8) participants initially because we need to determine what the actual workload will look like for the two staff members. There will be a lot of initial work in getting accounts created, assessing needs, etc. Additionally, the Job Center hours will coincide with the inmate recreation periods. During these periods inmates can access the space during open hours. We will also do workshops where we can accommodate more than 12 inmates. Inmates will be allowed to access the Job Center for 20-25 hours per week, and for those inmates who leave the institution for outside employment, the Job Center will be available one evening per week. There will be two staff present at all time.

**How will you address the ESL (English as a Second Language) population?** This is not an issue that we have discussed. The number of ESL inmates is unknown, however, the Job Center of Wisconsin has a bilingual employee who oversees the Title I program. Additionally, the Job Center continues to evolve their bilingual materials, and utilize available technical resources as needed. If need be, the Job Center can have their Title I employee assist with any non-English speaking inmates.

**Will they get basic computer skills?** Yes, we have a basic computer workshop that shows them how to turn on/off a computer, how to use a mouse, how to type. We have anticipated that the inmate population will have a broad spectrum of IT knowledge and skills.

**Are any other states doing this?** Not that we are aware of. The Department of Labor put out the LEAP [Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership program] grant for jail-based job centers, but we are not aware of any other job centers in a prison facility.

**Will inmates have access to the mobile job centers upon release?** Yes. Once we set up schedules for them, we will notify press of our locations. If they are in case management with our services we can notify them via their case managers. Our website Jobcenter.com will also have the details.

**How is this getting funded?** The previous mobile lab was funded through DOC Reentry Becky Young funding, and the two additional mobile labs were funded through the DWD request in the biennial budget. There was some funding available via the WIOA funds (\$600,000) most of which went into the Redgranite project. The remaining funds were used to provide technical instruction for the mobile lab, and to the OCI Job Center project (computers, etc.). There is no operating budget to do any of this. Staff from the Dane County Job Center are committed to splitting their time between the Aberg Avenue location and the OCI location.

**What about Milwaukee returning citizens – what resources do we refer them to?** All inmates can access the OCI Job Center regardless of what county they release to. For inmates releasing to other communities they will be referred to a Workforce Development Area staff member, who they will meet upon release. The hope is we can expand upon this project, and it would likely expand to the Southeast Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (Milwaukee).

### **Windows to Work – Overview of the Windows to Work Program**

*Anna Neal, Reentry Program Coordinator*

DOC contracts with each of Wisconsin’s 11 workforce development boards to provide a Windows to Work program at selected state correctional institutions or county jail facilities in each workforce development area.

The Windows to Work program offers pre-release and post-release services. The pre-release services includes five main components, which include Cognitive Intervention (CBI-EMP) which focuses specifically on employment-related issues, general work skills and expectations, financial literacy, community resources, and job seeking, applications and resumes. As of 2018 every DAI institution will have CBI-EMP as the cognitive-based intervention curriculum for Windows to Work participants.

The Windows to Work coaches continue to work with the participants up to 12-months post-release to help guide them through the reentry transition. Post-release services focus on job retention, assistance with promotional opportunities, and connecting the individual with available community resources to address needs for food, shelter, clothing, and transportation. There is limited funding available to address employment barriers such as transportation, education, identification and work supplies.

The target population includes those who are considered medium to high risk of reoffending, as identified by the COMPAS risk/needs assessment. Other eligibility criteria include:

- Mental health stability adequate for participation in competitive full time employment
- Currently incarcerated at a participating institution/county jail
- No detainers that would prevent participation post-release
- Releasing from incarceration no less than 60 days and no more than 12 months after enrollment
- No history of SSI/SSDI benefits within 12 months preceding incarceration and will not be eligible for benefits upon release
- At least one year remaining on community supervision
- Not medically identified as “no work” status
- Priority enrollment will be given to participants whose established agent of record is within the workforce development board area tied to the participating facility.

