

The Path Home Series: Workbook 3

BUILDING A FULFILLING CAREER

Planning your job search and
career path after release

A PUBLICATION OF THE
ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT



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The Path Home Series: Workbook 3

Building a Fulfilling Career is Workbook 3 in a four-part series of pre-release workbooks developed by the Alameda County Probation Department as a project of the Pathways Home initiative. The content in this workbook is available for other probation departments and reentry programs to adapt. For permission, please contact the Alameda County Probation Department's Reentry and Community Outreach Unit.

About the Pathways Home Initiative: The Pathways Home initiative is a first-of-its-kind partnership between the Alameda County Probation Department and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), which aims to improve the reentry process for clients returning to Alameda County from prison and jail. The initiative was partially funded by a Second Chance Act grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. For more information and to download copies of [Welcome Home: Alameda County Reentry Resource Directory](#), visit the department's website at www.probation.acgov.org.

About the authors:

Naseem Badiy is a political sociologist in the Research and Evaluation Unit of the Alameda County Probation Department. Her career has spanned the technology sector, government, and academia. She received her doctorate from Oxford University and was previously Assistant Professor of International Development and Humanitarian Action at California State University, Monterey Bay.

Wendy Still is Chief Probation Officer at the Alameda County Probation Department. In her four decades of public service, she has spearheaded numerous reform efforts in the California criminal justice system. A criminologist and a peace officer, Chief Still earned her Master of Advanced Studies degree in criminology, law, and society from the University of California, Irvine.

Editing: Jenny Linchey (ACPD), James Walker (Diogenes Community Solutions), and Amanda Gerrie (Pathways Consultants)

Graphic design and formatting: Claire Helmer and Daniel Ruezga

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- Christy Henzi, Division Director, Adult Field Services
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- Joey Mason, Program Worker
- Kelly Mitchell, Deputy Chief Probation Office, Adult Field Services
- Barbara Owen, Consultant
- Charles Pattillo, Consultant
- Robert Walton, Probation Specialist, Research and Evaluation
- Sarah Wanser, Unit Supervisor, Pretrial Services
- Rebecca Wegley, Probation Specialist, Policy and Standards Compliance
- Tyler Zatcoff, Reentry Services Coordinator

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- Ronald Davis, Associate Director, Reception Centers, Division of Adult Institutions
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GLOSSARY

Apprenticeship

A program or position in which a person learns a trade by working under a certified expert. Usually, an apprentice earns a wage while undergoing on-the-job training and completing classroom work in order to meet skills standards.

Certificate of Rehabilitation

A court order declaring that a person convicted of a felony is now rehabilitated. If a petition for a Certificate of Rehabilitation is granted, it is forwarded to the governor by the court and acts as an application for a pardon.

Code-switching

When a person adjusts how they speak or act based on their environment or context.

Cover letter

A letter of introduction that goes with a resume to provide additional information on a person's experience and why they are a good fit for the role.

Felony

A crime that is violent or very serious, including murder, rape, robbery, kidnapping, or arson.

Expungement

The process by which the record of a criminal conviction is sealed and removed from public record. An expungement order directs the court to treat the criminal conviction as if it had never occurred. It is important to note that information about the crime may continue to be available on the internet.

Interpersonal skills

The qualities or traits that help a person communicate effectively with others.

Internship

A limited period of work for a student or trainee, sometimes without pay, in order to gain experience or satisfy requirements for a qualification. Internships are offered by various organizations, including businesses, non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

Job skills

Abilities that allow a person to do a particular job. Some skills are attained by attending school or training programs. Others can be acquired through on-the-job learning.

Microaggression

When someone does or says something indirectly or unintentionally that sends a hostile or negative message to a person from a minority or marginalized group.

Personal values

Beliefs that motivate a person's actions and serve as guiding principles in their life. Personal values represent what is important to someone.

Resume

A one-page document that lists a person's education, work experience, credentials, and accomplishments. Most professional positions require applicants to submit a resume and cover letter as part of the application process.

Transferable skills

The abilities that a person can transfer from one job or life experience to another.

Work documents

Documents that verify a person's identity and establish their eligibility for employment.

INTRODUCTION

Work is an important part of belonging to society. You work to pay the bills, but you also work because it gives you satisfaction and an identity in your community.

When you return to the community, you will most likely need a job to support yourself and your family. The challenge is to find a job that is right for you.



It can be hard to stick with a job that you don't like, that doesn't interest you, or that doesn't give you the opportunity to learn and grow.

Sticking with a job is important because you can't advance and earn more money until you've spent time in a position. The longer you stay in a job, the more contacts you will build and the more appealing you will be to other potential employers.

It helps if you can think of a job as a step on a path towards a career.

This workbook will help you think about how to find a job. It will also help you start planning a path towards a career.

You aren't going to go through this process alone! Your probation officer or parole agent will work with you to identify your interests and skills, refer you to job training programs, and help with any job search costs.

The probation department has a lot of resources to help you find work. If you are on parole, your parole agent can help refer you to employment resources.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A JOB AND A CAREER

A job is an employment activity that you do to earn money. Your goal in a job is to get the task done and satisfy your boss. There are a lot of jobs that don't require special experience or skills.

A career is a series of related employment activities where you build a set of skills, knowledge, and experiences that are specific to an industry.

A career is a journey in which you learn and grow.

You could hold a number of jobs with different employers as you move along your career path. Some of these will be great and others may not be. But you will gain something from each position you hold.

It takes time to build a career. The idea is to slowly take on more challenging and complex tasks so you can gradually move into positions with more pay and responsibility.

There are a lot of benefits to a career:

- ▶ It gives you entry into a network of professionals in a particular industry that can help you along the way.
- ▶ It gives you expertise in a particular area.
- ▶ It gives you status.
- ▶ And most importantly, it gives you a sense of accomplishment and purpose.

Even if you are not ready to begin a career path, thinking about what career you might like to have one day will give your job search direction. It might help you find a job that you really like.

HOW TO BUILD A CAREER PATHWAY

When you have a criminal record and not a lot of work experience, it can be intimidating to think about finding a job or building a career. You might be convinced that a career isn't in the cards for you. But just because it's not easy doesn't mean you won't be successful.

You are only limited by what you believe is possible and how hard you are willing to work to make it happen.

There are plenty of employers who are glad to hire a motivated applicant with a criminal record. Caltrans regularly hires formerly incarcerated individuals, as does the County of Alameda, for example.

When Aly Tamoura was serving a 14-year sentence at San Quentin, he learned to code through The Last Mile coding program. After he was released, he was hired by the Chan-Zuckerberg Initiative and offered a six-figure salary.

Anything is possible.



Many of us will have to change careers at some point. You're not alone in having to think of a new career path. These days most people change careers often. Some people change careers because they want to do something new or because they want to earn more money. A lot of people are changing careers these days out of necessity. New technologies are changing industries and this is forcing some people to find new careers. For example, self-driving cars are changing the trucking and delivery industries. Soon truck drivers might need to learn new skills!

You have skills.

The first thing you should know is that you have skills. Every job you have had, whether legal or illegal, gave you skills that may be transferable to a career.

