

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INSIDE THE WALLS: A RAPID EMPLOYMENT MODEL

AUGUST 2022

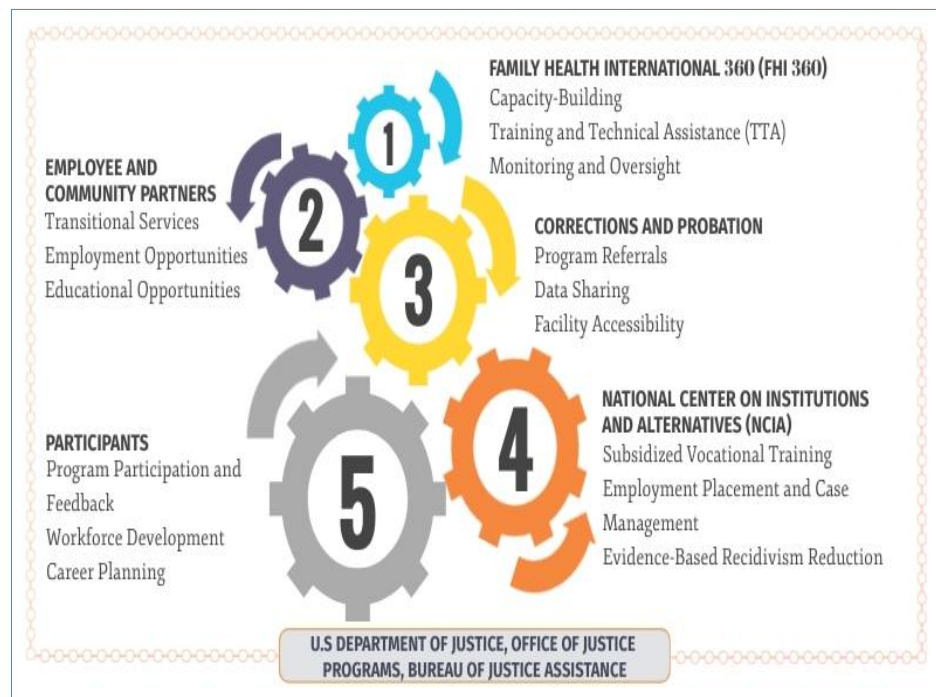
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INSIDE THE WALLS: A RAPID EMPLOYMENT MODEL

FHI 360 has launched the Post-Release Employment Program (PREP) to fast-track participants from behind bars to employment within six weeks. Introduced in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, PREP is designed to respond to the critical needs and challenges of individuals returning from jails or prison into their communities.

More than 650,000 people are released from prison each year¹. Upon reentry to the community, reentering individuals face significant barriers to education, employment, and successful re-integration. Returning adults experience stigma, housing and food insecurity, lower educational attainment, poorer health outcomes, and greater homelessness². Without social supports in their communities, more than two-thirds are re-arrested within three years³.

PREP features two-prongs of evidence-based training: 1) the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives' (NCIA) job-readiness and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) certification trainings for 100 incarcerated individuals; and 2) FHI 360's virtual training designed to increase correctional staff's capacity to provide trauma-informed

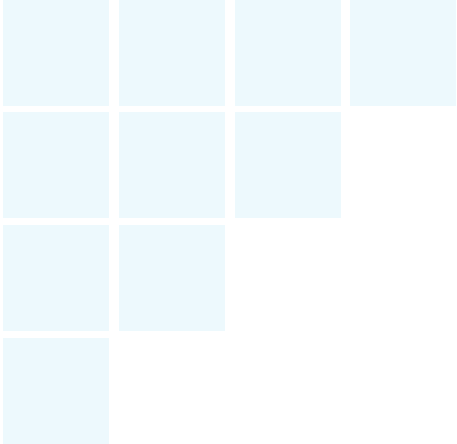
Figure 1: PREP At-a-Glance



¹ U.S. Department of Justice (2021). See: https://www.justice.gov/archive/fbci/progmenu_reentry.html

² [The Challenges of Reentry | Vera Institute](#)

³ U.S. Department of Justice (2021). as above.



care and better support participants in reaching their employment goals. The success of PREP is predicated on breaking community service silos and coalescing community stakeholders. As shown in Figure 1, at the core, the employment program promotes the integration of local corrections and probation departments with employer and community partners and encourages a unification of services to support the successful transition of participants returning to their communities.

The CDL certification track was selected based on the transportation and manufacturing industries' support of second chance hiring and a labor market assessment that showed high numbers of available jobs. Participants will complete two-thirds or more of the employment training pre-release. Post-release, PREP staff will work quickly with employer and community partners to meet participants' needs and find job placements. PREP's continual case management will support individuals in overcoming common post-release barriers—such as finding housing, obtaining healthcare/insurance, and clearing holds on drivers' licenses—and will follow the individual through job placement for one full year post-release. PREP's combination of training, innovative case/community partnerships, second chance employer networks, workforce readiness, and justice expertise will propel participants into promising futures while reducing recidivism and improving public safety.