

## Federal and State Institution 'Pre-Release & Post-Release Group Counseling and Individual Employment Placement'



PRCC<sup>2</sup> is a product and process designed to address and serve the unique and specific career/employment needs and challenges of soon-to-be-released Criminal Offenders (referred to as Clients) that are presently housed and/or under the control of State or Federal Correctional Institutions.

Engagement starts 10 Weeks prior to the release of each group, where each Inmate is formally indoctrinated into the PRCC<sup>2</sup> program, and then match with one of the specific 'skill-based' career-paths being offered by a group of local/well-established and philanthropic-driven employers through their Letter of Commitment and Support with the CRU PRCC<sup>2</sup> Program.

Support to each released 'Client' continues a weekly (1st Year) and monthly (2nd year) participation in the program and satisfactory employment with each specific sponsoring employer. The PRCC<sup>2</sup> program 'does not replace nor actively engage with the Federal or State Parole System, nor the Client's assigned Parole Officer (unless requested, or deemed necessary by CRU or the Host Employer)

The goal of the PRCC<sup>2</sup> program is to ensure that state-identified 'low-to-moderate risk' candidates are given optimal 'career knowledge,' 'behavioral/conflict-resolution knowledge' & 'employment opportunities' to measurably increase their immediate, short-term and long-term success; following release from State or Federal Correctional Institutions, and into State or Federal 'half-way' facilities.

This is a critically-needed service (and one in short supply) since there are currently, approximately 12 million people in the U.S. with a felony conviction. And, to add to this already 'employment challenged' population, each year an additional 650,000 inmates are released from Federal and State Correctional Institutions.

These key facts, along with other challenging variables (where a 2003 study of U.S. businesses in four major cities found that only 12.5% of this

group were willing to accept applications from any ex-convict) contribute to the latest estimates indicating that the 'stabilized' unemployment rate among felony offenders is a tragic 25-48%.



### **Most Common Factors Cited by Employers for 'Not Hiring a Felon**

Many employers won't hire felons because they (inaccurately) believe that 'all' felons are dishonest and likely to commit a new crime while on the job (once a felon - always a felon);

Other employers have privately stated that they believe that any publicly announcing information about a 'felon hiring' project might permanently damage the company's reputation, and accordingly, a loss of business;

Another often-cited reason stated as being a key reason that employers are reluctant to hire felons "is in order to protect the safety and well-being of the longstanding employees of the company and minimize the legal liability of the employer;" inaccurately believing that if they hire a felon who causes problems on the job, it could/would be viewed as 'negligent hiring' by the affected employee(s);

There is also the question of whether the employees of the business have the right to know if there is a felon employed at their company; vssu the felon's legal right to let their conviction stay private and in the past.

Unfortunately, support is given to those businesses that believe the since statistics do show a 'marginal' increase in 'employee risk,' due the fact is that not all felons are motivated to living an honest life, and maintaining a job and developing a career, following release from incarceration.

**Most Common Factors Cited in Correctional Education Research that should highly-motivate Employers to 'Hire a Felon:'**

1. A felony conviction & lengthy prison sentence has given them the chance to seriously reflect on the years that they spent incarcerated, exactly who all they have damaged by their actions, and just how much of their lives they have wasted because of their crime(s);
2. Most felons that found employment following release from prison stated that they were extremely grateful to any employer willing to give them a second chance at a life, and possible career;
3. Multiple years of incarceration in an institution has made them extremely punctual due to the rigid schedule to which they have had to adhere. And due to the high standards and requirements to obtain and hold work assignments within the institution, they are accustomed to hard work;
4. A majority of felons that found employment following release from prison stated that they were extremely grateful to have the opportunity to show their families, parole officer, and employer that, when given the chance, they can adapt (re-adapt) to working in society, and demonstrate the positive behaviors & skills that they have learned during incarceration;
5. Most federal & state prisons require inmates to hold jobs, and acquire new skills and trades, so they generally have a range of entry-level to advanced vocational skills & 'Job Program' participation;

With all the challenges felons face finding employment following release, felons stay with the company that hires them for 2 to 3 times the employment years of non-felon employees.

And unlike other employees that might 'shop' knowledge, skills and education gained through one employer, to the next, due to the previously-stated challenges, felons are highly determined to establish and maintain stability with one sole employer;

### **Key State and Federal programs that provide 'Incentives' to Employers that Hire a Felon: shows that, for most of the population:**

1. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a Federal Tax Incentives available which will reward employers for hiring ex-felons.

