



Center for  
Employment  
Opportunities

## CEO'S POLICY AGENDA

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### Increase government investment in reentry employment.

The COVID-19 crisis exposed and compounded racial inequity in access to employment. CEO participants and other justice-involved individuals, many of whom have been essential workers throughout the pandemic, rely on programs like CEO that support them and their families during the pandemic, economic recovery, and beyond.

More government investment is needed to expand access to jobs for these individuals, particularly those that create an immediate on-ramp to employment.

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[ceoworks.org](http://ceoworks.org)

### Invest government funds in transitional jobs.

Transitional jobs can uniquely address goals for both reducing incarceration and workforce investment. The immediate support for people when they come home is a critical bridge, helping them address their immediate financial needs, and create a pathway to permanent employment.

Government agencies can dedicate a portion of their contracted services budgets to provide transitional work opportunities for individuals coming home from incarceration, and can also allocate workforce funding to support transitional jobs programs.

### Create a Justice-Impacted Individuals Program.

WIOA is the nation's signature workforce development investment. Since justice-impacted Individuals have unique barriers to employment, creating a WIOA program exclusively for this population will allow more opportunities for state and local workforce entities to prioritize and better serve these individuals.

We must also replace the "ex-offender" language in WIOA and replace it with "justice- or system-impacted individuals" to prioritize language focused on the workforce potential of this population rather than further stigmatizing them based on their conviction history.

### Expand access to the SNAP E&T program.

The [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training \(SNAP E&T\)](#) is one of the few federal benefits that can directly reach most of the 600,000 individuals returning home from incarceration, providing food security as well as vocational training, work experience and support services. In order to more effectively leverage this resource, the federal government must **remove barriers to SNAP enrollment**, particularly for individuals with drug convictions, immediately implement new SNAP E&T regulations that **allow subsidized employment** as an E&T activity, **exclude subsidized employment income from SNAP eligibility tests**, and allow E&T participants to automatically co-enroll in WIOA programming.