The second thing you should know is that you will need to keep learning new skills. This is true for every person working today.

Fortunately, there are a lot of resources available to help you obtain new skills and find work when you are released.



The probation department contracts with a variety of reentry employment programs run by community organizations. These organizations help people obtain work documents (ID, social security card, etc.), build new skills, write a resume, and get hired at a job. The department also has resources to help people purchase work clothes, materials, and supplies.

You will need access to the Internet to search job listings and learn about career paths. There are local organizations that can help you get a free or low-cost computer and home Internet access.

You can always access the Internet at your public library for free. American Job Centers, sometimes known as “One Stop Career Centers,” also have computers available to help in your job search.

Welcome Home: Alameda County Reentry Resource Directory includes many resources to help you access the Internet or a computer.

THE GOALS OF THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook will guide you in discovering your job and career ambitions. Along the way, you will:

- ✔ Explore your interests, skills, and strengths
- ✔ Increase your knowledge of careers and explore possible careers pathways
- ✔ Develop a career plan based on your exploration
- ✔ Learn about job and career resources available to you
- ✔ Learn rules for dealing with work cultures and workplace conflict
- ✔ Learn about online safety



GUIDING BELIEFS

Before we begin, we want to share a few beliefs that guide this workbook:

- ▶ We believe that everyone deserves decent work and economic advancement. Decent work means that employees have adequate pay, free time, and rest. It also means that employees' personal and social values are respected. Decent work doesn't harm other people or the community. Decent work helps employees achieve personal and financial advancement.
- ▶ We acknowledge that people of color are disproportionately harmed by discriminatory policies, systems, and beliefs, and these harms are exacerbated based on class, gender, and ability. These effects are evident in the criminal justice system as well as the job market.
- ▶ We recognize that knowing your strengths, skills, and interests does not address systematic exclusion from meaningful, well-paid work. However, being proactive and knowing yourself and your career goals can help you overcome obstacles.
- ▶ Lastly, despite your conviction and incarceration history, know that there are opportunities out there for you. You can have a big impact on your community and world through the work that you do. Our approach to the exercises and activities in this workbook is to help you gain self-knowledge, uncover your assets and skills, and begin to plan a career that fulfills you. Dream big!

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

The exercises in this workbook have been developed to help you think through and plan for your release. They are also a good way for you and your probation officer or parole agent to get to know each other and develop strategies for your transition out of prison or jail.

You can work on this workbook at your own pace. If you get stuck or find an exercise difficult or unhelpful, take a break. You can come back to it later and try again.

PART 1:

Understanding yourself

Every person has a unique combination of experiences, skills, assets, and accomplishments that they bring to a role. Taking the time to think about and identify yours can help you build confidence and give direction to your goals.

Before you can decide on the best career path for you, you need a clear idea of where you are starting. The following sections of this workbook will help you think through these questions:

- ▶ What are your work interests? What types of work do you enjoy doing?
- ▶ What are your skills?
- ▶ What kind of work experience do you have?
- ▶ What are your personal strengths?
- ▶ What is your working style?
- ▶ What environment are you most productive and comfortable in?



YOUR WORK INTERESTS

One of the first steps on your career journey is to understand what kind of work you like and are interested in doing. There are a lot of online personality and career aptitude tests that can point you in the direction of careers that might suit your working style, personality, interests, and abilities.



CareerOneStop, a partner of the American Job Center network, offers a free 30-question job “Interest Assessment” online at **www.careeronestop.org** under “Toolkit.” You can access this and other assessments when you are released. In the meantime, you can think about what sort of work activities interest you.

Answer the following questions to help you start thinking about the types of work that might be right for you:

When did you last enjoy learning something new? What was it and what did you like about it?

What sort of games did you like playing as a child?

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

Who are some of your heroes or people who you look up to?

What kind of knowledge and skills do you want to gain?

Circle the activities that you enjoy doing and the areas that interest you. Write in any activities and interests that aren't on this list.

Performing	Medicine	Fitness	Watching TV
Acting	Movies	Swimming	Boating
Art	Music	Running	Fishing
Event planning	Social/racial justice	Hiking	Coaching
Starting my own business	Organizing	Photography	Mentoring
Cars	Personal finance	Singing	Cutting hair
Politics	Animals	Building things	Sculpture
Coaching	Reading	Fixing things	Filmmaking
Computer programming	Religion/spirituality	Riding a bicycle	Video editing
Typing	Researching and learning	Riding a motorcycle	Design
Cooking	Science	Socializing	Languages
Design	Technology	Meditating	Public speaking
Driving	Public speaking	Writing	_____
Nature	Sports	Poetry	_____
Fashion	Teaching	Taking care of children	_____
Gardening	Hosting gatherings	Baking	_____
Investing	Travel	Protecting people	_____
Math	Video games	Running	_____

YOUR SKILLS

Being able to speak clearly and confidently about your skills is very important for a job search. Employers want to know what you can do.



My Skills My Future

Tool to determine what transferable skills you have

www.myskillsmyfuture.org

A skill is something you do well. It could be anything -- fixing a motorcycle, playing basketball, speaking foreign languages, lifting heavy weights, laying carpet, baking a cake, managing projects, balancing a budget, sewing clothes, mowing a lawn, being a good listener, working well with others, or helping resolve conflicts.

It helps to break skills down into three categories: job skills, transferable skills, and personal skills.



Job skills help you do tasks and are related to a specific job. These skills are usually included in job listings to describe the position. A job skill could be knowing how to drive a tow truck or how to use word processing software like Microsoft Word or Google Docs. It could be knowing how to fix a car or design a website. It could be selling products or handling customers.

Job skills don't always come from employment. They may be developed through school, hobbies, volunteering, informal work, illegal activities, and other life experiences.

All your experiences count when thinking about the skills you have and figuring out what career paths might be right for you!

Transferable Skills

Even if you haven’t had a job before, you might have the skills that make you qualified for it. Skills that we can take from one job or life experience to another are called transferable skills.

It’s important to point out your transferable skills when applying for a position. For example, during an interview, you could say, “I’ve never held an office manager position before, but when I was in the military, I had to manage logistics and supervise subordinates.”

You are not starting from scratch – you have a lot of experience and skills that can build a foundation for your new career.

Taking a moment to list your skills can help you see that you aren’t starting from the beginning. You may already be on your way to a number of careers!

Try the following two exercises to identify your skills and link them to potential careers.

Identifying Transferable Skills

The table below provides examples of activities you may have done in the past and skills that could be gained from those activities. Read through these examples and then fill out the blank table on the next page with your own information. Think of your paid work, informal work, illegal activities, and things you’ve done during your time in prison.