This tax credit can be applied to employers who choose to hire “an individual who was convicted of a felony and who is hired not more than one year after the conviction or release from prison;”

2. The Federal Bonding Program provides all employers with a short-term liability bond, ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000, and is provided at no cost to the employer. This as an extremely important guaranteed ‘free’ benefit, since Federal Bonds protect employers from the possibility of any unlikely case of theft, or dishonesty on the part of an ex-felon.

### **Philanthropic Incentives: How Does Hiring a Felon Help Society**

- There are approximately 12 million people in the U.S. with a felony conviction, and each year approximately an additional 650,000 inmates are released from prison into society. Unfortunately, Department of Corrections & US Social Security studies as recent as 2017 show that fewer than 45% of all felons annually released had gain any recorded employment after eight months,
- Once somebody has a felony on their record, they generally become untouchable by most employers. Without any job prospects many of them turn back to the life of crime that they are accustomed to living in.
- By hiring a felon, you are giving them hope that they can move on and change themselves for the better. Incarcerating and monitoring criminals is expensive - by helping break this vicious cycle you are helping the public at large and possibly changing the felon and his/her family's life permanently.

**Hear President Obama's 2015 message to employers who were seeking to give the formerly incarcerated a second chance:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiosRLz5q10>

**How the Careers-R-US ‘Pre-Release & Post-Release’ Program works ‘for Washington State Felons:’**

The PRCC<sup>2</sup> program is a two-part process that first engages and indoctrinates the client ‘prior to the client being released’ from the host correctional institution (Pre-Release Career Counseling generally initiates 10 Weeks prior to parole to a State Work-Release House).

The Pre-Release 'period of engagement' consists of (10) 6-hour group sessions (typically 10 clients per group), and (3) two-hour 'one-on-one' contact sessions for each group member.

During the first (2) group sessions, clients are formally and fully indoctrinated into the PRCC<sup>2</sup> program, and provided with all the tools, vision, mission, goals, requirements and knowledge necessary to allow structured and successful movement through the 'Pre-Release Career Counseling' portion of the program.

For Washington State, every client will be successfully matched to a position with local Washington State business establishments that have agreed to sponsor and employ the client as part of a Letter of Commitment between Careers-R-Us and each specific Washington State business institution.

During the second part of the PRCC<sup>2</sup> program (Post-Release Career Counseling), and commensurate with the client's 40-hour work week with his sponsoring business institution, CRU will provide weekly (1 hour face-to-face) career, educational and mentoring support to ensure that optimal intrapersonal, interpersonal and group behaviors are immediately established and maintained with their newly-obtained employer and employee team members.

All Post-Release Career Counseling sessions will take place at the Clients assigned Work-Release House, and will be performed before, or after their normal work hours.

The 'Post-Release' Additionally, Proactive (bi-monthly) and Reactive (upon request) support is given to the sponsoring business institutions that are employing the clients, as well as to any State or Federal Official.

And finally, as part of the PRCC process, Monthly Client Progress Reports, which contains input from Careers-R-Us, the Sponsoring Employers, and the Clients as well, are generated and forwarded to the appropriate State or Federal Correctional Officer or Agency for review.

### **Pre-Release Structural Process Flow:**

#### **1). Introduction of the Facilitator & the PRCC<sup>2</sup> program to the clients:**

- a. Facilitator Introduction & Description of PRCC<sup>2</sup> program;
- b. Presentation of Ground Rules, Policies, Procedures & Expectations for successful participation & completion of the PRCC<sup>2</sup> program; and,
- c. Client Group Brief Introductions.

**2). Open Career Discussion:**

- a. Current and emerging trends in employment of Released Felons; and,

**3). Discussion on Success/Performance:**

- a. Expectations of the Client, Federal/State, Employer and PRCC<sup>2</sup>.

**4). Open Discussion on Logistics:**

- a. Responsibilities of all participants: Client, State, Employer, PRCC<sup>2</sup>.
- b. Completion of Strong Interest Inventory® Profile with Skills Confidence Test;

**Note:** With respect to the use of nationally-recognized tools designed to accurately measure each Client's 'individual interests,' Careers-R-Us relies on the results of the Client's completion of the 'Strong Interest Inventory® Profile with Skills Confidence' test results; which all Clients must complete online.

