

# Vetting Job Training and Employment Partners

## Key Questions for Victim Service Agencies

*Educational institutions, job training program providers, and employers can be great allies in helping people with lived experience reach their career and employment goals. When building relationships with external partners it is important to screen these providers to better understand what they offer, their accessibility, and whether they provide safe and supportive environments in which people with lived experience can thrive. Below are some questions to consider when identifying and vetting potential partners in your community.*

### Importance of Collaboration

It is difficult for an organization to have every education, employment and economic resources needed to support people with lived experience. Therefore, victim service agencies must commit to building meaningful collaborations with community partners such as educational institutions, workforce and job training programs, and employers.

To support building partnerships, explore the following resources:

1. [Building Partnerships and Pathways and Collaborations with Workforce and Education Systems](#): A Step-by-Step Guide on How to Form Partnerships with Education and Workforce Programs
2. [Opportunities for Survivors of Human Trafficking Through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#)
3. [Collaboration to Increase Access to Employment Opportunities for Survivors of Human Trafficking and Domestic and Sexual Violence](#)

As you navigate resources and potential partnerships, it is important to identify how prospective collaborations center racial equity, LGBTQI+ inclusion and survivor engagement. The following resources will provide victim service agencies with support in determining whether programs are inclusive to the wide range of identities of people with lived experience.

1. [Transformational Collaborations: Considerations to Apply a Racial Equity Lens \(Caminar Latino\)](#)
2. [Centering Racial Equity in Collaboration Survey \(Caminar Latino\)](#)
3. [Survivor Alliance: Survivor Engagement Resources](#)
4. [Meaningful Engagement of People with Lived Experience Toolkit \(Survivor Alliance\)](#)

## Educational Institutions

Community colleges offer a range of educational opportunities including degree programs, certificates, and job training. Partnering with community colleges provides people with lived experience more options for tailored career pathways. Depending on the region, there may be more than one educational institution, employer, or training program to consider. The following questions can help gather important information needed to determine which community college and its offerings may be the best fit for survivors.

- What costs are associated with specific career pathways? Is financial assistance available?
- What requirements are there for enrollment?
- How long is the program?
- What are the graduation/completion requirements?
- Does the school have a career services office? What career counseling, tutoring and academic support services are available?
- What supports does the school provide to students – such as transportation subsidies, free textbooks or laptops, on-site childcare, or counseling services?
- Are there remote learning opportunities? How are they structured?

- What steps are taken to ensure equity and inclusion?
- What training do faculty and staff receive to support students who have experienced violence and trauma?
- What training do faculty and staff receive to be inclusive of cultural differences among students?

## **Job Training / Vocational Programs / Apprenticeships**

Job training and vocational programs provide general work readiness support and industry specific trainings. These trainings are often designed in partnership with employers to ensure that trainees are developing the skills needed for that industry and job. In the case of apprenticeships, trainees earn while they learn and are connected to employment opportunities when they complete their training. When exploring these options consider the following:

- What costs are associated with the programs?
- Is financial assistance available?
- What are the eligibility requirements?
- When are classes offered?
- How long is the program?
- Is the training program credentialed?
- Does the training provider offer job placement services? What is their job placement rate?
- Is there a mentorship component? Are students matched with mentors with similar lived experiences?

## **Employers**

Connections and networking significantly improve the likelihood of employment, especially for individuals with limited work histories. Building relationships with employers can help create safe and supportive job opportunities for survivors. Victim service agencies should consider the following when identifying and engaging with local employers.

- What are the employer's mission and values?

- What is the employer's management philosophy?
- What is their reputation? Does the employer have a history of exploitative behaviors – example known complaints of sexual harassment, wage theft, or racial discrimination?
- Does the employer offer good wages and benefits?
- What kinds of training and professional development opportunities do they offer employees?
- Is there a healthy work culture?
- Will the work site potentially expose survivors to their traffickers or violate confidentiality among colleagues?
- Does the employer hire individuals with criminal records?

Properly vetting programs prior to referring survivors can help advocates provide people with lived experience with the information they need to make informed decisions about their career path options, allow for warm referrals to trusted organizations, and help to ensure that these programs are accessible and supportive for individuals who have experienced violence and trauma.

*This project is supported by Grant No. 15POVC-22-GK-03287-HT, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this resource are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime.*