EXAMPLE

Types of work and activities	Skills gained
Drove a delivery truck	Vehicle maintenance, time management, working alone
Built a shed	Carpentry, math, design
Participated in a support group	Working with other people, resolving disputes, listening attentively, problem-solving
Sang in church choir/played an instrument	Reading music, performing, working on a team
Took care of a household	Budgeting, cooking, resolving disputes, housecleaning, organizing schedules
Sold drugs	Accounting/budgeting, security, sales/marketing, managing people
Making art	Thinking creatively, design, spatial awareness

My Transferable Skills

Types of work and activities	Skills gained

Linking Your Skills To Potential Careers

Now, think about which of your skills are transferable to a job or career. Look at the skills that you listed in the previous exercise. Circle careers listed below that your skills might transfer to and star careers that you are interested in. Write in any careers that aren't listed.

Mechanic	Sound engineer	Caterer	Dockworker/ longshoreman
Bus driver	Music producer	Security guard	Sanitation worker
Graphic designer	Music teacher	Sales clerk	Investment manager
Architect	Performer	Entrepreneur	Financial analyst
Engineer	Composer	Lifeguard	Bank teller
Construction worker	Animal shelter worker	Computer programmer	_____
Teacher	Veterinarian's assistant	Data analyst	_____
Coach	House cleaner	Computer technician	_____
Social worker	Office manager	Park service worker	_____
Counselor	Accountant	Youth leader	_____
Fitness trainer	Cook	Website designer	_____
Community organizer	Administrative secretary	Artist	_____
Motivational speaker	Meal delivery person	General contractor	_____
Emergency medical technician	Restaurant server	Postal worker	_____
Customer service representative	Grocery store worker	Fireman	_____
Crisis worker		Electrician	_____
Nurse		Plumber	_____



Personal Skills

Your jobs skills and transferable skills won't help you much if you don't have the personal skills and attributes needed to work well with others. These are very important at work, too.

Personal skills are things about you that aren't related to a specific occupation. They have to do with how well you can work with others and your work style. They're traits that help you be successful at work and build professional relationships.

For example, being dependable or working well with others are two personal skills that will help you be successful in any job setting.

You use personal skills every day to get along.

Circle all the attributes that describe you:

Competent	Detail-oriented	Focused	Fast/efficient
Conscientious	Outgoing	Punctual/on time	Patient
Careful	Collaborative	Great memory	Articulate/good speaker
Motivated	Slow/methodical	Persistent	_____
Courageous	Energetic	Dedicated	_____
Leader	Good listener	Take direction well	_____

Rate your personal skills and attributes below to see which you are confident in and which ones you need to work on. Write in any that you think are missing.

Personal skills and attributes	I need to work on it	I'm good at it	I'm great at it!
Communication			
Teamwork			
Dependability/reliability			
Organization			
Adaptability			
Leadership			
Learning new skills			
Conflict resolution			
Flexibility			
Problem-solving			
Determination			
Creativity			
Persistence			
Sincerity			
Tactfulness			
Timeliness			
Tolerance			
Patience			
Attention to detail			

YOUR WORKING STYLE

Learning about your personality and preferences as they relate to work can help you understand your working style.

Check all the boxes below that sound like you. Cross out any elements that don't describe you.

- ☐ **I am a problem solver.** I like science and math. I'm analytical. I like to play games that involve reasoning and problem-solving.
- ☐ **I'm a creative person.** I like to draw, paint, write, or play music. I might like to design things—like flyers, clothes, or a room in a house. I think color combinations are fun.
- ☐ **I am a helper.** I like working with people—counseling, teaching, caring for others, or helping people solve their problems. I want to be of service.
- ☐ **I am a leader.** I have a lot of ideas and people listen to what I have to say. I've considered working for myself. I might like to supervise people. I'm not afraid to speak in public.
- ☐ **I'm a community builder.** I'm outgoing and like talking to people. I have ideas about how to improve things in my community and I might like to speak up about my ideas.
- ☐ **I am detail oriented.** I like to create things that are neat and orderly, and I often see a better way of doing something. I like making plans.
- ☐ **I am technical.** I like figuring out how things work. I like to work indoors in an office. I like working with computers.
- ☐ **I am independent.** I like to work by myself. I need autonomy. It would be great to be my own boss.
- ☐ **I am outdoorsy.** I like to work outside. I like to be on my feet, moving around. I like to use my body and stay fit. I find fresh air, sunlight, and space soothing.

[illegible]



UC Berkeley Campus

PART 2:

Formulating your career goals

Before you can plan a career path, you need to know what your options are and what is available to you. This means understanding what kind of careers are out there, which ones you are legally able to pursue, and which ones align with the local industries in your community.

EXPLORING POTENTIAL CAREERS

There are lots of ways to learn about different careers once you are released:

- ▶ You can find people who work in the career that interests you and ask them for a meeting to learn more about what they do.
- ▶ You can volunteer at an organization or company to learn more about the industry and see if any jobs interest you.
- ▶ You can use social media or meet-ups to find groups of people with similar career interests.
- ▶ You can use career resources at your local library.
- ▶ You can go to job or career fairs.
- ▶ You can visit career development websites.
- ▶ You can watch YouTube videos about different careers.



Every state has different rules regarding licenses people with criminal records not able to get. When you are released, you can look up your location on the National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction to determine whether it makes sense for you to pursue a certain career path. See **www.niccc.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org** for more information.

Before you explore careers, find out which jobs you are not able to hold if you have a felony.

For example, in California, you cannot be hired as a teacher if you were convicted of a violent or serious felony. However, if you meet all the requirements, California law may allow you to apply through the courts for a Certificate of Rehabilitation. A Certificate of Rehabilitation states that you are living an honest life, exhibiting good moral character, and obeying laws. If the Certificate of Rehabilitation is granted, you cannot be denied a teaching position due to your conviction.

Figure out what sparks joy for you

[illegible]

“

List the careers that might help you achieve similar feelings of satisfaction in the table below. Then, list the skills you already have related to each career and the skills you would need.

For example, you may know how to lay carpet from a job you had before, but you may need to learn how to supervise other people if you want to be a manager at a carpet company.

Careers that interest me	Job skills that I have	Job skills that I will need

CAREER GOALS

Setting goals is a process that can take time. If you are just beginning the process of setting goals, it can help to give yourself thinking assignments and do brainstorm exercises.

Try this one on the meaning of success:

What does success at a job mean to you? (It could be having a positive impact on clients or customers, being liked by your coworkers, being respected by your supervisor, or something else.)

What does success in your career mean to you? (It could be making an impact in your field, getting promoted, having status and influence, earning a high salary, or something else.)

What does success in your relationships mean to you?

Look at your answers and see if you can find elements of a career goal that you can work towards.

Working style

Another way to discover careers that might be right for you is knowing your working style – how you like to work. This may point you towards or away from certain careers.

Ask yourself, what would be your ideal workday? Write a few notes below about your ideal workday. What hours are you working? What kind of people are you working with? What is your environment like?

Read the questions below about your working style and check the answer that is most true for you. This will help you figure out what work environments might be right for you.

I enjoy working with:

- ☐ Data (information, words, numbers)
- ☐ People
- ☐ Things (machines, equipment)

I prefer working:

- ☐ Indoors
- ☐ Outdoors
- ☐ Some inside and some outside

I want a job that requires:

- ☐ A lot of interaction with people
- ☐ Some interaction with people
- ☐ Very little interaction with people
- ☐ No interaction with people

I want work duties that:

- ☐ Change frequently
- ☐ Change sometimes but are often the same
- ☐ Never change

What's the most important thing about a job?

