

REDF

An investment that works.

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Center for Employment Opportunities

www.ceoworks.org | California, Colorado, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania

At a Glance

Mission

The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) helps men and women coming home from prison successfully enter the workforce. CEO's evidence-based model combines life skills education; short-term paid, transitional employment; full-time job placement; and post-placement services. Addressing the employment needs of people with criminal convictions through the CEO model reduces the likelihood of re-incarceration and helps participants build a foundation for a stable, productive life for themselves and their families.

Social Enterprise

CEO provides crew-based maintenance and labor services for primarily public sector customers. CEO operates **70+** work crews every day, serving transit agencies, housing authorities, parks departments, and more, and offering participants paid employment within a week of enrolling in the program.

Track Record

With nearly **25,000** job placements made to date, CEO has significantly expanded over the past seven years and currently operates **16** offices across six states.

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Portfolio Partner Profile



Founded: The Vera Institute of Justice in the late 1970s; CEO has operated as an independent corporation since 1996

Locations: California, Colorado, New York (NYC HQ), Ohio, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania

Social Enterprises: Crew maintenance and custodial services

Target Population: Men and women under criminal justice supervision

Joined REDF Portfolio: 2011

Employed Since 1996:
25,000

REDF Investment & Advisory Services

REDF's more than **\$2.3m** capital investment has catalyzed CEO's expansion, enabling them to create hundreds of jobs and demonstrate the scalability of social enterprise and the CEO model.

Highlights of this partnership include:

- Leveraged our California business and government contacts and know-how to broker a \$1.5m contract between CEO and CalTrans (California Department of Transportation), allowing CEO to open their first California office in Oakland;
- Facilitated connections with local government officials to assist in laying the groundwork for a Los Angeles office;
- Continued to expand in California through offices in San Diego, San Bernardino, San Jose, and Los Angeles. Most recently, REDF's support fueled CEO's expansion outside of California into Colorado and Ohio;
- Assisted in creating a financial empowerment and career advancement framework that has been tested in Oakland and is now being rolled out nationally; and
- Helped CEO obtain its first two California Workforce Investment Board grants, allowing them to diversify their funding and partner with this government agency for the first time.

An Investment That Works

SINCE JOINING REDF'S
PORTFOLIO IN 2011:

2.7k
PEOPLE EMPLOYED

IN THE PAST YEAR CEO
EMPLOYEES HAVE WORKED:

200k+ HOURS
AND EARNED
\$1.4m IN WAGES

WITH REDF'S SUPPORT, CEO
IS ON TRACK TO EMPLOY:

5.3k
MORE PEOPLE BY 2020

Personal Success Story

A Job is So Much More Than a Paycheck



At 17, Michael was incarcerated for a gang-related offense. He spent 17 years in prison. When he came out, he didn't have much hope of finding a job—until he walked through the doors of CEO. There, he got the training and support he needed to succeed. “A job is so much more than a paycheck,” he says. “It’s a door back into society. Work helped me overcome the obstacles I faced coming out of prison. Employers should know: When you give someone who was incarcerated a second chance, they will be some of the best employees you can ever hire.” After working as a customer service supervisor and earning a promotion after only three months, Michael became a Case Manager at the Center for Juvenile Justice, where he counseled young people who are on probation. In 2017 he joined #cut50 as a Policy Associate, dedicating his perspective, skills, and passion to cutting the prison population in half by 2050.



After seeing the motivation and performance of the work crews, I am fully confident in CEO producing quality outcomes for CalTrans.

— Trent Manning, Litter Abatement Program Manager, CalTrans