



Second Chance Initiative Resource Guide:

Retention and Advancement



Second Chance Hiring

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This guide is designed to give manufacturers the tools needed to explore and implement Second Chance hiring. This resource provides ideas and guidance for supporting and retaining Second Chance employees, especially those recently incarcerated and addressing the collateral consequences of reentry.

I. Encouraging Retention: Careers in manufacturing offer exciting opportunities for development and growth. Second Chance hiring can be a great part of a retention and advancement strategy, and many companies and their community partners have made particular efforts to ensure employees with barriers to employment such as past convictions have the resources to be successful. Examples include:

- **Flexible and Transparent Scheduling:** Companies can work with new employees to set their schedules to allow for probation and parole visits, family responsibilities, healthcare appointments, and other obligations to help avoid early absences or competing priorities
- **Transportation Subsidies:** Paying for transportation to work can pose an initial barrier for some employees. Bus passes or subsidies in the first 30-90 days of work can help employees manage expenses and arrive to work on-time
- **Milestones Incentives:** Consider incentives to reward retention and ongoing training. These can be small salary increases or matching contributions to personal goals such as buying a car or home, or financing education
- **Cash Advances:** Providing no-cost cash advances on paychecks can help employees through crises and prevent them from having to take high-interest loans to maintain stability
- **Training and Credentialing:** Providing employees with ongoing development opportunities can benefit both the employee and the organization. Matching these training programs with increased income can incentivize completion and retention

II. Understanding Collateral Consequences: The greater awareness managers and HR leaders have about the criminal justice system, the higher the likelihood of success in Second Chance initiatives. For example, employees with past convictions may be subject to conditions affecting work, such as community supervision. This means they will have to check in periodically with a probation or parole agent to ensure they are successfully meeting their reentry goals. A few things to know about community supervision:

- **Appointments:** New hires may have regularly required appointments with probation or parole agents. These can be scheduled by agents on short notice. This requires open communication about the timing and requirements of these appointments relative to work hours
- **Curfews:** Supervision and transitional housing often have evening curfews attached. It is important to ensure work schedules align with these requirements
- **Employer visits:** On occasion, agents may need to check-in with the employer or visit the work site. If an agent asks to speak with you, take the opportunity to share any good news about your employees' successes
- **Electronic Monitors:** There might be an instance when an employee is mandated to wear an electronic ankle monitor. In most cases, the electronic monitor can be worn underneath clothing and need not be visible to other employees or customer

III. Maximizing Success & Mobility: Employee supports and career pathways are important to any employee, but can be especially valuable in Second Chance hiring. Strategies to encourage growth and advancement may include:

- Coaching managers and new employees on the benefits and resources offered by the company and its community partners to support personal and family issues
- Encouraging managers and staff to support peer employees, acting as mentors and assisting during on-boarding
- Working with community partners or trained staff to offer job coaching to ensure employees are integrating into the company and addressing personal needs that impact work
- Offering new employees a clear sense of growth trajectories and career paths at the company to encourage motivation, retention, and advancement
- Ensuring new employees have a firm grasp of:
 - Their role and specific job expectations
 - Appropriate lines of communication
 - Benefits that are available to them and how to access them
 - Timing and structure of payroll
 - Feedback and performance review process

“Researchers estimate that hiring formerly incarcerated candidates could save companies \$1,000 per year per position.”

- MINOR, PERSICO AND WEISS, 2017

IV. Building Second Chance Culture: Company leaders can be intentional about setting a positive and inclusive tone in presenting second chance hiring practices to the staff. A few areas to consider:

- Highlight your commitment to the community, customers, and neighbors, and the company's imperative to lead by example
- Share stories about both achievements and challenges to root staff in the realities of justice-involvement and the opportunities to succeed
- Remind staff of any personal and professional supports available to all employees to help ensure success
- Detail how staff can refer people with past convictions to the talent or hiring team for consideration