

**VOS REO**®  
VIRTUAL ONESTOP REENTRY  
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## TURNING THE TIDE: HOLISTIC AND INCLUSIVE APPROACHES TO REDUCE RECIDIVISM



Recidivism remains a pressing challenge for justice-impacted citizens reentering the workforce after incarceration. Across the globe—from the United Kingdom to Australia—countries face strikingly similar issues. In Australia, reconviction rates hover around 53%, with reimprisonment between 39–45%. In the United Kingdom, recent data shows that 28% of formerly incarcerated individuals return to prison.

This is where holistic services and inclusive programs can make a difference. By prioritizing education and employment, individuals preparing for release can strengthen their chances of success and reduce the likelihood of reoffending. Career pathways and job opportunities create second chances, while innovations in technology now enable job search and career exploration even before release.

When implemented effectively, this model has the power to reduce recidivism, restore communities, reunite families, and improve overall quality of life. Yet, significant barriers remain: many formerly incarcerated individuals struggle to secure employment, while industries continue to face persistent workforce shortages.

Offering second-chance employment not only expands talent pools for organizations but also provides justice-impacted individuals with stability and a smoother transition back to civilian life. In doing so, society benefits from safer communities, stronger economies, and renewed opportunities for all.

## **ANOTHER CHANCE STARTS WITH DIGITAL PLATFORMS**

A paradigm shift is underway in digital platforms designed to give justice-impacted individuals a true second chance. These platforms aim to reduce recidivism by equipping people nearing parole with the tools and resources needed to secure employment.

Geographic Solutions has pioneered one such innovation: Virtual OneStop REO<sup>®</sup> (VOS REO<sup>®</sup>), a comprehensive and secure system that guides justice-impacted job seekers toward meaningful work. In 2025, VOS REO was recognized as a finalist in Fast Company's World Changing Ideas Awards and honored with Tampa Bay Inno's Partnership of the Year. Beyond accolades, research shows that individuals who develop workplace soft skills alongside technical training are more likely to secure employment prior to release, attract the attention of employers, and avoid cycling back into the justice system.

At its core, VOS REO provides equal access to resources and helps overcome barriers to employment. By enabling secure job searches before release, it significantly reduces the risk of recidivism and opens pathways to stability, opportunity, and reintegration.

## **BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CORRECTIONS AND WORKFORCE**

The earliest traceable roots of VOS REO date back to 2014 when California's Tulare County Probation Department and Tulare County Workforce Investment Board partnered to launch Tulare County Probation RESET (Readiness for Employment through Sustainable Education and Training).

Through this program and partnership, these organizations were tasked with court and supervision services for over 6,000 adult and juvenile offenders. Reducing recidivism was a major key to success with the RESET program, and with the advent of the program came the need for a website to streamline the referral process and to co-manage cases. The RESET Portal launched successfully in 2015, marking the first system built on the VOS REO concept.

***“Having the portal allows us to streamline our referral process and co-case manage”***

**Lisa Martinez, Workforce Development Analyst at the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County.**

By allowing probation officers to begin registering individuals into the portal, program participants could now learn to create and update résumés, conduct skills assessments, perform labor market research, and apply to jobs in their area.

Since this early inception nearly a decade ago, the hypothesis has become tested results. The concept of being able to assist a probationer with finding employment post-release has shifted to assisting inmates pre-release. In California, Virginia, and North Carolina, this system is being used with recorded success on small and large scales.

## CALIFORNIA: ENTRY TO EMPLOYMENT NETWORK



In California, the results are the most prominent. In August 2022, Geographic Solutions partnered with the California Correctional Training Rehabilitation Authority (CALCTRA), the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), and the California Employment Development Department (EDD) to implement VOS REO at California State Prison, Solano.

The custom web portal, known as the Entry to Employment (E2E) Network, was designed to allow inmates to securely access employment tools through CalJOBS, the state's official workforce system. For the first time ever in the state, incarcerated individuals are able to connect with employers and secure job offers before leaving prison.