- ☐ It pays a high hourly wage or salary
- ☐ The work hours are flexible
- ☐ The work is meaningful or interesting

I would rather:

- ☐ Work for myself (I like the responsibility and independence)
- ☐ Work for someone else (I like the structure and guidance)

I prefer to work:

- ☐ Alone
- ☐ On teams with other people

I would rather:

- ☐ Supervise or lead others
- ☐ Have someone else supervise or lead me
- ☐ Work on my own with little oversight

What time of day do you prefer to work?

- ☐ Morning
- ☐ Mid-day
- ☐ Afternoon
- ☐ Evening

CAREER PATH

Once you've set a career goal or goals, you can start to chart your path. What career path do you want to take?

A career is not a destination; it is a journey of learning and growing. That's why we talk about it as path.

Your career path includes the steps you need to take along the way to get new jobs or learn new skills. This might include finishing your education, getting a mentor, or doing an apprenticeship program. It's what you need to do over a period of time (maybe years) to reach your career goal.



In the exercise called My Career Path on the next page, work backwards from your long-term career goals in order to chart a path for yourself over the next five years. Start with where you want to be career-wise five years from now. Then think about where you will need to be in one year to achieve your five-year goal. What jobs will help you work your way to your five-year career goals? Keep working backwards until you get to one month after your release.

So, for example, if you want to own your own landscaping business in five years, then in one year, you might want to work for another landscaper where you can gain experience and develop a list of potential clients. What do you need to do the first month after your release to build the skills and experience you need to get a job with a landscaping company?

It's okay if it's vague right now, and it's okay if you don't have all the information you need to fill this out completely. Start with few ideas, and you can come back and do it again when your ideas become more developed.

MY CAREER PATH

Long term career goals (5 years from now):

What possible careers do you hope to have in five years based on your career exploration?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Intermediate career goals (1 year after release):

What positions will you need to have in order to help you build the experience and contacts you need to achieve your 5-year career goals?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Intermediate job and career goals (6 months after release):

What job or career position do you need to be in to gain the experience you will need to meet your 1-year career goals?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Near-term job goals (1-2 months after release):

What job do you want to get to help you gain the experience you need to meet your 6-month job and career goals? What training or education will you need?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

[illegible]



Jack London Square, Oakland

PART 3:

Making an education and training plan

Once you know your career goals, you can plan the steps that will take you there. Most likely, you will need to gain new skills and experience, obtain certifications, or further your education somehow.

Expanding your knowledge, learning new skills, and improving your credentials are good ways of building a new life.

JOB TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

There are all kinds of free or low-cost career resources to help you develop your job skills and build your career readiness.

There are free job training programs offered by local community-based organizations, some of which are focused on individuals leaving jail and prison. These may place you in a temporary paid job while you receive training. They provide support with the job application process, including helping you build a resume, write a cover letter, and practice interview skills. Your probation officer or parole agent can refer you to one.



Adult schools are a great resource for continuing your education and gaining job skills. They offer a range of low-cost or free courses and programs, including in the areas of career and technical education (CTE), English as a second language (ESL), and parenting education. If you have not graduated high school, they can help you obtain your high school diploma or take a high school equivalency exam like the GED. They also offer job placement services, apprenticeships, and internships.

Community colleges offer courses that help you build skills and knowledge necessary for a variety of professions and careers. They can also connect you to unions for apprenticeship opportunities. You can take courses to build job skills or you can pursue a college degree.

GETTING A COLLEGE DEGREE

You may find that a college degree is a required step in the path towards your chosen career. If so, don't feel discouraged. A college degree is within your reach.

Having a criminal record is not an obstacle to higher education in California.

Your past conviction will not affect your admission to California colleges, and you may be able to get course credit for training you did while in prison or jail.



On-campus programs for formerly incarcerated students

California public colleges and universities have programs to support formerly incarcerated Californians.

Many California colleges have on-campus programs for formerly incarcerated students. The California community college system has Rising Scholars, the California State University (CSU) system has Project Rebound, and the University of California (UC) system has Underground Scholars.

Rising Scholars (Community colleges)

Rising Scholars is a group of community colleges dedicated to supporting academic achievement among students who have experienced the criminal justice system. In the Bay Area, for example, San Francisco City College has the New Directions Program, Laney College has Restoring Our Communities, and Merritt College has Street Scholars.

For more information about community college, see the factsheet on community colleges in the back of this workbook.

To find out if your local community college has programs like this for you, visit **risingscholarsnetwork.org**. The website has a directory with contact information for all the community colleges that can support you.

Project Rebound (CSU campuses)

Project Rebound is a special admissions program that assists formerly incarcerated individuals who want to enter a state university. The program offers special admissions for individuals who might not normally qualify for university acceptance because of application deadlines or minor academic deficiencies.

Underground Scholars (UC campuses)

Underground Scholars creates a pathway into higher education for people who have been incarcerated. They refer to themselves as a “prison-to-school pipeline” and endeavor to recruit, retain, and advocate for individuals who have served time.

You can contact the admissions office at the community college, CSU, or UC campus near your home to learn about what’s involved in pursuing a college degree and to find out if enrolling is the right choice for you. They can direct you to specific resources for formerly incarcerated students.

The process may feel daunting at times, and even intimidating, but remember, there are people available to help you navigate the college system. You also may not have to start your college degree from scratch.

Getting college credit for training you did in jail or prison

If you took career and technical education courses while you were incarcerated, you may be able to receive community college credit and jump-start your path to a college degree. You can also receive community college credit if you earned an NCCER certification. Ask a community college counselor about “Credit for Prior Learning.”



Community colleges may give you college credit for courses you took and trades you learned while in prison.

If you are leaving prison in California, make sure to obtain all your transcripts and career and technical education trade certifications. If possible, request to have your Office of Correctional Education student records scanned into the Strategic Offender Management System (commonly referred to as “SOMS”).

INTERNSHIPS

An internship is a short-term, often unpaid position at an organization that helps an individual gain work experience or satisfy a requirement for a certification program.

Internships are available for most college students through their university and offered by many large companies. They are a great way to check out an industry or profession before you decide to pursue a career. They are also a good way to grow your professional network and build your resume.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

Apprenticeships are paid work experiences that include classroom instruction and result in a nationally-recognized credential in a particular trade or career path. Jobs that result from apprenticeship typically pay very well. There are apprenticeships in lots of different areas, including carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, coding, and telecommunications.

Apprenticeships give you a mix of classroom and hand-on training, and you get paid while you learn!

Unlike an internship, which can last a semester or a summer, an apprenticeship can take 6 months to 2 years to complete and requires a full-time commitment. It's worth it because at the end of an apprenticeship, you receive a certification that says you are fully trained in your chosen trade. This will enable you to be hired into a union job. See the factsheet on apprenticeships at the back of this workbook for more information.



Union jobs pay well and have good retirement and healthcare benefits!

