

Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program 2024-25 Program Manual

Chapter 6: Program Entry

Chapter Overview

By the end of this chapter, grantees will be able to:

- Leverage standardized tools and templates to complete the program entry process.
- Complete tasks related to the program entry process.
- Comply with program entry requirements in the CEJA reporting system.

Recruitment and Program Entry Process

The **recruitment** and **program entry** processes are a collaboration between the CEJA Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program grantees and each of the respective IDOC participating facilities. Chapter 5 took a deep dive into the recruitment processes. Chapter 6 will take a deep dive into the program entry processes.

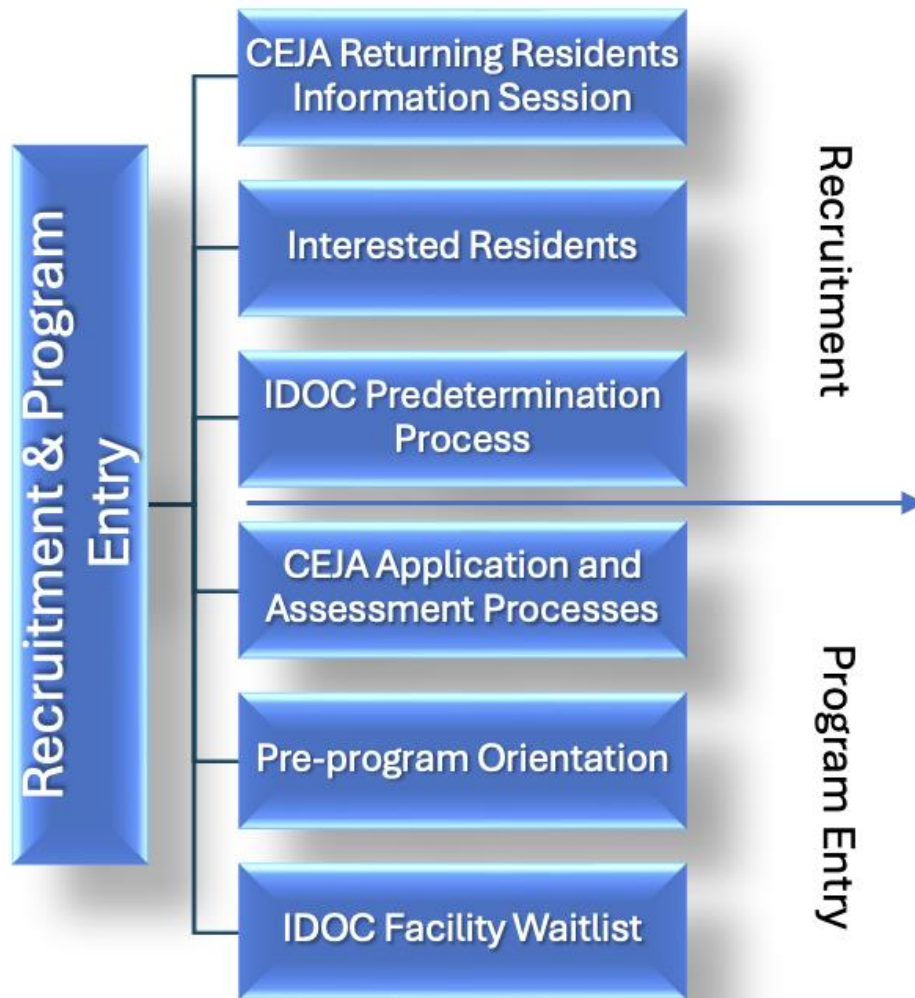


Figure 1: Recruitment and Program Entry Process

Recruitment

The **recruitment** component of the Recruitment and Program Entry processes consist of the following three steps:

1. **CEJA Returning Residents Information Session**

IDOC facilitates an orientation for all residents upon entry into the facility. During the IDOC resident orientation, CEJA grantees will facilitate a 15-to-20-minute information session.

Note: The information session dates, times, and timeframes should be negotiated between the grantees and each respective correctional facility.

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2. Interested Residents

Interested residents will be invited to express their interest during the IDOC Orientation.

Note: Residents may also send a request to the grantees' recruitment staff person through the inner office mail at each site.

3. IDOC Predetermination Process

Interested residents will be subjected to the **IDOC Predetermination** process, which includes a review of their TABE score, security risk level, status of any discipline or suspensions from programming, and Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR), also known as the out-date.

Note: For detailed information regarding recruitment, see Chapter 5.

