

## What does *Reentry* mean to North Carolina Employers?



Every year in North Carolina, about 25,000 people are released from the state's correctional facilities. In fact, more than 90 percent of individuals who spend time in our state's correctional facilities will eventually be released.

These individuals are returning to their communities and represent ***an under-utilized, skilled workforce that is prepared to contribute to the success of your business.***

Many of these individuals have participated in programs to prepare them for the workforce, including:

- work release in the community during incarceration;
- basic education classes;
- vocational training;
- post-secondary academic programs; and
- employment readiness classes.

In addition, through Correction Enterprises, more than 2,000 incarcerated people learn job skills by producing certain goods and services for the Department of Public Safety and other tax-supported entities. The valuable skills that these individuals have gained help them transition to employment upon release.

Data analysis shows that participation in these workforce development programs is associated with improved employment outcomes. Hiring from this population not only can help meet employers' needs for skilled workers, but also may include financial incentives, through the **Federal Bonding** program (\$5,000 in coverage per fidelity bond, free of charge) and the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** (up to a \$2,400 tax credit for each eligible employee under the ex-felon category).

More than 2,000 North Carolina employers are using these services and shoring up their workforce with reliable and loyal employees. In addition, a recent reform to North Carolina law on occupational licensing (House Bill 770) helps both jobseekers and employers. The new law clarifies qualifications for licensure and removes automatic disqualification based on criminal history, so that more people can become licensed to work in a number of fields.

Removing barriers to employment is a "win-win-win" - for workers, for businesses, and for safer communities.

To learn more about how you can benefit from this under-utilized talent pool, please contact your local NCWorks Career Center, which can be found by visiting [www.ncworks.gov](http://www.ncworks.gov).

For more information on North Carolina Reentry efforts, please visit [www.ncdps.gov/reentry](http://www.ncdps.gov/reentry)