VOLUNTEERING

If paid work isn't on your agenda right now, or if your job hunt is taking longer than you expected and you have free time, volunteering can be a good way to gain experience and become reconnected to your community.



You can volunteer at lots of places like museums, libraries, theaters, sporting events, zoos, government offices. You could also volunteer on a political campaign. Some places offer perks to volunteers, like free tickets to shows or games. It may even lead to paid work!

Volunteering is a great way to build your professional network and get exposed to work opportunities.

Volunteering can bring feelings of satisfaction and purpose. It is also a great way to meet people, build your professional network, and get exposed to work opportunities.

[illegible]



California State University East Bay, Hayward

PART 4:

The job search



Now that you have come up with some career goals, you can begin your job search. While you may not be able to work in your chosen field right away, you can choose a job that will help you develop the right skills.

Remember that the best candidate for a job doesn't have to match all the requirements. Sometimes people see something in you and are willing to teach you what you need to know to be successful at work. Be open about your goals and interests. If you don't have a particular skill, you can communicate how motivated you are and how hard you are willing to work to build those skills.

Any job search requires organization, effort, and determination. You have to stick with it even when it gets frustrating - and it will get frustrating. It helps to be organized and consistent about it.



STEP 1: GET YOUR WORK DOCUMENTS READY

Before you can begin your job search, you need to make sure you have all your work documents ready. You can work with your probation officer or parole agent to do this.

Work documents are:

- ▶ A valid form of identification
- ▶ A document that verifies your employment eligibility

Valid forms of identification for employment	Documents that verify employment eligibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Valid US driver's license or ID card that contains a photograph or description of personal characteristics ▶ ID card issued by a local, state, or federal agency with a photograph on it ▶ Voter registration card ▶ US military card or draft record ▶ Military dependent's ID card ▶ US Coast Guard Merchant Mariner credential ▶ A Native American tribal document ▶ US passport or US passport card ▶ Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card (this is commonly called a Green Card) ▶ Foreign passport that contains a visa stamp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Social security card ▶ US birth certificate or birth abroad certificate ▶ Native American tribal document ▶ US citizen ID card ▶ Resident citizen ID card ▶ Unexpired employment authorization document (issued by the Department of Homeland Security)



STEP 2: CREATE A RESUME

Before you can start submitting job applications, you need to get your resume ready.

A resume is a one-page list of your job skills, work experience, education, and references. It is used by a job applicant to present their background, qualifications, and accomplishments to a potential employer. An example resume is included on the next page.

Your probation officer or parole agent can connect you to reentry employment programs that will help with writing resume.

On your resume, you can list the names and phone numbers or email address of a few people who have worked with you or supervised you and are willing to vouch for your work ethic and abilities. These people are your references.

Once you have your resume ready, practice a quick, 30-second speech about your job interests and goals so you will be prepared to 'pitch' yourself to potential employers at job fairs or whenever the opportunity arises!

James Jones

Profile

Hardworking cook with several years of experience working in fast-paced kitchens. Committed to using safe and sanitary cooking practices and maintaining an organized and clean cooking area. Experienced in operating cooking equipment and tools.

Employment History

Line Cook at John's Pasta Shop, Oakland

July 2007 - August 2012

- Organized my station before the start of service each day
- Prepared food in fast-paced environment
- Ensured that all needed supplies were present before work
- Worked effectively with all kitchen personnel to promote a positive working environment
- Worked in compliance with food safety regulations

Back Line Cook at Peter's Pub, Portland

September 2005 - June 2007

- Assisted with food preparations prior to service
- Made sure food at my station was ready on time
- Handled food with cleanliness and care
- Cleaned kitchen and organized cooking utensils
- Worked with other restaurant staff to ensure success

Education

High School Diploma, Berkeley High School, Berkeley

September 2001 - May 2005

References

Sam Romano from John's Pasta Shop
sromano@email.com · 212-555-3347

Ellen Hayes from St. Mary's Church
ehayes@email.com · 212-555-9282

Details

james.jones@email.com

Skills

Knowledge of food

Kitchen management

Food science

Creativity and innovation

Safe food handling and sanitation



STEP 3: BUILD A PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

Networking is very important in a job search. Most employers would prefer to hire someone who has been recommended to them if they can. Also, meeting other people who are connected to your desired career helps you gain knowledge and support, which makes the job search much easier!

Networking isn't complicated. It's just about keeping your eyes and ears open, putting yourself out there at events, meet-ups, workshops, and webinars, and being prepared to talk about yourself and your job search goals in a professional way.

- ▶ **Always be prepared.** It's a good idea to have copies of your resume with you if you attend a networking event or job fair, or if you expect to meet someone who can pass it on to a potential employer for you.
- ▶ **Put the word out that you're looking for a job.** Ask friends, family, teachers, professors, former coworkers and supervisors if they know anyone who is hiring. Ask them to introduce you to people who work in the industry in which you are interested. Now is the time to reach out to people you respect for guidance and help.
- ▶ **Practice promoting yourself to people you already know.** Talk about your experiences confidently and clearly. If someone gives you advice or help, make sure to send a thank you note. You can also keep them informed about your job search efforts with a quick message.
- ▶ **Get out and mingle!** Going to community events is also a good way to meet a lot of people in one place.





STEP 4: FIND A MENTOR

A mentor is someone you respect whose advice can help you in various areas of your life, whether in work, school, family, or spirituality.

Having a mentor can help a lot in the process of building a career.

There are formal mentorship programs, but often a mentor relationship happens naturally between two people. Some people in your life are automatically mentors – coaches, pastors, relatives. Others, you have to ask directly.

Find people who have experience in the career areas you are pursuing and build a relationship with them. Get their advice and use them as a sounding board for discussing your thoughts and ideas. Ask for an opportunity to shadow them for a day in order to get a better understanding of what they do.



STEP 5: MAKE A LIST OF JOBS YOU WANT TO APPLY TO

You can find job listings on online job sites and through social media sites. If you join a reentry employment program, they can also help you with your job search.

For a successful job search, match your skills and goals to the requirements of the position. These requirements are usually listed in the job description, but you can also ask directly. It's a good idea to learn all you can about the industry and employer you want to work with.



The American Job Centers, or “One Stop Career Centers,” have information about many jobs.

www.careeronestop.org

As you're looking for listings, put the word out that you're looking for a job. Make sure to ask people you respect if they have any leads. These could be friends, family members, or people you have worked with in the past.





STEP 6: CREATE A COVER LETTER

In addition to a resume, some jobs require a cover letter. A cover letter is a letter about yourself that you include in your job application.