Program Entry Process

The **program entry** component of the Recruitment and Program Entry processes consist of the following three steps:

4. CEJA Application and Assessment Processes

IDOC eligible individuals will be invited to complete the CEJA Application and Assessments, which consist of the following (see details below):

- **CEJA Prescreening Assessments**
The CEJA **Prescreening Assessments** must be completed and entered into the CEJA Reporting System and will help determine eligibility for the potential participant.
- **Program Application**
Grantees will assist interested and eligible residents with completing the **Program Application**.
- **Interview**
Grantees must complete an **interview** with each potential participant to help determine if they are a fit for the program.
- **Coaching Session**
The **Coaching Session** is a one-on-one or group consultative sessions between grantee staff and potential participants.
- **Career Assessment**
The **Career Assessment**, which includes questions about the applicant's career goals and ability to complete the training program, must be updated in the CEJA Reporting System. See assessment below.

5. Pre-Program Orientation

This **Pre-program Orientation** allows potential participants take a deep dive into the construction and trade industry and helps them understand both the physical and academic expectations. See details below.

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6. IDOC Facility Waitlist

Once the IDOC Predetermination Process has determined qualification and CEJA Application and Assessments Processes has determined eligibility, potential participants will be added to the **IDOC Facility Waitlist** in the Offenders 360 (O360) database. Grantees will be granted access to the O360 system. The waitlist is prioritized by the resident out-date (*their anticipated release date*). See details below.

Note: Grantees will partner with IDOC staff to create a waitlist code and active roster code for O360.

Individuals selected to participate in the CEJA Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, must be done in collaboration with the IDOC facility team, and residents must have a minimum of one (1) year of incarceration remaining until their Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR) date, also known as the out-date, with a maximum of 36 months left.

CEJA Application and Assessment Processes

Grantees will use the tools and resources provided to assist potential participants with the program **entry process**.

The **CEJA Application and Assessment Processes** consist of the following:

- Prescreening Assessments
- Program Application
- Interview
- Coaching Session
- Career Assessment

CEJA Prescreening Assessment

The Prescreen Assessment consists of a rapid questionnaire that asks about their interest in the program, ability to participate, and covers basic eligibility questions. The **Prescreen Assessment** includes the following questions:

- a. Do you need any accommodations to complete this prescreening or application?
- b. Name
- c. Email
- d. Date of Birth
- e. Are you interested in working in construction or the building trades?
- f. Are you interested in working in the clean energy field? There are several career paths available, such as becoming a solar installer, wind turbine technician, or insulation installer.
- g. Are you interested in applying for an apprenticeship program?
- h. Are you interested in applying for an apprenticeship program?
- i. Are you willing and able to put in the time required by this program?
- j. What racial or ethnic groups best describe you?

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- k. Veteran Status
- l. Do you have a high school diploma, General Education Development (GED) certificate, or High School Equivalency Diploma (HiSED)?
- m. Select the Program (*Default to Returning Resident*)
- n. Prescreening Results.
 - o Does not meet prescreening results
 - o Meets prescreening results – decline to participate
 - o Meets prescreening results – interested in participating
- o. Provider (*Default to Returning Resident*)
- p. Follow-up Date
- q. Notes

Note: Once the prescreening information has been entered, the system will check to see if there is an existing Illinois workNet account based on the participants' information.

The Prescreening Assessment can be conducted on paper or in person. If the assessment is conducted on paper, answers must be entered into the CEJA Reporting System within 24 hours of completion.

Note: Refer to the CEJA Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program Partner Guide resource page for technical instructions or a hard copy of the prescreening questions.

Potential participants who have completed prescreening, found eligible, are interested in the program, and have either been synced with an Illinois workNet account or an account was created for them, should progress to the Program Application.

Program Application

The **Program Application** includes the following questions:

- a. First Name
- b. Last Name
- c. Do you have an SSN?
- d. Email
- e. Confirm Email
- f. Zip Code
- g. Date of Birth
- h. What sex were you assigned at birth, on your birth certificate?
- i. How do you currently describe yourself?
- j. Are you authorized to work in the US?
- k. What racial or ethnic groups best describe you?
- l. Do you have a high school diploma, GED, or HiSED?
- m. MSR Date at application
- n. Application Completion Date

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Note: If potential participants use an address other than the facility's address, grantees will need to make note that this may not be an accurate/current address upon release.

Grantees will assist interested and eligible residents with completing the **Program Application**.

The **Program application** must be completed electronically through the CEJA Reporting System with the assistance of the grantees' recruitment staff. The CEJA Reporting System will auto-populate certain demographic and contact information from the Prescreening Assessment into the application. If the application is initially completed on paper, the contents of the application must be entered into the CEJA Reporting System within 24 hours of completion.

