



## Common Questions for Returning Citizens

1. **Q:** Is there a CareerLink® in each state?

- A:** Yes. You can google [CareerOneStop.org](http://CareerOneStop.org). Then follow the directions below:
- At the bottom of the page click: Where can I get help looking for a job?
  - In the location box, enter a city, state, or zip code.

Based on the county and/or state in which you reside, the name of the center may vary. Some common names include: CareerLink®, Career Center, One stop Career Center, American Job Center, Workforce Solutions, Workforce Development Center, Workforce Development Agency, etc.

2. **Q:** Do certain crimes affect eligibility for certain training?

**A:** Yes. It would be best to contact the school you are looking to attend and ask about training limitations based on felonies and misdemeanors.

3. **Q:** Do I need a valid driver's license for CDL training?

**A:** Yes

4. **Q:** Are there specific eligibility requirements to receive funding for training?

**A:** Yes. There is a required checklist of original documents, testing, workshops, etc. Some requirements vary from county to county and state to state.

Three mandatory requirements for PA include:

- All male training applicants must be registered for Selective Service (registration occurs between ages 18-26) or have received a letter of exception.
- All applicants must have either a High School Diploma or GED
- All applicants must be a U.S. Citizen

*\*\*\*Additional requirements vary from state to state and county to county. Check with your local career center.*

5. **Q:** When should I complete my resume?

**A:** While a citizen of a Correctional Facility, take advantage of every opportunity and resource offered to you. The more you do while you are in, the more prepared you will be to move forward upon re-entry as a returning citizen. Have a current functional resume, a letter of explanation (your narrative), and know the location of your CareerLink®, and all other agencies that will act as support for a successful re-entry transition.

6. **Q:** Should I mention my incarceration when applying for jobs?

**A:** Yes. Most employers conduct background checks. It is better to tell your own story than to have an employer create one based on your conviction. This is why your letter of explanation (your narrative) is so important.



7. **Q:** Should I look into becoming a Certified Peer Support Specialist?  
**A:** Yes. Being a support to your peers, whether certified or not, has benefits for both individuals.
8. **Q:** How do I start a business?  
**A:** Contact your local Economic Development Office, the Small Business Development Center, or the Small Business Administration.
9. **Q:** Where do I find information on the local trade unions (painter, plumber, electrician, etc.)?  
**A:** In Pennsylvania: PA AFL-CIO  
Nationally: AFL-CIO  
(AFL-CIO is The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations)
10. **Q:** What do I do if I have no skills?  
**A:** Everyone has skills! Think about your previous employment paths, what you have done at a correctional facility, institution, etc.
11. **Q:** What do I do when I go to a Career Center?  
**A:** Ask to speak with a Career Coach. He/She will let you know what services their center offers. Some types of services might include Career Assessments, On-the-Job training, Vocational/Technical School Training, Resume/Narrative Preparation, assistance with Employment Searches, Internships, Apprenticeships, Incumbent Worker Training, etc.

### **Additional Information**

- Some businesses will hire you and provide the required training while you are employed. (CNA, CDL).
- **DO NOT** pay for services until you discover they are not free.
- Have an A, B, C plan. Start with any job, get a better job, and then start a career.
- **DO NOT** get comfortable or settle in your job. You can up-skill and be a better version of yourself.
- Get a library card (Learning Express, Languages, MS Office) for use of library online services.
- If you are a veteran, you are eligible for medical benefits as long as you have an honorable or general discharge. Contact the VA Office.
- Attend Job/Career Fairs. Come dressed to impress with your resume in hand.
- Make long-term connections. Network, network, network.
- Radiate POSITIVITY, NOT negativity.
- Print your goals and post them where you can see them all the time.
- Clean Slate is a new law in PA that helps people get a fresh start. Review this link for more information.  
<https://MyCleanSlatePA.com>