Launched in January 2024, the E2E Network assists detainees with building résumés, practicing interview skills, and searching and applying for jobs prior to their release. The portal also allows the counselors to conduct objective assessments, as well as individual employment plans.

The E2E Network opens the door for incarcerated individuals to access EDD's second chance employer list and job offerings through CalJOBS, in addition to other popular employment websites. The E2E Network also allows the private business sector to access a more qualified and trained workforce in a market that frequently struggles to find qualified employees.

CALCTRA's Workforce Development Coordinators help incarcerated individuals at CDCR prisons with their résumés and pre-employment preparations. Once individuals are on the network, they can search for jobs that match their skills and qualifications. E2E displays positive employer matches and provides the functionality for these individuals to apply for available opportunities.

## CALIFORNIA SUCCESS STORIES

Douglas Woodall was the first applicant who was hired using the E2E Network while incarcerated at California State Prison, Solano. Woodall was hired by a leading manufacturing company in mid-April and is extremely grateful.

***“The E2E system helped me land a job. I was able to build a professional résumé and get an early start applying for jobs in prison, which was beneficial in the job hunt.”***

Douglas Woodall, E2E Network User

Individuals who have approximately 180 days left in their sentence and who are part of CALCTRA's job training programs can participate in the secure job-seeking network.

In a [2024 CBS News Sacramento article](#), California inmate Fausto Basso, incarcerated since 2006, shared his story. “I've viewed 17 jobs. I applied for eight of them,” said Basso. “The job search is fantastic. It's endless opportunity for people like me”.

At the time of the news story, Basso had 70 days left in his sentence. He credited the job training conducted while in prison for finding his purpose, drive, and rehabilitation. “It's life-changing. It really is,” said Basso of the experience behind bars and the opportunity to find employment before release.

## BY THE NUMBERS

To date, the CALCTRA E2E Network has been fully implemented in all 30 state correctional facilities, enabling over 400 registered inmates and counting to search for quality employment before their release. The system is poised to reduce the state's recidivism rates and improve public safety through targeted risk and employment-based interventions.

With over 400 total records in the E2E Network's database directly related to the work that VOS REO powers, the system has shown promise. Within two years, pre and post-transfer statistics highlight career enhancement activities.

From launch to October 2025, the E2E Network has posted impressive statistics:

## Pre-Release Statistics

# 2,427

Total System Logins

# 156

Active Résumés

# 3,162

Liked Jobs

# 512

Transfers

## Post-Release Statistics

# 1,316

Logins

# 6

Résumés

# 28

Job Applications

Based on these statistics, 54% of those who return home continue to log in and use the system. And while a smaller percentage has led to job applications post release, the act of applying and searching for jobs can be correlated with a drop in the overall recidivism rate in the state of California. A recent report by the CDCR notes that reentry programs in the state have been credited with lowering recidivism rates by 34% for men and 44% for women.

The positive downward motion in recidivism for California exemplifies why systems powered by VOS REO, such as the E2E Network, are crucial for any city, state, province, region, or territory.

***“We want individuals to have a career before they return to their communities.”***

Bill Davidson, Former CALPIA's General Manager.

## VIRGINIA CORRECTIONS PORTAL



Virginia has one of the lowest recidivism rates in the United States. At 17.6%, this rate is the lowest in more than 20 years, and improves upon the 19% rate from Fiscal Year 2019.

The Virginia Department of Corrections' (VADOC) Director, Chad Dotson, was quoted on the VADOC's website stating that this was not only a collective win for dedicated public servants, and for all Virginians, but also for evidence-based reentry services.

Virginia has several pre-release programs for those who are incarcerated but expect to be returning home and back into the

civilian workforce. This includes Pre-release and Post-Incarceration Services (PAPIS), Virginia CARES (Community Action Re-Entry System), and Adult Alternative Programs.

