



BCE Transition Program

Purpose of the Program

Numerous studies focusing on the cycle of recidivism argue that stable employment is a strong indicator of preventing criminal activity, specifically for those who have been incarcerated. With this in mind, the Transition Program, an initiative of the Department of Corrections - Bureau of Correctional Enterprises (BCE) is designed to help inmate workers capitalize on work experience and skills acquired during incarceration and to aid in employment readiness for post-incarceration.



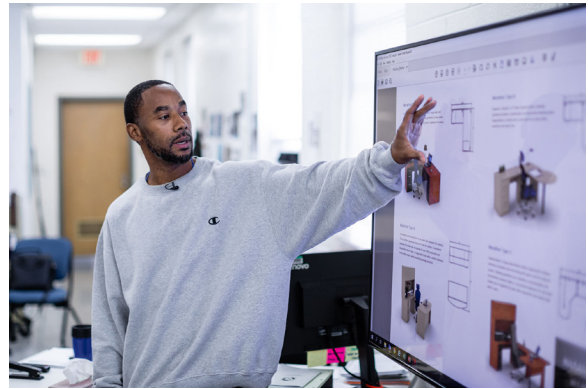
Target Population, Geographic Region and Eligibility Criteria

The Transition Program is a voluntary program that targets those inmates who have worked while incarcerated for Bureau of Correctional Enterprises, Correctional Farms, or special projects such as computer recycling or wheelchair recycling. The Program serves offenders returning to all 72 Wisconsin counties.



Contact Information

Transition Program Coordinators
P.O. Box 8990
Madison, WI 53708-8990
800-862-1086 Toll Free
608-240-5167 Regina Riedel
608-240-5166 Kristi Buscemi
BCETransition@wi.gov



History and Funding Source

From its inception as a budget initiative in 1998, the Transition Program has provided information about employment related services and links to hundreds of inmates. Transition went 'live' in February 2000 with the release of the first inmate worker from R.E. Ellsworth Correctional Center back to the community. At that point, the program was operational on a four-county pilot project basis and functioned in that design until going statewide in the summer of 2001.



Services Provided

Approximately one year prior to release a Transition Program Enrollment Packet is sent to eligible offenders. After required forms are returned, offenders are considered Transition Program participants and are eligible for services.

Services provided by the Transition Program include:

- Providing on-site Program Orientation
- Providing an employment planning guide to prepare the inmate for post-release employment
- Providing job-searching tools designed specifically to the needs of the inmate population
- Assistance in securing identification documents
- Assistance with identifying career interests
- Providing summary of BCE employment history and work skills
- Working with individual offenders on resume development
- Acting as employment reference for offenders' BCE employment to potential employers
- Disseminating information from other employment programs designed for the inmate population
- Providing linkages to community support services for post-release stabilization
- Providing targeted job listings in the offender's planned county / city of release
- Providing supplemental funds for items directly related to finding and keeping employment such as tools, rent, clothing, transportation