



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AGING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



## INVEST PROGRAM DIRECTIVE

DATE: April 04, 2018

NUMBER: WDP D17-01

## INVEST PROGRAM POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This directive provides information and guidance to Los Angeles County America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs), participating in the INVEST-Innovative Employment Solutions (INVEST) program. This directive describes County policy and procedures for the program and is effective immediately.

### REFERENCES

- California Community Corrections Performance Incentive Act (SB 678)
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Public Law 113-125)
- Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board 2017-2020 Local Area Plan (<http://workforce.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Revised-Los-Angeles-County-Local-Plan3-9-17.pdf>)
- County of Los Angeles Countywide Workforce Development Alignment Plan

### BACKGROUND

To reduce prison overcrowding, the State of California passed the California Community Corrections Performance Initiative Act (Senate Bill 678 or SB 678) which, among other strategies, provides counties financial incentives to develop policies, programs and services to reduce the number of adult felony probationers committed to State prison. Due to SB 678, the Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation) received an allocation of fiscal incentives from the State, which it is using to fund programs and services that aim to reduce the likelihood of adult probationers recidivating to State prison. As one of these programs, INVEST is a five-year partnership between Probation, Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS), and the Office of Diversion & Reentry (ODR) that aims to improve employment opportunities and outcomes for County Adult Probationers by using evidence-based practices proven successful in assisting former offenders in the workplace.

Los Angeles County's workforce development programs look to ensure greater access to employment opportunities for populations that traditionally experience significant barriers to employment through greater alignment and leveraging of County resources and partnerships. As one of these programs, INVEST supports the County of Los Angeles' Countywide Workforce Development Alignment Plan (Alignment Plan) which aligns the

workforce development programs of County departments, and ensures their coordination with the countywide Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) workforce development system. One of the main goals of both WIOA and the Alignment Plan is to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services for individuals with barriers to employment, which are needed to succeed in the labor market. Individuals experiencing barriers to employment include those involved in the justice system, making the probation population a priority for WDACS.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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### **Policy**

The INVEST program establishes a five-year partnership between Probation, ODR and WDACS to address the shortcomings of the existing and un-aligned systems of these departments to improve employment outcomes for the adult probationer population and develop an effective model that can provide a systematic solution to improving re-entry employment services and lead to employment that is along an articulated career pathway. Each AJCC must dedicate two (2) staff to the INVEST Program, an INVEST Career Development Specialist (CDS) and an INVEST Business Services Representative (BSR). Each participant will be assigned to an INVEST CDS, who will work closely with them in developing an individualized employment plan for identified participants requiring intensive services, and with the INVEST BSR, who will work in conjunction with the WDACS Business Services team to identify viable employment opportunities and connect the participants to employers. The INVEST BSR will utilize WDACS' Launchpad Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool to both document and identify re-entry-friendly employers and employment opportunities for INVEST participants, at the direction of County. INVEST BSRs will also work with WDACS Business Services Team to engage businesses in WDACS' Re-entry Employers Campaign that educate businesses about recent State and County Fair Chance Ordinances, their impact on local businesses, and employers' opportunities and responsibilities in relation to these ordinances.

The program is rolled out in two simultaneous tracks:

- A. INVEST Intensive Case Management: includes all participants referred by the designated INVEST Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs) co-located at the participating AJCCs. The participants referred by the co-located INVEST DPOs will receive services of a Multi-Disciplinary Support (MDS) team that includes co-case management and support from the INVEST DPO, the AJCC INVEST CDS and the AJCC INVEST BSR. This team will provide intensive employment services, case management, supportive services, system navigation and post-employment retention services. The program includes the participation of the DPO, not only as an enforcer, but primarily as a rehabilitator and mentor. The INVEST DPO will work alongside the INVEST CDS and INVEST BSR to provide wrap-around employment and rehabilitation services. The INVEST DPO will provide a criminogenic risk and needs assessment and the INVEST CDS will make use of

career interest, career value, work skills, and other assessment instruments to ensure that the right services are delivered at the right time to the right person.

- B. **INVEST Coordinated Field Referrals:** includes all participants referred by all other DPOs, who are not assigned to the INVEST program, by way of AJCC outreach and recruitment efforts; Probation centralized Resource Utilization Unit, or by ODR Re-Entry Intensive Case Management Service providers. Participants supervised by non-INVEST DPOs will receive the same intensive workforce services; however, the DPOs will not provide additional services. The INVEST CDS and INVEST BSR will collaborate to ensure the participant is given all the needed wraparound services to succeed in the labor market. To be eligible to participate in this track, applicants must meet all the requirements included in Attachment A: INVEST Coordinated Field Referral Eligibility Checklist.

