

# BRIDGING THE GAP IN OFFENDER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (OWD) SERVICES

AN OFFENDER'S GUIDE  
TO THE WORKFORCE



*Offender Workforce Development Specialist Training 2012*

*Elisabeth Copeland, Candita McNeal, Chip Reece & Deneen Urbanek*



### SO YOU'RE LOOKING FOR WORK...

Looking for work is a daunting task, even more so when you have a felony conviction on your record. Worrying about how you will support yourself or your family may cross your mind. Even with a clean background, a well-paying job can be difficult to find. Rest assured that there are jobs available and you will find something, even if you take a low paying job for a while. You will be able to earn an income while looking for the right job for you.

This guide was designed to assist you in your job search. The collaborative effort of the Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS) behind this project was to offer you a guide of services to better prepare you in your job search. Those of you in rural communities do not have resources as readily at your fingertips as those individuals in urban settings. It is our hope that this guide bridges the gap in assisting you to meet your career goals.

We would like to thank the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC), and KansasWorks for their assistance in this endeavor.

*"Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start."*

~Nido Qubein,  
Author and Speaker

### SOCIAL MEDIA

In this age of technology, employers visit the worldwide web to gain a better idea of the candidates they are considering for hire, what their interests are, and what they do during their downtime. Social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace can provide employers with information you thought was private. Follow these 10 suggestions to make yourself savvy in the job search rather than sorry.



<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/onlinecareernetworking/tp/socialmediajobsearch.htm>

### TRANSPORTATION

In need of reliable transportation to get you to and from the library? KansasWorks offices? Interviews? Your job? The Ellsworth Correctional Facility (ECF) Bicycle Program can help. At the request of a non-profit organization, your Parole Officer, KansasWorks office, or et cetera, you may receive a bicycle to take care of this need. Contact the ECF Bike Shop, 785.472.5501 ext. 46357 for assistance.



*"We are all here for some special reason. Stop being a prisoner of your past. Become the architect of your future."*

~ Robin Sharma,  
Author of *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*

**Veteran Services**

**Veteran Employment & Training Services**

U.S. Department of Labor  
 900 SW Jackson, Suite 509  
 Topeka, KS 66612-1220  
 785.296.5032 Office  
 785.296.0264 Fax



**National Coalition for Homeless Veterans**

<http://www.nchv.org/>

[http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/Reentry/09\\_ks.pdf](http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/Reentry/09_ks.pdf)

**KANSAS LIBRARIES**

Visiting the library is the perfect avenue to access the many resources provided to you in this employment guide. Libraries are easily accessible in most communities, have flexible hours, free wi-fi, computers for public use, and link you to the entire world. Your job search should include a visit to your local library so you can research information about your chosen field, locate a KansasWorks office, apply for jobs online, or to just read a book for enjoyment. The Kansas Library Directory will assist you in finding a library in your neighborhood. <http://www.publiclibraries.com/kansas.htm>



The State Library of Kansas seeks to improve the lives of Kansas residents by providing resources that: increase reading readiness and on-grade reading acuity; improve chances for academic success; help start and grow businesses; assist individuals with employment opportunities; and provide lifelong educational opportunities. <http://www.kslib.info/>

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## GET READY!

When conducting a job search, it is important to be aware of the employment documents that companies may require so you are prepared to interview, prepared to be hired, and ready to start a new job. The last thing you need is a glitch and missing documentation that could stall the hiring process. Employment documents you will need include your birth certificate, driver's license or State-issued identification card, and your Social Security card. In some cases (men only), your registration with Selective Service will be verified.

If you do not have the original documentation that you will need before an employer can put you on the payroll, order copies now, so, you'll be ready to start work immediately once you get a job offer.



### Ordering Birth Certificates

The Office of Vital Statistics has six methods available for making a request for a birth certificate: regular mail, priority mail, telephone, fax, internet, and walk-in customer service. Detailed instructions are available at each link below. **Birth certificates began being filed with the Office July 1, 1911.** <http://www.kdheks.gov/vital/birth/howto.html>

### Driver's License or Identification Card Locations

104 out of 105 counties in Kansas offer some sort of driver's license and/or ID card service. The link below depicts the counties where there is a full service station (blue), and the counties where there is a limited service station (green). Please note that some counties offer both. Click on a county for more details about the services they offer, and days they are available. <http://ksrevenue.org/pdf/dmvdstations.pdf>

### How to Get or Replace a Social Security Card

You need a Social Security number to get a job, collect Social Security benefits and receive some other government services. But you don't often need to show your Social Security card. Do not carry your card

employees to gradually move from economic dependency into self-sufficiency as they earn a steady income and become contributing taxpayers, while participating employers are compensated by being able to reduce their federal income tax liability. WOTC joins other workforce programs that help incentivize workplace diversity and facilitate access to good jobs for American workers. <http://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/>

### Federal Bonding Program

In 1966 the U.S. Department of Labor established The Federal Bonding Program to provide Fidelity Bonds that guarantee honesty for "at-risk", hard-to-place job seekers. The bonds cover the first six months of employment. There is no cost to the job applicant or the employer. In most states the bonds are made available through the state agency responsible for workforce matters. <http://bonds4jobs.com/>

### Workforce Investment Act

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) offers programs that can train individuals seeking vocational employment or enhancing their career. Your KansasWorks or Workforce Center representative can assist you in obtaining more information about this program.

