



Governor's Council of Second Chance Employers

Minutes

June 4, 2026; 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm ET

IN-PERSON: More Than A Bakery, 570 Big Sink Road Versailles, KY 40383
Virtually via YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28mbF3fmyPc>

2:00 pm - Call to Order

Chair Natalie Burikhanov, Executive Director of the Team Kentucky Office of Reentry Services, welcomed everyone and thanked Barbara Aker for hosting the meeting at More Than A Bakery.

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: Tracie Jackson)	Government	Present
Barbara Aker	Business	Present
Nick D'Andrea	Business	Not Present
John Estus	Business	Present
Stephen Johnson	Business	Not Present
LaKisha Miller	Business	Not Present
Tyler Stegall	Business	Not Present
Tami Wilson	Business	Not Present
Rob Perez (Proxy: Mindy Street)	Business	Present
Steve Powless	Business	Present
Chad Mills	Trades Union	Present
Ryan Quarles (Proxy: Reneau Waggoner)	Education	Present

Guests and staff: Ryan Walter, Kenneth Tuttle, Cameron Sontag, Bill Quigg, Ann Blaylock, Larry Ferguson, Alisher Burikhanov, Debbie Dennison, Elishah Taylor, LaChrista Ellis, Sara Jagers

Minutes (Voting Required)

Chair Natalie Burikhanov, Executive Director, Team Kentucky Office of Reentry Services, called for a motion to approve March 6, 2026, minutes as presented. *Reneau Waggoner made the motion, which was seconded by Steve Powless.* A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously with no opposition voiced.

Member Spotlight: More Than A Bakery

More Than A Bakery's Barbara Aker, Director of Family Pride; Bill Quigg, President and CEO, More Than A Bakery; Cameron Sontag, Vice President of Operations; and Kenneth Tuttle, Mixer, provided an overview of More Than A Bakery's approach to fair chance hiring and workforce development.

Company leadership emphasized that their culture is built on treating employees like family and creating opportunities for individuals to succeed regardless of past challenges. They described how these efforts align with the company's mission, values, and workforce needs, noting that employees hired through the initiative have become some of the organization's strongest performers and leaders.

Cameron Sontag discussed lessons learned from previous experiences in larger manufacturing environments where strict hiring policies often prevented qualified individuals from being considered for employment. He explained that More Than A Bakery's experience demonstrates the value of evaluating applicants as individuals and focusing on their potential contributions rather than solely on their backgrounds.

Kenneth Tuttle shared his personal reentry journey following incarceration and recovery. He described the barriers he encountered when seeking employment after release and explained how being given an opportunity at More Than A Bakery helped him rebuild stability, maintain sobriety, and advance professionally. He credited the company's supportive culture, advancement opportunities, and trust in employees as key factors in his success.

Barbara Aker reported that More Than A Bakery currently employs 22 active second chance hires, representing approximately 14 percent of its workforce, with additional hires scheduled to begin soon. Several of these employees have already received promotions, further demonstrating the effectiveness of the company's workforce strategy. She emphasized that the initiative has become one of the organization's strongest talent pipelines and has produced positive outcomes for both employees and the business.

The presenters highlighted the importance of strategic community partnerships with organizations including the Kentucky Department of Corrections, Lexington Rescue Mission, Jubilee Jobs of Lexington, and Goodwill Industries of Kentucky. These partnerships provide applicant screening, employment readiness training, transportation assistance, work attire, coaching, and other support services that help individuals successfully transition into employment.

Discussion also focused on the importance of employee referrals, mentorship, accountability, and targeted support during the first 90 days of employment. Company representatives noted that strong relationships and consistent hiring practices have improved retention and helped employees establish long-term success.

Governor's Reentry Initiative Update

Chair Natalie Burikhanov provided an update on the Governor's Reentry Initiative, highlighting the successful passage and enactment of House Bill 5 and the development of Kentucky's first reentry campus at North Point Training Center. She explained that the campus will serve up to 400 incarcerated individuals annually, combining workforce development, technical education, and intensive reentry services designed to connect participants directly with employment opportunities upon release.

The Council received updates regarding partnerships with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), ongoing planning efforts, and the vision for creating a dedicated educational environment that prepares participants for high-demand careers while supporting successful reintegration into the workforce.

Chair Natalie Burikhanov also shared information about newly developed programmatic videos highlighting reentry success stories and workforce initiatives. The videos are intended to communicate the value of reentry investments, highlight successful outcomes, and support employer engagement efforts across the Commonwealth.

Group Discussion

The Council discussed ongoing efforts to ensure meaningful second chance employment. Members emphasized the connection between employment, recovery programs, and recidivism reduction,

highlighting the importance of integrating treatment centers and local jails into employment pathways.

Recommendations included increasing visibility of partners and their contributions, establishing mentorship networks to guide employers and program participants, and creating incentives for individuals in recovery, such as employment, housing, and skill certifications. Members identified sustaining second chance employment initiatives across administrative changes as a key priority.

Discussion: Recruiting Second Chance Employers

The Council discussed strategies for expanding the network of second chance employers across Kentucky. Members emphasized that workforce training and credential attainment are most effective when paired with meaningful employment opportunities after release.

Discussion focused on improving communication about the skills, work experience, and credentials individuals earn while incarcerated. Members explored ways to better communicate prison work assignments, vocational training, and educational achievements in terms employers can readily understand and value during the hiring process.

Council members highlighted the importance of sharing success stories from employers and employees to help address concerns and misconceptions about second chance hiring. The conversation also emphasized the need for stronger employer engagement, mentorship opportunities, regional partnerships, and pathways that connect correctional education programs directly to workforce demand.

Members discussed opportunities to leverage the upcoming reentry campus, employer partnerships, apprenticeship pathways, and existing council resources to recruit additional businesses. There was broad agreement that continued outreach, education, and relationship-building will be critical to expanding second chance employment opportunities throughout Kentucky.

3:31 pm - Adjournment

Chair Natalie Burikhanov reminded the council of the next meeting, which is scheduled for Thursday, September 3rd, 2026, with the location to be announced soon.

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

Following adjournment, attendees were invited to participate in a tour of More Than A Bakery's facilities.