**Evaluation of the Prison to Employment Initiative (1.0)                 2020 - 2024**

*Supported by the California Workforce Development Board*

The Presley Center was contracted to evaluate the causal effect of California’s Prison to Employment (P2E) initiative on recidivism and employment outcomes. P2E (1.0) was a $37 million investment in the integration of workforce and reentry services across California, specifically focused on regional service models that promote warm hand-offs and stronger partnerships between the criminal justice system, workforce development, and community-based organizations.

This mixed-methods project focuses on the experience of offenders under DAPO supervision and uses a mixed-methods design to answer three driving research questions:

1. Which programs and types of programs led to higher employment rates and higher wages for participants?
2. Which programs and types of programs led to reduced recidivism for participants?
3. What best practices can be learned?

This study analyzes administrative data from the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB), CDCR, California Department of Justice (CADOJ), and the California Economic Development Department (EDD). We also collect original data through interviews with regional workforce development boards, P2E service providers, and P2E clients from four regional planning units.

This evaluation is ongoing. The final deliverable includes a report of findings to the California State Legislature and the CWDB. Interim deliverables included routine (quarterly) meetings with the CWDB and updates on preliminary findings as requested.

**Evaluation of the Prison to Employment Initiative (2.0)   ~2023 - 2026**

*Supported by the California Workforce Development Board*

The Presley Center was selected to evaluate the State’s second investment in the Prison to Employment (P2E) initiative. This project is an extension and expansion of the 1.0 evaluation and uses a mixed-methods design to address four motivating research questions:

1. Which programs most contribute to P2E participants’ success?
2. Does P2E reduce inequities for historically marginalized groups? Which programs and types of programs are the most effective or efficient in promoting economics and social mobility?
3. What is the long-term (3+ years) impact of P2E on participants’ post-release success?
4. What are emerging and/or established best practices for the coordination of pre-release reentry and post-release workforce services across multiple service providers? What are areas for improvement from a system- and client-perspective?
5. What mechanisms help explain answers to the above questions?

This project is currently in the contracting phase, but is scheduled to begin this year and run through 2026.

**Prison to Employment: Solutions for Riverside and San Bernardino       2020 - 2021**

**Counties’ Justice Impacted Population**

*Supported by the John Randolph Haynes and Dora Haynes Foundation*

Co-principal investigator, Sharon Oselin, was awarded a grant to conduct a study that interrogates the hiring practices and preferences of employers in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Employment is one of the strongest predictors of a justice-involved individual’s successful reentry and recent policy changes and legislative investments are positive steps to improve community reintegration through individualized, supportive services. However, comparatively less is known about employers’ actual willingness to hire justice-impacted individuals - particularly against the backdrop of the CA Fair Chance Act, enacted in 2018.

This mixed-methods project is motivated by four broad research questions:

1. What is employer demand for individuals with records in Riverside and San Bernardino counties?
2. What formal hiring policies do employers use to gauge an applicant’s criminal history?
3. What informal hiring practices do employers use to gauge an applicant’s criminal history?
4. To what extent are these policies and practices consistent with the CA Fair Chance Act?

An original survey with embedded experiments was administered to 524 hiring decision-makers. Semi-structured follow-up interviews were conducted with a sub-sample of survey respondents. The key findings from the quantitative (survey) analysis include the following:

* hiring decision-makers remain reluctant to hire those with records and their aversion to this population is greater than that of other stigmatized applicant groups;
* self-reported violations of the CA Fair Chance Act are common and widespread across employers, regardless of company size, industry, and other relevant characteristics; and
* the CA Fair Chance Act’s appeals provision is minimally effective in encouraging employers to re-extend offers of employment in an experimental context.

This evaluation concluded with a presentation of findings to a convening of regional stakeholders—including criminal justice practitioners and reentry service providers—and a summary report to the granting organization. Manuscripts for academic audiences are in the process of being drafted or are under review.

**Realignment, Re-entry, and Recidivism: A mixed methods impact     2019 - 2021**

**evaluation of the Riverside County Probation Department’s Day**

**Reporting Centers, 2019-2021**

*Supported by the Riverside County Community Corrections Partnership, using CDCR flow through funds and administered by the Riverside County Probation Department*

The Presley Center was contracted to evaluate the effect of attending a Riverside County day reporting center (DRC) as an alternative to traditional custodial sentencing and as a mechanism for reducing recidivism rates among N3 felony offenders realigned by AB-109. Riverside’s DRCs are a community correction program that provide non-residential services to ex-offenders upon reentry, including: workforce development, substance abuse education, and cognitive behavioral therapy, and more.

This project used a mixed-methods approach to address four primary research questions:

1. Do Riverside County’s DRCs reduce recidivism among AB-109 offenders when compared to those assigned to traditional supervision?
2. How do DRC clients assess these programs’ strengths and weaknesses?
3. How can DRCs be improved?
4. Does DRC participation produce any specific skills and benefits for clients?

The study used administrative data provided by the Riverside County Probation Department and California Department of Justice to estimate the causal effect of attending a DRC on the likelihood of rearrest or reconviction for a new crime within two years of referral for services. We also collected original data through surveys and interviews with DRC clients to provide further insight into questions two, three, and four.

This project culminated in a report to the Riverside County Probation Department and presentation to the Riverside County Community Corrections Partnership, which highlighted key findings that included:

* participating in a DRC decreases the likelihood of being arrested for a new offense by 26% and decreases the likelihood of being reconvicted for a new offense 29%, relative to the arrest and convictions of offenders who were referred but did not attend a DRC due to scheduling conflicts;
* strengths of the DRC experience, include support in attaining goals, navigating services post-release, accountability, and more generalized social support;
* clients also report DRCs make re-entry easier than traditional supervision and they recognize specific changes in themselves and their environment that benefit their overall well-being;
* potential areas for improvement—including enhanced vocational and employment services, and an environment that feels less like a traditional law enforcement setting—are also raised by those receiving services; and
* DRC participation leads to a social benefit of at least $337,000 to $1.98 million dollars (in 2015 dollars), which reflects the monetary value of crime avoided due to incarceration, the social cost of incarceration, and other longer-term costs imposed on the offender by society due to their incarceration.