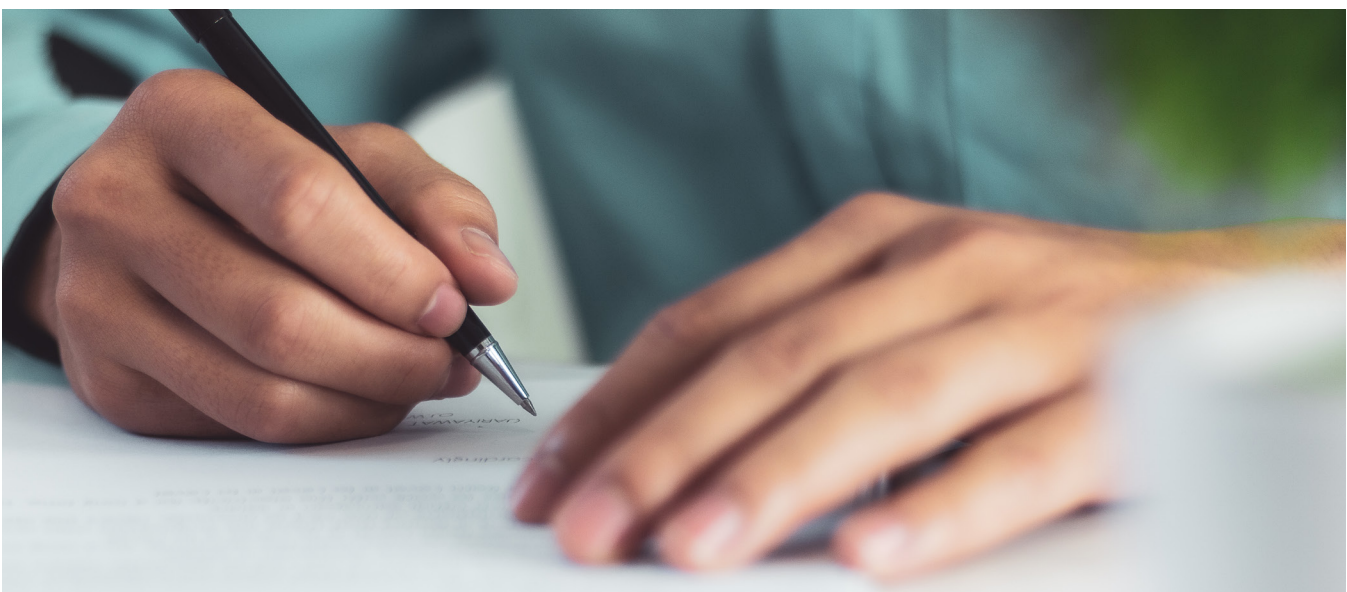
A cover letter serves a few important functions:

- ▶ It introduces you
- ▶ It tells your employer why you want the job
- ▶ It tells your employer your career goals
- ▶ It lists your relevant skills and qualifications for the position
- ▶ It discusses anything on your resume that needs further explanation

A cover letter is a good place to talk about a gap in employment or a career change. You do not have to discuss your criminal record with potential employers and they are legally barred from asking about it.

A cover letter should always be customized to the specific position you are applying for and addressed to the hiring manager at the company. You can use the same resume for different jobs, but you'll want a new cover letter for each one.

There are a lot of online guides and templates that that will help you write a resume and cover letter. Make sure to have someone proofread your letter before you send it out!





STEP 7: APPLY!

Look through job listings, read job descriptions, and find a position that matches your skills and qualifications. Call if you need more information or if you want to know more about the types of candidates they are looking for. Then, customize your resume and cover letter for the position by showing how your skills fit the job you're applying for. If the job wants a particular skill, make sure that is listed on your resume.

Now you can submit!

If you are contacted for an interview, spend some time preparing for questions they might ask.

Make sure to wear appropriate clothing for an in-person interview. Your probation officer or parole agent can help you get appropriate clothing for your interview.



Be pleasant and courteous when you greet your potential future employer. Make eye contact when you shake hands. Say, "It is nice to meet you," or "Thank you for having me."

Be sure to send a thank you email within 24 hours of the interview.

Looking for work is hard work. It takes a lot of time and energy to be successful. It can be discouraging and frustrating for anyone. You may be turned down from some jobs. That is part of job searching.

Although job hunting can be frustrating at times, you will learn and gain experience along the way and if you stick to it, you will find something right for you.

It's important to work on staying positive by talking to friends, networking, and learning. You'll get there.

Making a routine is very important in your job search. Use a calendar like the one on the next page to plan out each week, allocating time for researching jobs, searching job listings, preparing your cover letters and resume, and going to job fairs and employment centers.

Treat it like a job! Include your other commitments – school, programs, appointments, and social plans – in your schedule. The more organized you are, the more productive and confident you will feel.

Treat your job search as a job. Show up and put in the effort.



Weekly schedule								
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
9-10am								
10-11am								
11-12pm								
12-1pm								
1-2pm								
2-3pm								
3-4pm								
4-5pm								

[illegible]



Garin-Dry Creek Pioneer Regional Parks, Hayward

PART 5:

Being successful in the workplace

Once you find a job that you like, your focus has to shift to succeeding in your job and furthering your career goals.

Your work isn't finished! You have to keep growing and learning and making new goals to replace the ones you have already achieved.

We all do.



PROFESSIONALISM: MANAGING YOURSELF WHILE MANAGING OTHERS

All jobs require understanding what is expected of you, defining an objective, completing tasks, and meeting deadlines and expectations. These are skills that you may use in other areas of your life.

To make sure that you understand your responsibilities, talk to your manager or supervisor about what is expected of you in your position.

There are also hidden rules to a workplace that aren't talked about in job descriptions.

Hidden rules

Hidden rules are the rules that you are just supposed to know but no one tells you about.

Every organization has hidden rules. The hard part is that sometimes you have to figure them out on your own.

Let's explore some hidden rules.

Communication

This is really important. Communication at the workplace is different than communication in your home life or with your friends.

At work, you must:

- ✔ Be respectful and use professional language. Don't curse or be vulgar.
- ✔ Let the employer know ahead of time if you are going to be late or absent.
- ✔ Don't tell inappropriate jokes, discuss sex, make sexual innuendos, flirt, or proposition coworkers.
- ✔ Don't make racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ageist, or otherwise inappropriate comments.
- ✔ Don't gossip or say bad things about your co-workers, your boss, or your employer.

Behavior

Every employer has different behavior expectations of their employees. Most employers will expect that you:

- ✔ Dress professionally.
- ✔ Maintain good personal hygiene (come to work clean and groomed).
- ✔ Be dependable and do what you say you are going to do.
- ✔ Put in effort and be effective while you are at work.
- ✔ Be courteous and respectful with customers, colleagues, and managers.
- ✔ Don't steal from your employer or coworkers.
- ✔ Don't conduct personal business or use your cell phone while working.
- ✔ Don't discriminate based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, or disability.
- ✔ Don't sexually harass coworkers or other staff.
- ✔ Listen carefully and follow instructions.
- ✔ Ask questions if you are confused or if something isn't clear.

CODE-SWITCHING

Manners, dress, and speech are unique to different cultures and communities. They are like codes. Sometimes, you have to switch between different codes when you go from home to work.

Code-switching is adjusting how you speak or act based on your environment or context.

We do this all the time. We speak differently to our grandparents than our friends. If we are at church, we dress and behave differently than when we're at school.

Most people don't wear a suit and tie in their free time, but for workplaces where that is the expectation, they switch into a more formal mode. It's not just their clothes that they change - it could be their handshake or the type of language they use.