The Strong Interest Inventory® Profile with Skills Confidence test provides every Client and CRU with a full breakdown of the specific client's interests in work, play, academia, and communication styles, with the added bonus of showing the Client 'how confident they are in certain abilities' and then compares these areas of 'high confidence' to the Client's 'mapped-out' interests and skills.

**Strong Interest Inventory® Profile with Skills Confidence test**

<https://careerassessmentsite.com/tests/strong-tests/>

**5). Discussion on Organizational Theory & Organizational Behavior:**

- a. Organizational Theory- How Organizations are designed and Why they are designed that way; and,
- b. Organizational Behavior- The Prescribed Role, the Enacted Role and the Subjective Role.

**6). Discussion on Conflict Resolution:**

- a. Dealing with Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Group Conflict.

**7). Discussion on On-The-Job & Off-The-Job Optimal Behavior:**

- a. 'On-the-job' & 'Off-the-job' personal behavior & situational awareness.

**8). Administer General Interest Test & Aptitude Test:**

- a. Issuance of a General Interest Test & General Aptitude Test.

**9). Perform Mock Employment Interviews and Discussions:**

- a. Group & Facilitator's critique of participants.

**10). First One-On-One Client/Facilitator Session:**

- a. Determination of Immediate, Short-Term & Long-Term Goals, and
- b. Resume & Cover Letter development.

## **11). Second and Third One-On-One Client/Facilitator Sessions:**

- a. Presentation and review of final Immediate, Short-Term and Long-Term Goals document;
- b. Presentation and review of Resume & Cover Letter; and,
- c. Review of the PRCC<sup>2</sup> Employment-placement process, available appointments & acceptance of Appointment Assignment; and,
- d. Discussion on the PRCC<sup>2</sup> 'Post-Release' Structural Process Flow (Week 1 through Week 52):

## **1st Year 'PRCC<sup>2</sup> Post-Release' Structural Process Flow:**

### **1). Initial Post-Release Office Visit:**

- a. Review of all 'PRCC<sup>2</sup> Post-Release Program policies, and procedures;
- b. Review of all 'Sponsoring Employer' policies and procedures; and,
- c. Discussion on Keys to Success: transportation, housing, finances, abstinence, societal norm adherence, dress/attire/hygiene, career advancement and education opportunities.

### **2). First-Year 'Bi-Monthly' Half-Way House Site Visit by CRU to Client [at Federal/State Half-Way House]:**

- a. Discussion on Keys to Success: transportation, housing, finances, abstinence, societal norm adherence, dress/attire/hygiene, career advancement and education opportunities; and,
- b. Completion of 'Client Interview' form; including discussions on any issues, questions, concerns or needs.

### **3). First-Year 'CRU Monthly Employer Site Visits:'**

- a. Review of all 'Post-Release PRCC<sup>2</sup> Program policies, and procedures;
- b. Review of 'Sponsoring Employers' policies and procedures; and,
- c. Completion of 'Employer Interview' form; including discussions on any issues, questions, concerns or needs.

## **2nd Year Post-Release Structural Process Flow:**

### **1). Post-Release Monthly Client Office Visit to CRU:**

- a. Discussion on Keys to Success: transportation, housing, finances, abstinence, societal norm adherence, dress/attire/hygiene, career advancement and education opportunities; and,
- b. Completion of 'Client Interview' form; including discussions on any issues, questions, concerns or needs.

## **2). Post-Release Monthly ‘CRU Monthly Employment Site Visits:’**

- a. Review of all ‘Post-Release PRCC<sup>2</sup> Program policies, and procedures;
- b. Review of ‘Sponsoring Employers’ policies and procedures; and,
- c. Completion of ‘Employer Interview’ form; including discussions on any issues, questions, concerns or needs.

### **CRU's PRCC Client Selection Process**

Nationally, approximately 75% of the individuals committing Felonies are Male, and of this group, 63.3% of the sentences issued annually involve offenders who had a history of one or more prior Felony offenses.

Additionally, while figures vary slightly from State to State, the overall rate of recidivism for Men is 65.9% (compared to 53.6% among Women).

The key to CRU’s PRCC Program lies in its partnership with the Department of Corrections in the well in advance ‘screening’ and ‘down-selection’ of the ‘soon-to-be-released’ Felons that will be allowed entry into CRU’s PRCC Program.

#### **1. ‘Criminal History Category’ Assignments used by CRU:**

In 2017, the United States Sentencing Commission released the results of their extensive study titled ‘Past Predicts the Future: Criminal History and Recidivism of Federal Offenders Commission Report.’

