

TOPPSTEP

The Offender Parolee Probationer State
Training Employment Program

Georgia Department of Labor

Information is the seed for an idea, and only grows when it's watered.

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Georgia Department of Labor

TOPPSTEP Defined

The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program (TOPPSTEP):

- Is a collaborative effort between the Georgia Department of Labor, the Georgia Department of Corrections and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles
- Assists rehabilitated offenders in obtaining and maintaining employment upon release from prison and probation.

TOPPSTEP collaborative effort:

It is in the best interest of collaborative partners and the TOPPSTEP participant (the memorandum of understanding) to form a local network of services available so that a definitive employment plan maybe developed.

GOAL: To see every parolee and probationer gainfully employed and self-sufficient.

Customized employment services

GDOL provides:

- Customized employment services to TOPPSTEP participants based on individual needs.
- A variety of services, including job search workshops, referrals and job development.
- Computers, software programs, internet access, books and videos in the Career Centers.

GDOL administers the following federal programs for the state of Georgia: The Federal Bonding Program and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Program.

Veteran services staff assist veteran TOPPSTEP participants.

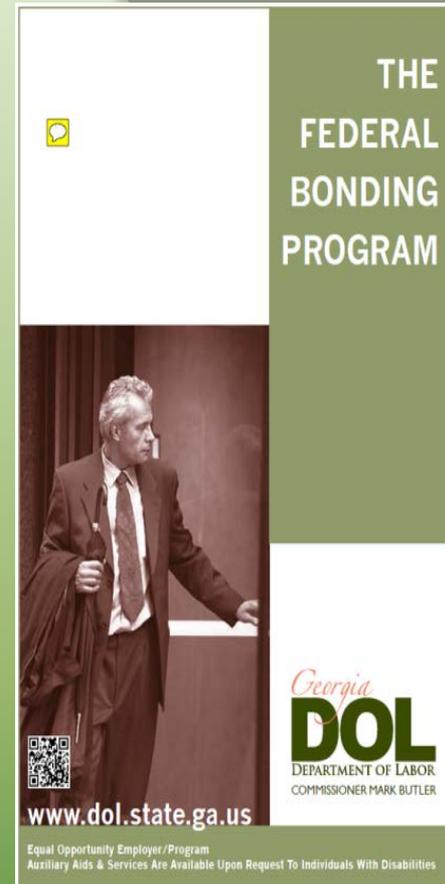
TOPPSTEP is designed to give individuals the tools needed to get and keep a job.



- Federal Bonding Program
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- How to answer job application questions about convictions
- How to answer interview questions about convictions
- How and where to look for jobs

The Federal Bonding Program (Brochure)

- Anyone is eligible.
- It is insurance that protects the employer.
- No cost to you or employer.
- Provided initially for 6 months but can be extended.
- Must have a firm job offer or start date that depends on you getting bonded.



Work Opportunity Tax Credit (Brochure)

- Must be released from prison or convicted of felony in last 12 months (a “qualified ex-felon”)
- Tax break for employers
- New hirers must work certain number of hours for the tax year for employer to claim credit
- Small or Large businesses and temp agencies may request tax credit

Note: First Offenders do not qualify because they have not been convicted of a felony.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit provides tax incentives to businesses that hire and retain new employees who are members of qualified groups. It is based on the number of hours worked, length of employment, and earnings.

- Any size business can benefit
- Reduce tax liability
- Easy application process
- Hire qualified individuals

Groups That Qualify For The Tax Credit

- Veterans
- SSI/SSDI Recipients
- Vocational Rehabilitation Referrals
- Ex-Felons
- Food Stamp (SNAP) Recipients
- TANF Recipients
- Designated Community Resident

Maximum Tax Credit

Veterans
From \$2,400 to \$9,600

Non-Veteran Groups - Pending Federal Reauthorization
From \$1,200 in one year to \$9,000 over two years

Three Simple Steps to Apply

1. Complete IRS Form 8850, Pre-Screening Notice and Certification Request for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, by the date of the job offer
2. Complete the USDOOL form ETA 9061-Individual Characteristics Form
3. Mail the signed and dated IRS and USDOOL forms no later than the 28th calendar day after the new employee starts work to:
The WOTC Unit - Georgia Department of Labor
148 Andrew Young International Blvd, NE Ste. 400
Atlanta, GA 30309-1751

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
www.dola.ga.gov/business/incentives/opptax

Georgia DOL
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

www.dol.state.ga.us

DOL-4468 (R-4/12)



Career Center Services

- Workshops: Resumes and Interviewing
- Computer and Internet access
- Printers, copier, and fax machine, free to use
- Books, videos, and flyers
- Resume reviews
- Job referrals
- Unemployment Insurance
- Referrals to other community resources

Key Resources (Employment)

Crime Solution

<https://www.crimesolutions.gov/>

National Institute of Corrections

<http://nicic.gov/>

Reentry Council

<http://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/projects/firc/>

Reentry Myth Busters

<http://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/projects/mythbusters/>

National Reentry Resource Center – Employment

<http://csgjusticecenter.org/reentry/issue-areas/employment/>

EEOC Updated Guidance on Use of Criminal Records in Employment Decisions

http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/arrest_conviction.cfm

DOL Guidance and Directive

http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=9230

<http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/directives/Dir306.htm>

OPM Contractor Fitness Adjudication Best Practices Guide

<http://chcoc.gov/transmittals/TransmittalDetails.aspx?TransmittalID=5585>

FTC Consumer Protection Documents: For Employers and Employees

<http://business.ftc.gov/documents/bus08-using-consumer-reports-what-employers-need-know>

<http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/sites/default/files/articles/pdf/pdf-0096-fair-credit-reporting-act.pdf>

What Can You and I Do

- **Network, network, network.**
- **Visit each other's place of business.**
- **Let clients see the agencies working/collaborating together.**
- **Share information on clients, i.e. what works, what does not work for certain individuals, etc.**
- **Visit employers in the community as a team.**
- **Share the success stories with the business community.**
- **Bring in other local partners— a burden shared is a burden lightened.**
- **Perform a daily check of each collaboration partner's website.**

Questions?



www.gdol.ga.gov