Please note, for both tracks A and B, Selective Service registration is not a requirement at the time of enrollment into the INVEST program but is required at the point of co-enrollment in WIOA, along with all other WIOA eligibility elements that must be met at that time.

The INVEST Program will commence at the following five (5) L.A. County AJCCs that will provide the services outlined herein to INVEST participants:

1. Rio Hondo Comprehensive AJCC
2. East Los Angeles/West San Gabriel Valley Comprehensive AJCC
3. Rancho Dominguez Comprehensive AJCC
4. Northeast San Fernando Valley AJCC
5. Palmdale AJCC (Affiliate to Antelope Valley Comprehensive AJCC)

### **AJCC Staffing and Services**

All AJCC staff assigned to INVEST are required to complete Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) training provided by the County and become certified as an OWDS. This training is based on the curriculum provided by the National Institute of Corrections. As a pre-requisite to this training, the staff must hold a bachelor's level degree from an accredited college or university and/or possess lived experience of personal involvement with the justice system.

The AJCCs must assign two (2) fully dedicated, full time staff to this program, as follows:

***INVEST Career Development Specialist (CDS):*** The INVEST CDS provides intensive employment and career development services that are tailored to the unique needs, barriers and circumstances of the justice involved individual and utilize evidence-based practices in serving the former offender taught via the OWDS training. The INVEST CDS is responsible for:

- **Remaining Fully Versed on WIOA Legislation and all County Funded Workforce Development Mandates and Requirements:** The INVEST CDS plays a central role in the public workforce development system and is required to remain educated and well-versed in federal, State and local workforce development legislation, rules, requirements, mandates and directives that guide and ensure compliance with the federal workforce development system.
- **Possessing Thorough Knowledge of CalJOBS:** The INVEST CDS is required to have a full understanding of and remain trained in utilizing CalJOBS, the State's workforce development labor market exchange and case management system to conduct Objective Assessments, create Individual Employment Plans (IEPs), regularly update IEPs as changes occur in real time, open and close allowable activities to accurately reflect actual begin and end dates of the activities provided, run canned reports in CalJOBS necessary to inform and track participants and their progress, continually update case notes and track status of supportive service referrals.
- **Conducting Assessments:** The INVEST CDS is required to conduct or facilitate educational level testing utilizing approved testing tools (TABE, CASAS or Wonderlic), conduct supportive service needs assessment, and conduct skills and interest assessments.
- **Regularly Providing Up-to-Date Labor Market Information:** The INVEST CDS must be equipped with the most recent information on the growing and in demand occupations in the L.A. Basin Regional Planning Unit and their L.A. County Workforce Development Area. The INVEST CDS works closely with the INVEST BSR to utilize the most current Labor Market Information and interpretation thereof to prepare the participants for employment along a career pathway in an in-demand industry.
- **Ensuring Provision of Employment Readiness Programming & Workshops:** The INVEST CDS is responsible for conducting or ensuring participants receive, as needed, employment readiness training and workshops including: resume development, interviewing skills, workplace conduct, financial literacy, time management, communication skills, and navigating employment with record.
- **Securing Services of Approved Training Providers:** The INVEST CDS must remain fully versed in the California Employment Development Department (EDD) Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Interstate Training Resource and Information Network (I-TRAIN) policies, procedures and requirements for securing training providers for participants based on consumer choice and County policies. The CDS is responsible for ensuring and tracking training delivery and expenditures and ensuring that employment placement is in a sector or occupation of the training provided.

- **Executing Agreements with Educational Institutions:** The INVEST CDS is responsible for following County policy and procedures regarding executing agreements with educational institutions for the provision of employment-related education and training, and sector-based cohort trainings.
- **Conducting Appropriate Referrals to Transitional Subsidized Employment:** The INVEST CDS is responsible for identifying appropriate candidates for referral to transitional subsidized employment at County contracted Social Enterprises, and others, as directed by WDACS.
- **Providing Supportive Services According to State & Local Policy:** The INVEST CDS is responsible for providing referrals to employment-related supportive services and/or issuing payments for allowable supportive services according to approved supportive service and incentive policies. Each AJCC is required to have in place a supportive service and incentive policy approved by WDACS, which will provide the guidelines and procedures to be followed when providing these services.
- **Providing Stability and Employment Retention Supports:** The INVEST CDS is responsible for providing follow up services, that consist of intensive employment retention supports. These services may be delivered in individual or group settings for a minimum of one year from the time of commencement of unsubsidized employment. These services include, but are not limited to, employment and re-employment coaching/assistance, job retention and advancement strategies, financial stability and empowerment workshops/trainings, referrals to education, skills-building, certification programs, personal supports, referrals to peers and/or public or private direct personal support providers, and referrals to partners that provide barrier removal services.