Note: Be mindful, potential participants who have started or completed the application process, and are found eligible, are not yet formally accepted into the program.

Interview

Grantees will complete an **interview** with potential participants. The interview should be a structured conversation. The goal of the interview to help determine if the potential participant is an appropriate fit for the Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program.

Coaching Session

Coaching sessions are one-on-one or group consultative sessions between grantee staff and potential participants that provides an initial overview of the construction and trade industry and helps potential participant explore if this profession is a fit for them.

While the interview is an opportunity for the grantee to determine if the potential participant is a fit for the program. The coaching session is an opportunity for the potential participant to determine if the CEJA Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program is right for them.

Career Assessment

The **Career Assessment** includes the following questions:

- a. Assessment Date
- b. Some jobs have lifting requirements. Please indicate whether you are able to lift this amount of weight.
- c. Many of the apprenticeship programs require people to stand for long periods of time. Please indicate whether you are able to stand for long periods of time.
- d. Career Goal
- e. Secondary Career Goal
- f. Are there specific careers you are interested in pursuing? (Select at least one)
 - Solar & Wind
 - Automotive (EV Focus)
 - Electrical
 - Green Building Construction
 - Manufacturing Clean Energy technologies
 - I am interested in learning about clean energy careers

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Note: Grantees can enter more than one Career Assessment per participant, if need be.

After the application, potential participants must complete the initial Career Assessment, which includes questions about the applicant's career goals and ability to complete the training program. The Career Assessment must be updated in the CEJA reporting system. Grantees will assist potential participants with completing the assessment.

Note: A hard copy of the Career Assessment can be found on the CEJA Returning Resident Clean Jobs Training Program Partner Guide.

CEJA Reporting System

Recruitment staff will complete the CEJA Application and Assessment Processes with potential participants. Once the Prescreen Assessment has been completed, potential participants are considered an **"inquiry"** contact.

Note: CEJA Application and Assessments are completed after the IDOC predetermination process.

Pre-program Orientation

Potential participants that complete their application, assessments, interview, and coaching session, and are determined to be a good fit for the program, will progress to the one-week **Pre-program Orientation**. The orientation allows potential participants to take a deep dive into the construction and trade industry. In addition, it will enable them to explore which profession within the clean energy construction and building trades industry might be of interest to them.

The orientation should include the following components specified in the Bridge Program curriculum framework:

1. Introduction to clean energy careers (At least 5 hours).
 - a. Clean energy careers and pathways: Develop a personalized clean energy career pathway leading to promising credentials and career advancement opportunities.
2. Energy and sustainability fundamentals (At least 5 hours).
 - a. Clean energy definitions: Explain energy, clean energy, sustainability, energy efficiency, energy conservation, and climate change.
 - b. Climate change: Explain how different clean energy careers will help with state and national climate goals.
 - c. Sample curriculum guide for energy and sustainability fundamentals.

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3. Safety basics (At least 10 hours). Training includes required certifications in OSHA 10 and First Aid/CPR.
 - a. Safety compliance: Explain safety principles and regulations to maintain a secure work environment and how to comply with local, federal and jobsite health and safety demands.
 - b. Personal protective equipment and safety practices: Demonstrate safety practices and proper use of PPE when navigating a construction environment.
 - c. Working at height: Demonstrate safety practices when using ladders, applying scaffolding, safety harnesses, and rigging when navigating a construction environment.
 - d. First aid/CPR: Demonstrate ability to administer emergency first aid and CPR and know when to call for help.
 - e. Sample curriculum guide for safety basics.

Note: For more information, reference the [Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework for Returning Residents](#).

Any Bridge Program curriculum that is successfully completed during the orientation week shall be counted towards completion of the Bridge Program.

Note: Grantees may also want to consider including some components of NCCER training, such as introduction to hand and power tools.

IDOC Facility Waitlist

Once the IDOC Predetermination process has determined qualification and CEJA Application and Assessments have determined eligibility, and the Pre-program Orientation has allowed potential participants to take a deep dive into the clear energy construction and building trade industry, potential participant will be added to the **IDOC Facility Waitlist** in the Offenders 360 (O360) database. Individuals placed on the waitlist are not guaranteed enrollment into program.

Grantees will be granted access to the O360 system. The waitlist is prioritized by the resident out-date (*their anticipated release date*).

Note: Grantees will partner with IDOC staff to create a waitlist code and active roster code for O360.

