



**Division of Criminal
Justice Services**

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Deputy Commissioner and Director

TO: All Probation Directors and Commissioners

FROM: Robert M. Maccarone, Deputy Commissioner and Director, Probation and Correctional Alternatives *RMM*

DATE: December 4, 2018

RE: Probation Employment Liaison Officers Updated Directory and Announcement

As probation professionals, we understand the value of gainful and sustained employment and its impact on individuals under supervision. Of course, sustained employment not only provides a means to self-sufficiency and the ability to support one's family, but positively structures the time of individuals under supervision where pro-social thinking and attitudes can be reinforced.

In 2017, OPCA, with the assistance of county probation departments, established the statewide directory of Probation Officer Employment Liaisons. This followed our joint work with the NYS Department of Labor and the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, wherein we convened a series of Employer Roundtables throughout New York State. A number of probation directors and supervisors participated in the Employer Roundtables. We learned that area employers are quite willing to employ individuals under community supervision and want to work more closely with probation departments in establishing work schedules that their businesses require. We learned that establishing a single point of contact within probation departments could greatly assist employers address their questions and support continued employment of probationers. So we worked with probation directors in 2017 to establish the Probation Employment Liaison Directory, which has now been updated based on the submission of probation annual plans. Attached is a copy of State Director's Memorandum #2017-4 outlining the original development of this directory. The current directory will soon be posted to the DCJS Website.

Recently, OPCA reached out to the designated PEL's in each department and inquired as to whether they were receiving any questions from employers. Based on responses from probation departments, many indicated that they have not had communication from local employers related to probation and employment barriers. Probation departments also reported that it was a challenge to make employers aware of the probation employment liaison position and how a call to probation could address employment questions; for example, the need for the probationer to work extended hours during the holiday season.

To assist probation departments, OPCA has since developed the following suggested template wording for county probation departments to consider posting to their own county websites:

The _____ county probation department recognizes the importance of sustained employment for individuals under community supervision. Employment provides individuals a means to self-sufficiency and the ability to support their families, as well as the capacity to structure their time in positive ways. Probation also understands the needs of area employers and their ability to ask questions of probation officers about work schedules and other work environment related issues. Accordingly, the _____ County Probation Department has designated a single point of contact or Probation Employment Liaison officer to communicate with area employers.

Please feel free to contact Probation Officer _____ at _____ if you are an area employer who has any general questions about probation conditions relating to employment, employment opportunities for individuals on probation, or if you have any other employment related questions or concerns.

We are hopeful this effort to engage employers will expand their awareness of a valuable resource should they have any general questions related to employment opportunities.

On a related note, the NYS Department of Labor offers information for both job seekers and employers on some of the incentives and options available to individuals with known barriers to employment that include having a criminal history. Attached, please find fact sheets describing the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and the Federal Bonding Program.

Please contact Community Correction Representative Frank F. Cangiano at (518) 485-5153 or via email at frank.cangiano@dcjs.ny.gov with any questions that you might have regarding this directory or your jurisdiction's ability to promote the availability of these employment liaisons to local employers.

Thank you for your continued commitment and cooperation.

Attachments: Probation Employment Liaison Directory
State Director's Memorandum #2017-4
Work Opportunity Tax Credit Fact Sheet
Federal Bonding Fact Sheet