***AJCC INVEST Business Services Representative (BSR):*** The INVEST BSR is responsible for developing employment opportunities with re-entry friendly employers and providing the full array of business and employer services available at the AJCCs, with a concentration on benefiting the re-entry population served by INVEST. The INVEST BSR works in concert with the WDACS Business Services team to provide the following services:

- **Supporting Business Service Strategies and Initiatives:** The INVEST BSR works in concert with the WDACS Business Services Team to support County identified business service strategies and initiatives such as, but not limited to, industry sector strategies, private-public partnership, and customized employment and talent management services. They broker On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts, and Customized Training, and any other business engagement and employer-driven training tools identified and/or approved by the County.

- **Developing and Conducting Group Format Workshops:** The business and employer-related workshops provided to eligible INVEST participants and employers should cover topics regarding AJCC employment services.
- **Utilizing Launchpad CRM Tool** (when implemented): to both document and identify re-entry friendly employers and employment opportunities for INVEST participants.
- **Engaging Businesses in WDACS' Re-entry Employers Campaign** that educates businesses about recent State and County Fair Chance Ordinances, their impact on local businesses, and employers' opportunities and responsibilities in relation to these ordinances.
- **Providing Employer Services:** The BSR shall also provide the full array of employer services, as they identify and connect with re-entry friendly employers and businesses.
  - o **Conducting labor exchange activities:** matching and referring INVEST participants to job orders and postings available from employers who will potentially hire justice involved individuals.
  - o **Engaging in business analytics and employer outreach activities:** to understand and communicate participant profiles, education levels, skills, and experiences, as well as possible criminal background issues, to the employer community to inform labor exchange activities.
  - o **Engaging in job identification:** through job order data systems, employer relationships, job depositories, and other strategies to identify job opportunities for justice involved participants.
  - o **Communicating identified job opportunities:** to all INVEST staff and partners within the AJCC, such as the INVEST CDS and INVEST DPO.
  - o **Working with employers:** on active recruitments within the AJCC to identify possible connections for INVEST participants.
  - o **Participating in and coordinating re-entry friendly job fairs:** at the AJCC and other partner or community locations.
  - o **Conducting screening and coaching activities:** prior to referring candidates to employers to ensure INVEST participants are prepared and qualified for the job selection process.
  - o **Developing and maintaining employer relationships:** with the hiring managers of employers to promote labor exchange and job identification activities within the AJCC for the re-entry participants, as well as identify

opportunities for unsubsidized employment, internships, and work-based learning experiences that link to careers in high growth sectors.

- **Brokering OJT contracts and customized training:** and any other business engagement and training tools identified and/or approved by the County.
- **Providing Customized Business Services:** to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations, which are tailored for specific employers in relation to their work with identified re-entry populations.
  - **Conducting customized screening and referral:** of qualified INVEST participants in training services to employers.
  - **Providing customized services:** to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations on re-entry employment-related issues.
  - **Organizing customized recruitment events:** and related services for employers including re-entry targeted job fairs.
  - **Providing human resource consultation services specific to hiring justice involved individuals:** including, but not limited to, assistance with writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks; developing performance evaluation and personnel policies; creating orientation sessions for new workers; honing job interview techniques for efficiency and compliance; analyzing employee turnover; creating job accommodations and using assistive technologies; or explaining labor and employment laws to help employers comply with discrimination, wage/hour, and safety/health regulations.
  - **Providing customized labor market information:** for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters.

The services described above should not be provided as stand-alone activities but be stackable and along an articulated individualized service plan and career pathway. The participants shall be given the opportunity to take advantage of all services available on their journey to reach their short-term and long-term career goals, which shall include education and training goals.

All services described above must be provided according to policies in place under WIOA, unless otherwise directed by County by way of this Directive or subsequent communication.