At work, code-switching can involve changing your behavior, your clothes, or your speech to fit the work culture.

Every job will require different degrees of code-switching. Working at a bank might require you to wear a suit and tie. Working in a kitchen might require you to wear your hair a net.

Even greetings are place specific. In the military, you greet your commanding officer formally. In most professional settings, you don't hug or touch other people beyond a handshake.

The tricky part with code-switching is that it often involves temporarily changing your natural speech patterns and word choices, your personal style, and your demeanor (the way you carry yourself). By doing this, you might feel that you are denying your culture. But everyone has to code-switch, from the entry-level worker all the way up to the CEO.



In 2019, California passed a law that protects people in workplaces and public schools from discrimination based on their natural hair. The new law prohibits the enforcement of grooming policies that disproportionately affected people of color. This includes Afros, braids, twists, cornrows, or locs.

During your job search, you will need to be a social detective and determine whether code-switching is needed in each workplace and if it is acceptable to you.

If you're not comfortable with the way you're going to have to dress and behave in a particular job, then you don't have to work at that place. You'll give yourself a lot more job opportunities, though, if you are willing to be flexible.



MANAGING CHALLENGES AND CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE

Problems will come and go at work. Just like any other area of life, conflict is to be expected. The most important thing to think about ahead of time is how you want to react in these situations.

A good way of managing conflict at work is to maintain self-control, use your communication skills, and be willing to solve the issue in a peaceful manner by discussing it and coming to an understanding.

Does that seem easy or hard to you?

☐ Easy

☐ Hard

What can you tell yourself to keep calm when conflicts at work arise?

Who can you go to when dealing with workplace issues?

How would someone you respect deal with problems at work?

How did you respond?

Would you do anything differently next time?

The possible responses to microaggressions include:

- ▶ Ignore it.
- ▶ Report it now (to your supervisor or human resources).
- ▶ Report it later after you've calmed down (to your supervisor or human resources).
- ▶ Document it.
- ▶ Speak to the person.

When you experience a microaggression at work, this three-step process can help you decide how to respond.¥

Ask yourself:

- ① Did this microaggression occur?
- ② Should I respond to this microaggression?
- ③ How should I respond to this microaggression?

You have many options about how to respond. But the important thing is to think of someone who you can call or text to ask for a trusted opinion.

Can you think of someone right now? It can be a friend, family member, mentor, colleague, or probation officer. Think of someone who is quick to respond to a message or text.

Who can you talk to?

What is a good way to respond to a microaggression at work?

¥ Nadal, Kevin, National Child Welfare Workforce Association, A Guide to Responding to Microaggressions, CUNY Forum 2-1, 2014, October 12, 2020, {<https://ncwwi.org/index.php/resourcemenu/resource-library/inclusivity-racial-equity/cultural-responsiveness/1532-a-guide-to-responding-to-microaggressions/file>}

SHOWING UP

‘Showing up’ means being on time, being ready, and doing what you say you’re going to do. How you show up says a lot about your values and who you are. It is how you present yourself to the world.

If you don’t show up for your coworkers and your boss, you’re not giving yourself a chance at success. You’re presenting yourself to them as someone who is not reliable and not serious. You’re burning bridges and denying yourself the opportunity to build a professional network that opens doors for you.

How do you show up for your family, friends, and community?

How do you want to show up every day at work?

HOW TO LEAVE A JOB PROFESSIONALLY

Sometimes you get a job and realize that it isn’t the right fit for you. Or perhaps you’re lucky and you’re offered a better job that you want to take. Quitting a job should not be your first choice, but sometimes it is the right choice for you.

Leaving a job has several hidden rules. These rules help you to leave the job in a way that doesn’t damage your reputation or close doors for future opportunities.



Resigning from a position:

First off, try not to quit until you make sure you have another job. Also try to follow these rules:

- ✓ Give two weeks' notice that you plan to resign, preferably in writing or email.
- ✓ Try not to leave during a busy time.
- ✓ Organize your things and plan to leave as soon as you tell your employer of your resignation just in case they ask you to.
- ✓ Continue to perform the best you can even after you have resigned.
- ✓ Don't gossip or talk badly about your employer after you leave.

If you need advice about workplace issues, contact your probation officer, parole agent, or your local legal aid office.

THE RIGHT JOB FOR YOU

The right job is out there for you.

Every time something doesn't work out – maybe an employer isn't a good fit, or your training or education program isn't enjoyable – you are learning something new about yourself. It's all part of the process of building a career.

It won't always be easy. You might fail a couple of times before you succeed.

Failure is a part of success. What matters is how you handle it and what you learn from it.

To avoid getting discouraged, you have to cultivate resilience. Like lifting weights to build your biceps, you have to build your ability to recover from challenges in your career path.

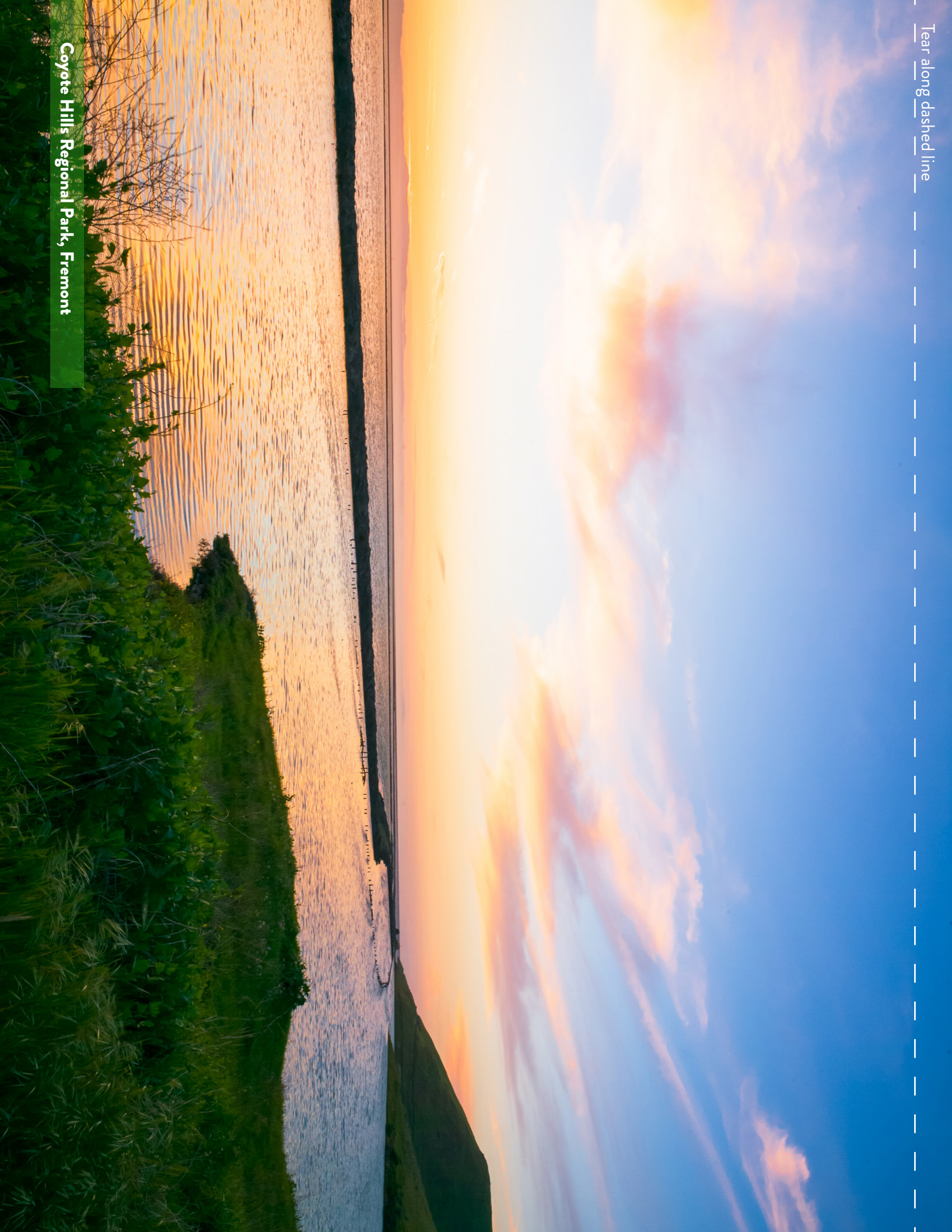
You can do it. Good luck.





