

# How the E2E Network Creates Second Chances for Incarcerated Job Seekers

A Second Chance Starts with Job Opportunities and Resources in **VOS REO**  
VIRTUAL ONESTOP REENTRY  
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



## The Background

The California Prison Industry Authority's (CALPIA) Assistant General Manager of Workforce Development, Rusty Bechtold, was attending an industry conference looking to solve a long-time problem at his organization: how do you bring the modern online job search to those who are incarcerated and on the cusp of returning to the workforce?

What used to be an in-person search that happened post-prison release is now exclusively digital. With that comes a change in skills and technology needed to apply. For those who are incarcerated for several years, it can be even more difficult.

CALPIA provides real-world job training to incarcerated individuals so they can succeed when returning to their communities. CALPIA is a self-funded state entity that provides job skills to approximately 5,700 individuals within California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) prisons. The organization aims to ensure that incarcerated individuals secure career opportunities prior to leaving prison in hopes that they never return.

According to recent data from the CDCR, the state recidivism rate stands at 41.9%. Statistics about recidivism show what happens when a person is released from jail or prison. Those who reoffend have a high likelihood of ending up behind bars. Federal levels of recidivism aren't too far off from California's, with the Federal Bureau of Prisons reporting 43%, nationally.

This data is the reason why having a pre-release, technologically advanced job search solution is key to preventing parolees and those recently released from returning to incarceration.



## Presenting the Solution

Bechtold's opportunity to solve this problem presented itself at that same industry conference. He had a chance encounter with a subject matter expert from Geographic Solutions. They talked about the Virtual OneStop Reentry Employment Opportunities (VOS REO) system and together they walked through a demo.

From the outset, CALPIA had been looking for an actionable and manageable way to connect on-the-job training to real employment opportunities. They wanted to give employers willing to hire those with prior convictions a platform where they could recruit a candidate pre-release. VOS REO quickly became the resolution they sought.

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*"I'm a true believer in timing. And CALPIA has always been looking for a meaningful way since inception to connect real on-the-job training to the employment process."*

**- Rusty Bechtold, Assistant General Manager of Workforce Development, CALPIA**

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CALPIA was so impressed with the promise of VOS REO, that they quickly proposed that it be implemented at California State Prison, Solano, as the Entry to Employment (E2E) Network.

The E2E Network was envisioned to build pathways from prison by making job search and interview practice tools accessible to inmates. Individuals can analyze occupations that align with their interests, skills, and values through a variety of assessments. Job seekers can take skills and interest assessments and are given access to résumé builders and cover letter creation tools. The network equips them with interview preparation, job search ability, and labor market data which helps to analyze income potential and growth.

Coupled with job experience and training from CALPIA's behind-bars employment program, training and upskilling elements within the E2E Network enhances the candidate's overall profile.

Bill Davidson is CALPIA's General Manager. With 23 years of fiscal and administrative experience in state government, Davidson, too, had long dreamed about a solution of this nature.



“The Entry to Employment network is a game changer when it comes to successful reentry for incarcerated individuals,” said Davidson in a [press release](#) published during the system’s launch.

While in the program, Davidson said, inmates are assisted with not only work skills, but ‘soft skills’ as well. This includes computer skills, instructions for writing and distributing a résumé, the importance of showing up on time, how to handle conflict, appropriate interactions with manager and coworkers, and more.

Individuals who have approximately 180 days left on their sentence and who are part of CALPIA’s job training programs are eligible to participate in the secure job-seeking platform.

## Navigating New Challenges for System Access and Security



The E2E Network project did not come without challenges. Innovations and adaptations were made by Geographic Solutions’ software development team to ensure that strict security requirements were met. The E2E Network is the first of its kind to operate via a secure connection without access to the internet, social media, and common messaging platforms.

Outlined security protocols restricted inmates from using any internet-based programs that might lead to illicit activities with the outside world. Certain documents, such as résumés and cover letters, can be a security threat and used as a medium to pass messages between inmates or those outside of the facility.

A securely monitored connection allows incarcerated job seekers to use CalJOBS, the state's workforce system, under correctional staff supervision. It provides direct user access to nearly all the systems' tools, while ensuring there is no access to websites, email, and direct messaging platforms.

All communications, whether between the individual, staff member, or employer, are strictly monitored by approved staff members and confined to the internal database.

## We Have Liftoff



In June 2024, CALPIA launched the E2E Network in partnership with the CDCR, the California Employment Development Department, and Geographic Solutions.