In April 2023, the VADOC partnered with Geographic Solutions to launch a new VOS REO-powered portal that would assist justice-impacted individuals in Virginia with their employment search prior to release.

Known as the Virginia Corrections Portal, the secure system aims to reduce recidivism by providing individuals in correctional facilities with the necessary job exploration tools and training resources to aid them in finding better employment before reentering society.

## **VIRGINIA SUCCESS STORIES**

The digital infrastructure of the Virginia Corrections Portal directly supports and integrates with statewide programs such as PAPIS and Virginia CARES. Through this integration of physical and digital services, a group of individuals were able to use the Virginia Corrections Portal pre release to successfully search for and find employment.

“In one case, the individual was released in August 2025 and immediately had an interview with Rochester Electric,” said Scott Trice, Workforce Development Specialist at the Virginia Department of Corrections. “Because of the Virginia Corrections Portal and his résumé being in the system, he was able to secure employment before release.”

Trice credits the Virginia Corrections Portal with several additional success stories, including one where the participant received multiple job offers. As of now, the Virginia VOS REO-powered system has been implemented in four facilities as a pilot, with more scheduled to start using the software in 2026.

## **BY THE NUMBERS**

According to the [latest statistics from the Virginia Employment Commission and Virginia Correctional Enterprises](#), a total of 651 state responsible inmates who participated in Virginia Correctional Enterprises training were released in FY 2020. Those who participated in VCE employment programs were less likely to recidivate than those who did not participate.

Even in its infancy, the Virginia Corrections Portal has shown major implications for assisting in placements for justice-impacted individuals.

Since launch, Geographic Solutions' jobs data shows that

# 439

**individuals** have used the Virginia Corrections Portal before release.

## NORTH CAROLINA JOBS EXPLORATION IN TRANSITION



In February 2025, the North Carolina Department of Commerce and the North Carolina Department of Adult Correction partnered with Geographic Solutions to launch VOS REO. The North Carolina Jobs Exploration in Transition, or NCJET, serves as a digital bridge between correctional facilities and workforce development agencies, helping individuals explore job opportunities and build reentry plans while still incarcerated.

While the state’s recidivism rate has remained relatively stable, with slight fluctuations. [A report by the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission](#) shows a 44% re-arrest rate within two years out of a sample of 13,000 people released from state prisons.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce Reentry Initiative provides resources and assistance to justice-impacted job seekers to help them overcome barriers to employment created by a criminal record. State career centers also work with federal, state, and local providers of reentry services, including community-and-faith-based organizations, and vocational rehabilitation centers.

## NORTH CAROLINA SUCCESS STORIES

A pilot program at the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women – Correction Enterprise Plant takes the same tools that individuals use within the online NCWorks system and offers them in a safe and secure environment. Inmates who are seeking for jobs after release look for a small green circle with a “2” inside, indicating that the company is a Second Chance Employer.

Latricia Taylor is finishing up a two-year sentence at this particular correctional institution. With her search for employment after release, she hopes to find a role that will be fast paced, and where she can help people.

Taylor’s story of success can’t yet be tied to full-time employment, but after release, she’s hopeful that NCJET, powered by VOS REO, will be the forward momentum needed to avoid recidivating. “It’ll be one less thing that I’ll have to stress about,” said Taylor in an interview with [Raleigh, North Carolina’s, My Fox 8](#), when interviewed about using the system to find a job that is friendly to second-chance job seekers.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**The youngest of the VOS REO projects, NCJET is positioned to help many justice-impacted individuals within the state.**

According to the NCDAC, the state has approximately 30,000 people in prison throughout more than 80 state prisons. NCJET is currently in 6 locations, including 3 corrections enterprises plants, and 3 state prisons, with kiosks in other plants and infrastructures.