The Windows to Work program is funded by Becky Young Community Corrections Recidivism Reduction funds. In fiscal year 2018, the Windows to Work program received an additional \$250,000 to expand the program to two additional DOC facilities and one additional county jail. The expansion included Redgranite Correctional Institution, Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution and Adams County Jail. Additionally, substantial programmatic changes occurred using the increased funding to bring most positions to full-time, and increase transfers that occur from one Workforce Development Board area to another. As a result of these expansion efforts, the Windows to Work program enrolled 216 additional participants, and increased the number of participants that transferred from 13 in FY17, to 65 in FY18.

Each Windows to Work program provider is responsible for tracking participant data related to enrollment, education and employment. This data is entered and tracked in the Program Data Collection System (PDCS). The DOC will use the PDCS data to evaluate the program's effectiveness.

**Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin (WDBSCW) Windows to Work Program at OCI and FLCI**  
*Wendy Tougas, Windows to Work Coach – Employment and Training Association*

The DOC contracts with the WDBSCW who sub-contracts with Employment and Training Association (EATA) for the Windows to Work program.

Integration of this program at Fox Lake Correctional Institution required continuous communication with vocational school staff, academic school staff and the administration staff in order to gain support for the program and assist with recruiting inmates to the program.

The Windows to Work program is a 12-week program, with classes running twice per week for 1-2 hours per session. The goal is to hold three (3) classes per program year at each site, with a goal of 50 enrollments per program year across Oakhill and Fox Lake correctional institutions.

Coaches provide ongoing case management services for one year post-release. The coaches try to help participants navigate the various challenges they may face upon release to the community. These challenges include safe and drug-free transitional housing, inflexible landlords, delays in receiving funds for bus passes, lack of rental assistance, lack of work clothes and boots; length of time it takes to get resources; and putting the skills they learned in CBI-EMP into everyday practice. There are limited funds available to help participants obtain release clothing and work clothing, driver's license reinstatement, bus passes, rental assistance, and hygiene products.

**Fox Valley Workforce Development Board Windows to Work Programs and Program Expansion (RGCI and OSCI)**  
*Brent Sanderfoot – Windows to Work Coach – Fox Valley Workforce Development Board, Inc.*

The expansion of Windows to Work program at Redgranite Correctional Institution was highly anticipated and well received by the staff, the administration and the inmates. The transfer process is beneficial as inmates who transfer to a different institution, which may fall within a different workforce development area, will no longer lose the Windows to Work services. Unfortunately, inmates releasing to Milwaukee from an institution other than Racine Correctional Institution (RCI) or Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility (MSDF) cannot transfer to the Milwaukee Windows to Work program. This is because a large number of inmates releasing to the Milwaukee area are housed at MSDF and RCI. Therefore, the inmates participating in the Windows to Work program at these two facilities already constitute a full workload for the assigned Windows to Work coaches.

The Windows to Work is a voluntary program. Inmates who express an interest in the program are given a brief orientation of the expectations and requirements of the program. They are given one week to ponder the

expectations. If they remain interested and willing to participate in all aspects of the program, they will be enrolled in the program.

Once the inmate is released from prison/jail, they will meet with their coach within three (3) days. The individual's resume, cover letter, and other pertinent documents are saved to a flash drive, and this flash drive is given to the individual upon release (with agent permission).

The participant is expected to maintain weekly contact with the coach for the first couple of months. As the participant acclimates in the community and is doing well, the contact will be reduced to bimonthly visits. The coach will provide the participant with details of upcoming job fairs and hiring events, and will also provide assistance for basic needs, such as clothing, rental assistance, and bus passes.

Questions & Answers:

**Can only inmates participate in this program?** Yes. There are other services available for other individuals. For example, for individuals supervised in the community, they can be referred to the Community Corrections Employment Program (CCEP).

**Review FY18 Council on Offender Reentry Annual Report**

*Michele Krueger, Reentry Cross-Divisional Coordinator, Department of Corrections*

The draft version of the Annual Report was reviewed with council members. Any additions or corrections should be emailed to Michele Krueger at the earliest possible convenience.

**Remaining FY19 Council Meeting Dates:**

12/5/18 @ 1:30-3:30pm

3/21/19 @ 1:30-3:30pm

6/12/19 @ 1:30-3:30pm

***Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.***