The launch garnered a good amount of local, state, and national media coverage, including:

[CBS 13 Sacramento](#)

[KCRA NBC 3 Sacramento](#)

[The Vacaville Reporter](#)

[Government Technology](#)

[Corrections1](#)





This project is already giving second-chance job seekers exposure to job offers before leaving prison. Davidson and Bechtold expect 600-800 individuals will go through the E2E program each year, underscoring the potential it has to positively impact recidivism rates within the State of California.

“CALPIA wants individuals to have a career before they return to their communities and this first-of-its-kind network is definitely helping in the process,” said Davidson during the system’s official launch event.

The E2E program not only helps incarcerated individuals familiarize themselves with the outside world, but also helps reinforce the mindset needed to stay away from trouble and succeed once released.

E2E Network gives incarcerated individuals access to California’s second-chance employer list, job opportunities available through CalJOBS, and helps connect skills learned behind bars to career in a variety of fields, including welding, optical, computer coding, healthcare facilities maintenance, and more.

“It is also great because the secure portfolio that is built while incarcerated will be moved to the CalJOBS platform upon their release, so they can continue to access it once they are out,” said Davidson.

The E2E Network went live first at California State Prison, Solano, and has since expanded to the following facilities:

**Central California Women’s Facility**

**Valley State Prison**

**San Quentin Rehabilitation Center**

**Avenal State Prison**

In 2025, the network will be implemented at every state prison across California.

**Proof is in the Numbers**

15%

According to a recent joint study between CALPIA and the University of California, Irvine, CALPIA participants have a return to custody rate after three years

85%

of all CALPIA participants do not return to prison. This saves the State of California millions of dollars annually.

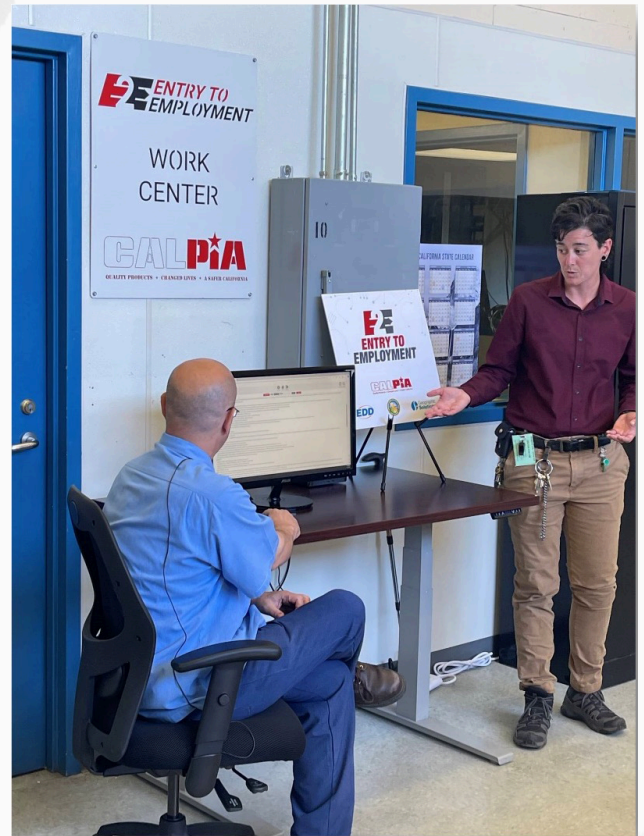
## A Greater Sense of Purpose: Walking Out of Prison and Straight into the Workplace

This statewide collaboration between departments and organizations has already yielded several success stories.

Douglas Woodall was the first applicant to be hired using the E2E Network. Earlier this year, Woodall was hired upon release by a state manufacturing company.

Incarcerated since 2006, Fauso Basso hopes to be the next success story. In an interview with Sacramento's CBS News, he shared his story and experiences using the E2E Network, describing how he had viewed several jobs, and applied for about half of them. Basso shared that with 70 days left in his sentence, his anxiety and stress has been greatly reduced.

Quoted in the new story from CBS, Fauso had this to say about his potential to be employed post release:



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*"This program is a blessing to have," said Basso. "It lowers my anxiety to find employment right when I get out ... it has given me confidence and self-worth, it's given me a purpose in my life, being able to show up and work every day. I'm not taking away from society like I used to."*

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## Working Towards a Greater Good for Society

For employers, the E2E Network opens access to a new talent pipeline that is trained, yet often overlooked. But the E2E Network is not only a win for employers and state officials. The launch of a platform of this nature has the promise to keep streets safer in neighborhoods often plagued by crime. It has the prospective to reunite families and give those released from prison a chance at supporting their loved ones. It has the potential to ease the minds of workforce and job agency staff members who try so hard to place these folks in jobs that offer meaningful work at a living wage.

### Yes, I am Interested in more information about **VOS REO**

Reach out to a member of our Corrections Industry Sales Team:

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