NCDAC's Workforce Development Manager, Torrey Leach, is part of a collaboration between two teams working to provide opportunities to this group of workers before leaving jail or prison. NCJET, or North Carolina Jobs Exploration in Transition, is the employment system that is the fruit of this collaboration. All of this is part of an effort to provide upward mobility for reentry.

***“To me, successful reentry means more than just not recidivating, it means stability, purpose, and community connection.”***

**Torrey Leach, North Carolina Department of Adult Correction's Workforce Development Manager**

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## INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE: UK AND AUSTRALIA'S JOURNEY TO REDUCE RECIDIVISM

The issues presented in this white paper aren't unique to the United States. One corporate program that is leading the way in the United Kingdom's quest to reduce recidivism is Amey's Journey to Work program, which helps participants secure employment for those leaving prison. As Business News Wales reported, the nationwide reintegration initiative has benefited 196 prisoners across 10 UK prisons. Before leaving prison, participants are equipped with essential skills, increasing their chances of successful reintegration into the workforce.

The government is also taking new approaches and recent initiatives comprises the creation of Employment Advisory Boards that include companies like KPMG. These new initiatives were launched to advise, support, and challenge prisons to offer training and employment to prisoners and prison leavers. Another government-sponsored program is Regional Employment Councils, which are part of a major new drive to get thousands of offenders into stable jobs, bringing probation, prisons, and local businesses together.

With their own type of reset, Reboot Australia supports those affected by incarceration into employment by focusing on the 46% of Australia's released prisoner population who re-offend within the first 2 years post release. The program is supported by Social Enterprise Throughcare Employment company, who specialize in employment for those who've been incarcerated. Workskil Australia's program Work Ready, Release Ready, or WRRR, supports sentenced individuals and those remanded in custody or on bail to succeed once a sentence is served. Participants receive mentoring, training, skill-building opportunities and comprehensive community support to ensure successful reintegration back into communities in an effort to increase their potential for securing a job.

## POTENTIAL TO SOLVE LABOR SHORTAGES

Internationally, these are only a few of the initiatives undertaken to reduce recidivism. Not only can a reduction in recidivism help restore communities and families, but it significantly strengthens the labor market.

In a recent opinion piece from the Financial Times, Jeffrey Korzenik, Chief Economist at Fifth Third Bank, wrote, “We have a problem: structural labor shortages across the world’s largest economies threaten our mutual (U.S. and UK) prosperity. In both countries, a largely untapped talent pool is those with a criminal record.”

Korzenik continued: “In both nations, the unemployment rate of those exiting prison is shockingly high. Studies in the U.S. suggest an unemployment rate of more than 60% during the first year, and a long-term unemployment rate of more than 27%. In the UK, government figures show that just 26.5% of those exiting prison gain immediate employment.”

Similarly, from Fast Company’s Impact Council, Geographic Solutions’ President and Founder, Paul Toomey, wrote that, “with industries from manufacturing to healthcare continuing to grapple with persistent workforce shortages, labor markets have everything to gain from solutions such as VOS REO.”

“One of the most promising yet significantly underutilized groups is second-chance talent. These individuals represent millions of highly-motivated and skilled professionals seeking stability after incarceration,” said Toomey.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Reducing recidivism requires more than isolated initiatives; it demands a comprehensive and targeted employment plan in which every stakeholder plays a role in successful reintegration. Government-supported programs provide the policy framework and funding necessary to sustain long-term interventions, while technology solutions such as VOS REO equip justice-impacted individuals with the tools to become job-ready before release. At the same time, corporations that embrace inclusive talent practices and commit to second-chance hiring help bridge the gap between opportunity and access.

This collaborative model not only fills critical labor shortages but also generates measurable economic benefits. By reducing reliance on public assistance and lowering the costs associated with reincarceration, governments save money that can be reinvested into community development. Employers gain access to motivated workers who bring resilience and adaptability to the workplace, while justice-impacted individuals secure stable employment that fosters dignity, independence, and long-term success.