



Governor’s Council of Second Chance Employers Minutes

December 5, 2025; 11:00 am – 12:30 pm EST

IN-PERSON: Bluegrass Community & Technical College Georgetown-Scott County Campus
200 Technology Ct. Georgetown, Kentucky, 40324

VIRTUAL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7BQ3Fq4kOA>

2:03 pm EDT, Call to order

Chair Natalie Burikhanov, Executive Director of the Team Kentucky Office of Reentry Services, welcomed everyone and thanked Dr. Ryan Quarles and Kentucky Community & Technical College Systems (KCTCS) for hosting the meeting at the Bluegrass Community and Technical College, Georgetown-Scott County Campus.

Roll call took place and quorum attained.

Governor’s Council of Second Chance Employers Member Roll Call:

Member	Sector	Present/Not Present
Governor Andy Beshear (Designated Chair: Natalie Burikhanov)	Government	Present
Secretary Jamie Link	Government	Present
Secretary Keith Jackson	Government	Present
Secretary Steven Stack (proxy: Taban Herrington)	Government	Present
Barbara Aker	Business	Present
Nick D’Andrea	Business	Present
John Estus	Business	Not Present
Stephen Johnson	Business	Not Present
LaKisha Miller	Business	Present
Tyler Stegall	Business	Not Present
Tami Wilson	Business	Present
Rob Perez (proxy: Mindy Street)	Business	Present
Steve Powless	Business	Present
Chad Mills	Trades Union	Present
Ryan Quarles	Education	Present

Guests and staff: Representative Jennifer Decker, Representative Vanessa Grossl, Gregory Feeney, Phil Neal, Larry Ferguson, Reneau Waggoner, Ann Blaylock, Alisher Burikhanov, Debbie Dennison, Elishah Taylor, LaChrista Ellis, Sara Jagers

Minutes (Voting Required)

Chair Burikhanov called for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 4, 2025 meeting as presented. *Secretary Jamie Link made the motion, which was seconded by Chad Mills.* A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously with no opposition voiced.

Employer Spotlight: Kentucky Community & Technical College Systems (KCTCS)

Dr. Ryan Quarles, President of KCTCS, welcomed everyone and presented a legislative and budgetary proposal to establish a reentry campus at Northpoint Training Center (Burgin, KY) to provide intensive, employer-aligned career and technical education for inmates nearing release. This proposal was developed in partnership with KCTCS, DOC, and legislative partners and included input and guidance from key stakeholders in reentry and workforce development. The campus would serve approximately 400 inmates annually (with expansion potential) from across the prison system who would have to qualify and apply for and maintain good behavior to stay in the program. The proposal includes building a new education and training facility while utilizing existing housing. The estimated cost is \$43 million and has been requested as a budget item to the legislature.

Programs would be selected based on in-demand industries, such as advanced manufacturing, welding, diesel and automotive technology, electrical line worker training, CNC/robotics, and CDL and would utilize stackable credentials. Training would operate on a full-workday model, with students inmates who are separated from the general population in order to focus solely on programming and intensive reentry services.

The proposal is a public safety and workforce development proposal that would reduce recidivism and prevent future crime and victims, strengthen the economy, and break generational cycles of incarceration and poverty with positive impacts on state and local budgets, public benefits, and workforce availability.

Together, the Executive Branch, KCTCS, and legislative partners are pursuing a legislative proposal and budget request to establish the program and seek funding for the new program build in the 2026 legislative session.

Update on Governor's Reentry Initiative Update & Next Phase

Chair Burikhanov provided an update on the Governor's reentry initiatives, including progress and achievements from the Council's first year and outlining priorities for the year ahead. The Council met quarterly and convened workgroups focused on second-chance employment, industry resources, and public-private partnerships, producing recommendations to strengthen reentry outcomes and expand employer participation.

Key outcomes included enhancements to secondchance.ky.gov as a one-stop shop for employers, individuals who have returned from incarceration, and key partners in reentry; the creation of employer and participant testimonial videos as a recruitment tool for second-chance hiring; and the development of infographics and consistent statewide messaging to clearly explain reentry pathways, workforce preparation, and employer benefits.

Chair Burikhanov also reported on significant reentry and education program expansion within the Department of Corrections over the past year, with more than two dozen education and vocational programs, including construction trades, HVAC, CDL, aquaponics, and the state's first licensed prison-

based cosmetology program. All 14 state prisons now operate reentry centers providing focused reentry services and life-skills preparation.

The Jobs on Day One pre-apprenticeship initiative with the Ironworkers Union and a fair-chance hiring pilot with the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce were highlighted as successful employer engagement strategies, with participants completing training and securing employment upon release.

Looking ahead, priorities include increasing direct hires upon release from prison, securing additional second-chance employer commitments, expanding wraparound services, and strengthening targeted outreach and employer recruitment efforts statewide.

Council Members Report Discussion

Chair Burikhanov explained that the Council is preparing its first annual report, due at the end of January as required by the establishing executive order. This report will emphasize Council accomplishments, member case studies, and recommendations moving forward.

12:30 pm EDT, Adjournment

Chair Burikhanov announced the next meeting on Friday, March 6, 2026, at the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Chair Burikhanov called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. *Secretary Keith Jackson made the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Ryan Quarles.* A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously, with no opposition voiced.