Tear along dashed line

Altamont Pass, Alameda County



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APPENDIX

DISCOVER APPRENTICESHIP: EARN WHILE YOU LEARN TODAY

American workers and career seekers, like you, are looking for opportunities to fast track their career goals, avoid debt, and earn competitive wages. An apprenticeship program can put you on that career pathway **today**.

WHAT IS APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally-recognized credential.

There are five key components of an apprenticeship. These components differentiate apprenticeships from other types of workplace training programs in several ways:



PAID JOB

Apprenticeships are jobs!

Get paid to learn throughout your apprenticeship with a guaranteed wage increase as you develop new skills.



MENTORSHIP

Gain workplace-relevant skills in the field of your choice through on-the-job learning and **under the supervision of an experienced mentor**.



WORK-BASED LEARNING

Gain **structured on-the-job learning** to prepare for a successful career.



CREDENTIALS

Earn a **portable, nationally-recognized credential** within your industry.



CLASSROOM LEARNING

Most apprenticeship opportunities include **classroom instruction** and often provide college credit for your experience **while allowing you to avoid student debt**.

The length of an apprenticeship program can vary depending on the employer, complexity of the occupation, industry, and type of program.



www.apprenticeship.gov

“Our apprenticeship program supports a top priority for The Hartford by helping attract and develop diverse talent outside of the traditional college track, for critical customer-facing roles. Participating students gain tuition support and a full-time position with a leading U.S. insurer, where they can grow their career – whether it’s their first professional role or a new career path. It’s a win for them and a win for us.” – John Kinney, The Hartford

FIND PROGRAMS IN MULTIPLE INDUSTRIES

Apprenticeship programs are available in multiple industries, including:

- ▶ Information Technology
- ▶ Healthcare
- ▶ Hospitality
- ▶ Cybersecurity
- ▶ Energy
- ▶ Advanced Manufacturing
- ▶ Engineering
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Construction
- ▶ Financial Services

94%

of apprentices who complete an apprenticeship program retain employment, with an average annual salary of \$70,000

HOW TO BECOME AN APPRENTICE

There are many ways to find the right apprenticeship opportunity for you.



Apprenticeship opportunities are offered through an employer or the program sponsor.



To become an apprentice, search for an opportunity using our [Apprenticeship Finder](#) and apply directly with the employer or the program sponsor.



Questions about a specific opportunity? Contact the employer or the program sponsor listed on the job posting for more information.

DISCOVER APPRENTICESHIP TODAY!

Want to learn more or find apprenticeship opportunities near you? Visit the U.S. Department of Labor’s one-stop source for all things apprenticeship: www.apprenticeship.gov.

Phone: 1-877-872-5627

Speech and Hearing Impaired: 1-877-889-5627

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration promotes registered apprenticeship under the National Apprenticeship Act.

Updated September 2020

Source: US Department of Labor, 2020.

What About Community College?

Fact Sheet for Individuals on Parole in California

January 2018

Your local community college can help you gain skills, find a better job, and succeed.

Can I Go to College?

- Anyone with a high school diploma, a high school equivalency, a GED, or is 18 years of age may enroll in a California community college, even those with prior convictions.
- Approximately 70% of community college students in California struggle with college readiness; your local community college can help you with tutoring and other services.
- California has a statewide tuition fee waiver (called the California Promise waiver) for any low-income student in community college, even those with prior convictions.
- Federal financial aid is available for students with prior convictions; there are narrow restrictions for those convicted of drug offenses while receiving student aid.
- Be aware of any registration requirements that might apply to individuals subject to 290 registration.

Why Should I Go to College?

- California community colleges offer degrees and job training certificates in more than 175 fields, many of which are in industries that will hire employees with criminal records.
- California community colleges are required to analyze their regional labor markets and to offer certificates in fields that have job openings now and into the future.
- Completing college can give you better job options and opportunities to earn a higher wage or salary.
- Most community colleges have tutoring centers, learning labs, libraries, student lounges, and other areas where you can study and receive help.
- Many community colleges have evening and weekend classes that can accommodate your work schedule and programming requirements.
- Achieving a college certificate or degree can make you a positive role model for your family.

How Does Community College Work?

California has 114 community colleges. You can find your closest college(s) here:

californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/findacollege

Applications can generally be submitted anytime and classes can be started in fall, spring or summer. Be mindful of application deadlines.

Each college has its own website, but you can apply for any of them, here:

home.cccapply.org/

If you are interested in a particular job or degree, go here to find a list of all colleges that offer that career or academic program:

californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/FindaProgram.aspx

Information about regional job markets, career pathways, and regional workforce resources can be found here:

doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/

You will be more successful if you go through an orientation, complete an assessment, and plan your educational pathway and career goals. The community colleges can provide these services for you. You can start here:

stepforward.cccco.edu/

Many colleges have student groups or clubs for formerly incarcerated students, special support programs, or faculty or staff who are there to support formerly incarcerated students. You can find a statewide directory of those colleges and programs here:

correctionstocollegeca.org/

Federal financial aid restrictions are minimal and primarily apply if you were convicted of a drug offense while you were receiving student aid. If you are low income, you are eligible for a tuition waiver (the California Promise waiver). Information and applications for financial aid can be found here:

icanaffordcollege.com/

Ask your parole agent for a referral if you do not yet have a high school diploma, equivalency, or GED. Free or low-cost courses may be available at your local college, and your local adult school will also offer GED or equivalency, sometimes for a fee.

californiaadultschools.org/cas/

If you have some college credits and are interested in completing a four-year degree, reach out to a California State University (CSU) campus with the Project Rebound program. You can find one of the programs, here:

prexpanded.org/





A PUBLICATION OF THE
ALAMEDA COUNTY
PROBATION DEPARTMENT