



## **Kentucky Department of Corrections**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Kentucky Launches Partnership with Nation's Largest Evidence-Based Reentry Employment Provider**

**FRANKFORT, KY (Oct. 8, 2019)** – The Kentucky Department of Corrections (DOC) today announced the opening of the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) -- a program that provides immediate, comprehensive employment services to people returning home from prison.

CEO began offering reentry services in the Louisville metro area on Aug. 12. The program focuses outreach on those with the highest likelihood of returning to prison and works exclusively with formerly incarcerated individuals who face significant barriers to employment. The goal is to help them gain the skills and support necessary to obtain full-time employment and financial stability.

“Supporting a successful transition to the community is central to the mission of the Kentucky Department of Corrections,” said Commissioner Kathleen Kenney. “Our partnership with CEO directly aligns with that mission. CEO provides returning citizens immediate paid employment, skills training and ongoing career support.”

Many people returning home from prison struggle to find and keep a full-time job. This partnership holds tremendous promise to significantly expand the work of the Kentucky Department of Corrections to help formerly incarcerated individuals transition to stable, productive lives.

All CEO participants have access to immediate work and pay as employees on CEO’s transitional work crews as soon as they return home from incarceration. Work crews offer services to both public and private sector agencies.

“We have long been aware that successful reentry is critical to public safety,” said Kentucky Justice Secretary John Tilley. “Our partnership with CEO and its leadership represents a major step forward in Kentucky’s commitment to transforming individuals’ lives and protecting the public. We are excited to partner with CEO in opening its first Kentucky office in Louisville. By providing employment services to Kentuckians returning home from incarceration, CEO will not only help us prepare them for successful careers, but reduce their likelihood of recidivism as they pursue their professional goals. We are excited to launch this program and see this partnership with CEO grow across the Commonwealth.”

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) is CEO's first work crew partner in the state, launching a pilot project with CEO in Louisville last month. So far, 25 Kentuckians have participated in the pilot, developing critical job readiness skills and getting immediate paid work experience upon returning home.

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Secretary Greg Thomas said "partnering with CEO allows our Cabinet to deliver high-quality services from skilled individuals while putting them on a path to gainful employment."

The chief executive officer of CEO, Sam Schaeffer said "CEO is excited to work with government partners like DOC and KYTC to help give formerly incarcerated individuals the tools to gain a job and economic mobility. Our vision is that every returning citizen who wants to work should have that opportunity."

For more information about the Center for Employment Opportunities, visit <https://ceoworks.org> or email [CEOLouisville@ceoworks.org](mailto:CEOLouisville@ceoworks.org)

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