CRU relies on the results of this study, which concludes that ‘Criminal History Category’ is a highly accurate and reliable ‘primary predictor’ of Recidivism.

A given Felon’s ‘Criminal History Category’ is developed from several variables and components, including previous/current criminal history points, and the seriousness of past offenses.

The object of this method is to calculate the Offender’s ‘Criminal History Points,’ which will correspond to a ‘Criminal History Category’ on the US Department of Corrections Sentencing Table.



## **US Department of Corrections Criminal History Categories:**

- CHC I (0 - 1 Criminal History Points)**
- CHC II (2 - 3 Criminal History Points)**
- CHC III (4 - 6 Criminal History Points)
- CHC IV (7 - 9 Criminal History Points)
- CHC V (10 - 12 Criminal History Points)
- CHC VI (13 or more Criminal History Points)

To ensure 'optimal' stakeholder-success for the Client, State/Federal Institution, Employers, and CRU, and to minimize the risk of Client Failure,' **the PRCC<sup>2</sup> program only selects Clients from the lowest two 'risk' categories: CH I and CH II.**

## **2. 'Felony Offense Group' Category Assignments used by CRU:**

Felony Offenses in the United States are categorized by the US Department of Corrections into 9 Federal Offense Groups:

- 1. Assault**
- 2. Burglary**
- 3. Drug**
4. Manslaughter
5. Murder
- 6. Property**
7. Robbery
8. Sex
- 9. Other**

To ensure 'optimal' stakeholder-success for the Client, State/Federal Institution, Employers, and CRU, and to minimize the risk of Client Failure,' **the PRCC<sup>2</sup> program only selects Clients from the highlighted Federal Offense Groups.**

## Work-Release Facilities Supporting PRCC Clients

### Progress House Work Release



**The Progress House Work-Release facility is a Re-Entry Minimum-Security prison located in Tacoma, Washington and serves half-way housing needs of institutions located in Pierce County and surrounding areas. Work-release Inmates are incarcerated in this facility whenever they are not at their job, which the Department of Corrections oversees and controls 24/7.**

Webpage: <http://doc.wa.gov/corrections/incarceration/work-release/locations.htm#progress-house>

### Reynolds Work Release



Reynolds Work Release is a Minimum-Security State Prison facility located in the City of Seattle and serves half-way housing needs of institutions located in King County and surrounding areas. Work-release Inmates are incarcerated in this facility whenever they are not at their job, which the Department of Corrections oversees and controls 24/7.

Webpage: <http://doc.wa.gov/corrections/incarceration/work-release/locations.htm#reynolds>

### **Deliverables to Federal/State Agencies, Clients and all Sponsoring Employers:**

- 1) Correctional Facility Report:** which is made up of Client, Employer and PRCC<sup>2</sup> input;
- 2). Client Report:** which is made up of screened State, Employer and PRCC<sup>2</sup> input; and,
- 3). Sponsoring Employer Report:** which is made up of screened Client, Employer and PRCC<sup>2</sup> input.

## **External Resources used by Careers-R-Us:**

### **Assistance For Felons in Washington State Program**

<http://felonopportunities.com/assistance-for-felons-in-washington-state/>

### **DOL ETA Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program**

[https://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/State\\_Contacts.cfm#washington](https://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/State_Contacts.cfm#washington)

### **Help For Felons Organization**

<https://helpforfelons.org/>

### **Jobs For Felons in Seattle, Washington Program**

<https://www.jobsforfelonshub.com/locations/jobs-for-felons-in-seattle-washington/>

### **Ranker Media List of Companies That Hire Felons**

<https://www.ranker.com/list/list-of-companies-that-hire-felons/business-and-company-info>

### **The National Helping Individuals with criminal records Re-enter through Employment (H.I.R.E.) Network**

<https://www.hirenetwork.org/>

### **U.S. Department of Education - Correctional Education**

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/correctional-education.html>

### **Washington State Employment Security Program - Federal Bonding**

<https://hirenetwork.org/content/washington>

### **2013 Washington State Bill: Assistance Felons Seeking Employment In The City of Seattle**

<https://q13fox.com/2013/06/10/bill-passes-to-assist-felons-with-getting-jobs/>

### **2016 White House 'Fair Chance Pledge' for Ex-Convicts**

<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/04/11/fact-sheet-white-house-launches-fair-chance-business-pledge>

**Public Housing Agency's Housing Choice Voucher Program**

<https://felonyfriendlyjobs.org/housing-for-felons/>