### Additional Employment Resources

**The Kansas Department of Commerce**

<http://www.kansascommerce.com/>

**Kansas Department of Labor**

<http://www.getkansasbenefits.gov/>

**United Way of Kansas**

<http://www.211kansas.org/211findhelp/Program/Search.aspx>





## KANSASWORKS & WORKFORCE CENTERS

KansasWorks.com and the Kansas Workforce Centers are your one-stop, best source for posting and finding jobs in the state of Kansas. Job seekers can take assessments, perform advanced job searches, build and post online resumes, skills certification and training programs, job notifications for Veterans, and access services that let KansasWorks staff match you with your ideal job. Best of all, Kansas Workforce Centers are located in communities across Kansas and services are free to use! <https://www.kansasworks.com/ada/skillmatch/skl>ContactUs.cfm>

### Kansas Career Pipeline

Today's job candidates in Kansas have a variety of needs when it comes to securing a satisfying career, and achieving success in our workforce requires the right choices, tools and information. *Kansas Career Pipeline* is an effective solution to help you plan for a career, make a career change, and keep your career on track!



Through an easy step-by-step process you can explore your interests and occupational options, consider new or additional education and training, prepare for today's workforce, and find jobs.

To get started, simply call (877) 509-6757 or visit your local workforce center for an activation code to get you started. <http://www.kansascareerpipeline.org/default.htm>

### Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a Federal tax credit incentive that Congress provides to employers for hiring individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. The main objective of this program is to enable the targeted

with you. Keep it in a safe place with your other important papers. <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber/>

### Are You Registered for the Selective Service? It's the Law!

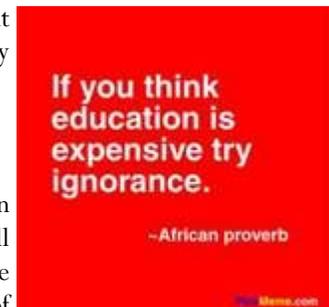
Almost all male U.S. citizens, and male aliens living in the U.S., who are 18 through 25, are required to register with Selective Service. It's important to know that even though he is registered, a man will not automatically be inducted into the military. In a crisis requiring a draft, men would be called in sequence determined by random lottery number and year of birth. Then, they would be examined for mental, physical and moral fitness by the military before being deferred or exempted from military service or inducted into the Armed Forces. <http://www.sss.gov/default.htm>

## THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING AN EDUCATION

You may think that an education is not necessary to survive. You may think that since people have survived long ago without being able to read that it is a waste of time for you to get an education. You feel like dropping out of high school and calling it a day. You never want to look back. But what you fail to realize is that it is very important to get an education.

### You Can Survive Better

When you have an education, you can survive much better in society. You will not have to depend on other people to take care of things that you would be capable of doing on your own with an education, such as handling serious matters. You will be able to make sense of life, and you will be able to handle things more effectively. You will also have better protection. What this means is that you will have the tools that you need to make sure your rights are protected and never disrespected. Without an education, there is no guarantee that you will be safe from such a thing.



### **Greater Opportunities**

When you have an education, you will have many more opportunities. While you can obtain opportunities without an education, as some have been able to, it is much more difficult to without an education. Having an education will enable you to get your foot in the door and get on the road to success.

### **You Will Be More Respected**

Finally, when you get an education, you will be respected more. People will look up to you rather than treat you like trash. People will feel like what you say matters, since you will be more qualified to speak on many subjects in their eyes. Just think of how wonderful it will be to receive respect.



Now certainly, you see the importance of having an education. So, when you feel like quitting, do not do it. Keep on going. After all, you will be glad you did when you start reaping the results of your hard and dedicated work towards this end. <http://www.academicresources.net/the-importance-of-getting-an-education.htm>

## **EDUCATION...**

### **THE KEY TO YOUR FUTURE**

#### **GED Services**

The Kansas Board of Regents is the official GED administrator for the state of Kansas. This site provides general information on GED test taking and records. [http://www.kansasregents.org/ged\\_introduction](http://www.kansasregents.org/ged_introduction)

#### **Higher Education Opportunities**

Looking for higher education opportunities in the State of Kansas? Visit this site which will connect you to all State colleges, universities, community colleges, private schools, and technical schools. <http://www.kansas.gov/education/higher-education/>

#### **Career Zoom**

Search information on career technical education training opportunities from 26 Kansas public institutions. Tailored exactly to your needs, exactly to your passion. So zoom in, learn, and put your passion to work. <http://www.careerzoomkansas.com/>

### **Financial Aid/Educational Assistance Programs**

Need financial assistance paying for your education? Each year thousands of dollars are available to students who wishing to pursue an education. It does not take long to complete the process and you are set to go! **Note:** Men, born after December 31, 1959, who aren't registered with Selective Service will not qualify for Federal student loans or grant programs. This includes Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), Direct Stafford Loans/Plus Loans, National Direct Student Loans, and College Work Study.

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>

<http://www.kansas.gov/education/assistance/>

[http://www.kansasregents.org/student\\_financial\\_aid](http://www.kansasregents.org/student_financial_aid)

<http://www.kansasgrants.net/>

<http://www.fastweb.com/>



### **Alternate Sources of Assistance**

The **Successful Families Program**—TANF offers employment services and support services to low-income families. Support may include cash assistance. Certain eligibility requirements for participation are on the website. <http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/ees/Pages/Cash/TAF.aspx>

The **Rehabilitation Services Program** offers a variety of programs to meet the diverse needs of Kansans with disabilities. The link below better explains their services and who can benefit. <http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/rs/Pages/default.aspx>

**Central Kansas Educational Opportunity Center** exists to promote educational awareness by helping community members find a pathway in which to identify and meet their educational, personal, and career goals. <http://www.bartonccc.edu/instruction/eoc/about.html>