

Analysis

Department of Corrections

Second Chance Act: Improving Vocational and Employment Services

Analyst: Julie Neburka

Request: Approve a request from the Department of Corrections (DOC) to apply to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance's Second Chance Act: Adult Reentry Education, Employment, Treatment and Recovery Program for a \$900,000 grant to begin a heavy equipment training and certification program at DOC institutions.

Analysis: On May 3rd, 2021, the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance made \$24.3 million available to state, local, and tribal governments under the Second Chance Act: Adult Reentry Education, Employment, Treatment and Recovery Program. The purpose of this grant program is to enhance a corrections system's ability to address substance use treatment needs of offenders and to expand education and employment programs that emphasize strong partnerships between corrections, parole and probation officers, education, workforce development, and reentry service providers. The grant is awarded in three categories; DOC's request is in category 2, Improving Employment Services and Connections.

DOC proposes to use grant funds to pilot a heavy equipment training and certification program at its facilities. The program would provide training via a contractor, and DOC would develop community connections to prepare adults in custody for employment upon release in highway construction and other industries that use heavy equipment. A mobile classroom would be located at each prison for a two to four-week period, during which time adults in custody would be trained on virtual heavy equipment simulators, which have proven to expedite the heavy equipment training and certification process. Both the training contractor and the agency would develop relationships with industry representatives for post-release job placement. If the program proves successful, DOC will work with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to explore whether and how adults in custody might use federal Pell grants to pay for this training after the grant-funded pilot program ends.

This grant application is due on June 22, 2021. If awarded, the period of performance would start October 1, 2021 for a three-year period. There are no match requirements. If successful, the agency may need to return to the Legislature to request limited-duration position authority and additional Federal Funds expenditure limitation.

Legislative Fiscal Office Recommendation: Approve the request.

Department of Corrections McDonald

Request: The Department of Corrections (DOC) seeks authorization to apply for a grant of up to \$900,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, titled the Second Chance Act: Adult Reentry Education, Employment, Treatment and Recovery Program.

Recommendation: Approve the request.

Discussion: On May 3, 2021, the Bureau of Justice Assistance made \$24.3 million available to state, local, and tribal governments for the FY 21 Second Chance Act: Adult Reentry Education, Employment, Treatment and Recovery Program. The purpose of this grant program is to enhance a corrections system's ability to address the substance use treatment needs of offenders and to expand education and employment programs, while emphasizing strong partnerships between corrections, parole and probation officers, education, workforce development, and reentry service providers. The grant funding is divided into three solicitation categories. The Department is seeking permission to apply for funds within category 2, Improving Vocational and Employment Services.

If awarded, DOC would use grant funds to pilot a heavy equipment training and certification program at its facilities. Similar to a program already offered by the Oregon Youth Authority, a mobile classroom would be located at each facility for a two to four week period, during which time adults in custody would be trained on virtual heavy equipment simulators, which have proven to expedite the heavy equipment training and certification process. Additionally, training would include employment preparation soft skills, such as resume preparation and mock interviews. The program would provide training via a contractor, and DOC would develop community connections and collaborate with industry representatives to prepare adults in custody for employment opportunities in industries requiring heavy equipment operators upon release. If the program proves successful, DOC will work with contractors and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to ascertain whether and how adults in custody might use federal Pell grants to pay for this training after the grant-funded pilot program concludes.

This grant application is due on June 22, 2021 and the period of performance is 36 months, starting October 1, 2021. There are no match requirements. If successful in the solicitation, DOC will likely return to the Legislature to request authority for one or two limited-duration positions and additional Federal Funds expenditure limitation.



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Oregon Department of Corrections

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May 12, 2021

The Honorable Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
The Honorable Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair
The Honorable Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street, N.E.
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

The Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) respectfully requests approval to apply for the Fiscal Year 2021 Bureau of Justice Assistance **Second Chance Act: Adult Reentry Education, Employment, Treatment and Recovery Program, Category 2: Improving Vocational and Employment Services** grant.

Source of Grant	U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
Amount Being Requested	\$900,000
Purpose of the Grant	<p>DOC requests permission to apply for this grant to begin a heavy equipment training and certification program at DOC facilities and work with a contractor and community groups to help prepare adults in custody (AICs) for gainful employment after release.</p> <p>The program is similar to one already offered at the Oregon Youth Authority. A mobile classroom would be moved onto the prison footprint for a two- to four-week duration. AICs would be trained on virtual heavy equipment simulators, which have been demonstrated to expedite the training and certification process. Training would include employment preparation soft skills such as resume preparation and mock interviews; and DOC and the contractor would collaborate with industry representatives for post-release placement.</p> <p>These positions are in high demand in the community, typically pay \$25 to \$60 per hour, and highway construction industries and other employers needing heavy equipment operators are often more open to hiring employees with a criminal history.</p>
Application Deadline	June 22, 2021
State Match Required for the Grant	None

Impact the match will have on budgeted services and performance measures	N/A
Additional FTE the grant will require	DOC is still in the early planning stages, but at this time we anticipate possibly 1.0 or 2.0 additional Full-Time Employees (FTE) will be required, but they would be limited-duration positions funded by the grant. DOC also anticipates requesting indirect costs to compensate for reporting and other administrative support for this grant. All training will be provided through contracted services.
How the Grant Supports the Agency Mission and Goals	<p>Because research has demonstrated post-secondary education and vocational training and certification during incarceration reduces the risk of recidivism, the Legislature has funded DOC for basic education and work-based education opportunities. The proposed heavy equipment training program will allow DOC to add a new education and certification opportunity.</p> <p>Reducing recidivism through the proposed use of these grant funds supports the agency's mission to promote public safety by holding offenders accountable for their actions and reducing the risk of future criminal behavior. It also promotes Preparing Offenders for Reentry, which is a component of the agency's vision.</p>
Sustaining the Program after the Grant Period	DOC intends to use the grant funds to pilot this training program. If the program is successful, DOC will work with contractors and the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission to ascertain whether Pell grants could be utilized for AICs to pay for the training after the grant project concludes.

Thank you for your consideration.



Colette S. Peters
Director

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