Individuals selected to participate in the CEJA Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, must be done in collaboration with the IDOC facility team, and residents must have a minimum of one (1) year of incarceration remaining until their Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR) date, also known as their out-date, with a maximum of 36 months remaining.

Grantees will follow IDOC's policies regarding support and will refer the residents who do not meet minimum program requirements to other educational services in their facilities, such as literacy, GED, and ESL classes.

Note: although program entry is a collaboration between the grantee and the IDCO facility, IDOC makes the final decision regarding program entry.

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When outreach and recruitment staff identify an individual who may be interested in participating in the CEJA Returning Resident Clean Jobs Training Program, they will be entered as an “**inquiry**” contact in the CEJA Reporting System and added to the program waitlist for their respective facility.

Enrollment Decisions and Commitment Letters

Once residents have been selected from the waitlist in the O360 system, and the program entry process is complete (i.e., application, Assessments, etc.), the decision letter can be disseminated to participants. These enrollment decisions should be communicated to the applicant by a formal letter from the program outlining the enrollment decision.

Acceptance

Applicants are accepted if they meet the program's eligibility requirements and are willing and able to participate. A **CEJA Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program Acceptance Letter** and Commitment Agreement will be provided to applicants that clearly outlines the enrollment decision and action steps for the participant. The applicant must also be made aware of the program class schedule and any critical programmatic information.

The letter includes a **commitment agreement** that the applicant **must** sign and return before beginning the training or during the orientation. The commitment agreement is a written agreement between the participant and the grantee that clarifies the participant's rights, obligations, and training conditions. The participant and grantee staff must sign the commitment agreement during the orientation week.

*Note: A copy of the **Acceptance letter and Commitment Letter** must be uploaded to the **Customer's Profile** in the CEJA Reporting System.*

As part of the commitment agreement, participants are also asked to provide permission to grantees to share information with the CEJA office. This agreement serves as a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) waiver. The **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** is a federal law that affords participants who are 18 years old or who have entered a postsecondary institution at any age (“eligible student”) the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from their educational records. The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, and the FERPA regulations are located at [34 CFR Part 99](#).

Without a signed commitment agreement that includes a FERPA waiver, grantees cannot track participant data in the CEJA Reporting System. Therefore, signing the form is mandatory.

Note: Refer to the CEJA Partner Guide for the Acceptance and Commitment Letter template.

Building Rapport with Participants

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Building rapport is essential to creating a program culture that fosters belonging, inclusion, and collaboration. Rapport helps cultivate a professional relationship based on mutual understanding, connection, and trust between grantee staff and participants. When applicants and participants feel they have trust and can trust those around them, they can better engage in instruction.

The ability to build rapport with applicants and participants is a skill like any other. It can be learned, and it can be improved over time with dedicated practice. Below are some examples of how staff can build rapport with participants.

- *Remember Applicant/Participant Names* -
This may seem like a small act, but this can be a significant gesture for many. Remembering participant's names can reinforce a sense of belonging.
- *Be Prepared for Applicant/Participant Interactions* -
Not being adequately prepared for instruction or participant meetings may make participants feel that interacting with them is not a priority. Being on time, greeting participants, and having necessary resources available or following up after meetings can strengthen grantee staff connections with participants.
- *Find Common Experiences or Opinions* -
Enrolling in a program like the Returning Residents Clean Jobs training Program will be new for many participants, and finding common connections with participants further promotes positive connections. Find common experiences or opinions to help root the relationship and provide a shared connection. It is also helpful to foster relationships.
- *Actively Listen* -
Being fully present in conversations means more than being physically present. Building rapport also requires staff to be mentally and emotionally present as well. Some ways to do this during a conversation are to make eye contact with a participant or ask follow-up questions.
- *Be Aware of Body Language* -
Non-verbal communication is equally, if not more important, than verbal communication. However, at times, it can be misleading, which can cause a rupture in a staff/participant relationship. Grantee staff need to be mindful of the messages being sent by hand movements, facial expressions, vocal tone and volume, and distance from participants. For example, a staff member who is very passionate might move closer to a participant, move their hands more, and increase their vocal volume. Their intention may be to communicate excitement, but it may be interpreted as aggressive.

Note: Grantees should be mindful not to over promise and under deliver (i.e. promising employment, a certain compensation upon completion, etc.)

While rapport building is important during the CEJA Application and Assessment Processes, these behaviors and activities must extend to the delivery of all program elements. It is the responsibility of all staff to cultivate a welcoming and trust-based environment.

Additional Resources

CEJA Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program

See the CEJA Workforce Hubs Partner Guide for:

- Program Application
- Career Assessment
- Acceptance Decision Letter