## **Procedures**

### ***Co-location of Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs)***

The INVEST DPO will be co-located at an AJCC site and will work closely with the AJCC staff on all participant cases referred to the co-located DPOs. INVEST DPOs are also certified Offender Workforce Development Specialists. The INVEST DPO will determine a participant's criminogenic needs and will work with them utilizing Cognitive Behavioral Intervention and Motivational Interviewing strategies to prepare the Probationer to take on a higher level of responsibilities as they move into workforce development activities. The INVEST DPOs will collaborate with the AJCC staff on each individual case, conduct INVEST orientations with the participants and the AJCC staff, develop a case plan with the participant and the INVEST CDS, facilitate monthly meetings with participant and INVEST CDS to review, revise and add to their individual employment plans, and any other activities that may be necessary to provide the participant with a full array of wrap-around services.

### ***Outreach and Recruitment***

AJCCs are required to provide ongoing/systematic outreach at the L.A. County Probation Area Offices within their regions to allow for recruitment of SB 678 eligible participants. Each AJCC will be paired with one (1) to four (4) designated Probation Area Offices and hold ongoing orientation/recruitment sessions. These sessions must be held at the designated Probation Area Office at a minimum of once per week, or as otherwise directed by County. Those AJCCs that are paired with more than one Probation office will rotate the outreach events between these assigned locations. The scheduled visits should be coordinated with the Probation offices, as well as co-located DPOs to maximize the opportunity to provide a joint orientation with both partners present.

### ***The Referral Process***

The INVEST referral process can occur in two ways (A) INVEST Intensive Case Management referrals from INVEST DPOs to AJCCs via WDACS or (B) INVEST Coordinated Field referrals from Probation via WDACS. There are three (3) referral sources for Coordinated Field Referrals from Probation: (1) INVEST DPOs, who identify probationers in need of INVEST services during outreach efforts described below, (2) other field DPOs, who identify probationers in need of workforce development services, and process the referral through Probation's Resource Utilization Unit (RUU), and (3) Office of Diversion and Re-entry.

(A) INVEST Intensive Case Management referrals from INVEST DPOs to AJCCs via WDACS Automated Referral System (ARS), which will replace the existing paper-based referral system currently in place:

The INVEST DPOs co-located at the AJCCs will work with the probationers on their case load prior to referring them to the AJCC staff for workforce development services. The co-located DPO will enter the participants' information into the ARS, accompanied by the completed Consent and Release Agreement (Attachment B) signed by the applicant, which will start tracking the stages of the referral until the process is completed and the



participant is enrolled in INVEST AJCC workforce development services via CalJOBS INVEST local grant code. Further details on the ARS and the INVEST local grant code are provided below.

**(B) INVEST Coordinated Field referrals from Probation to AJCCs via WDACS ARS:**

- 1 As AJCC INVEST staff and INVEST DPOs identify probationers appropriate for the INVEST program through outreach, the INVEST DPO will have the ability to create a referral in the ARS identified as a Coordinated Field Referral, including the completed Consent and Release Agreement signed by the applicant. Participants enrolled in this portion of the program will not be on the INVEST DPO's case load and will be served only by the AJCC staff.
- 2 When any DPO in the field (other than the co-located INVEST DPOs) identifies probationers in need of workforce development services, they will refer these probationers to such services through Probation's RUU. The RUU will then enter the participants' information into the ARS, which will then start tracking and informing the stages of the referral. This referral source is not yet in place and AJCCs will be notified by County of the commencement date for this component of the program.
- 3 ODR is working with Probation to provide Re-Entry Intensive Case Management Services (R-ICMS) to probationers. The services provided may include housing, substance abuse treatment, and other supports the probationer may need to successfully re-integrate into society. From this population ODR R-ICMS case managers will identify those who need workforce development services and will refer them to the AJCCs utilizing the ARS. R-ICMS case managers will be cross-trained on INVEST, the AJCC system, and will utilize an INVEST pre-screening tool to identify SB 678 participants who are ready for workforce development services and appropriate for INVEST program participation. This referral source is not yet in place and AJCCs will be notified by County of the commencement date for this component of the program.

**Tracking and Reporting**

***ARS***

Once the ARS system is finalized and functioning, the referrals shall be completed utilizing the WDACS ARS by both Probation and AJCC staff. Details on how to use the system will be disseminated as they become available through an instruction manual and training. The current system of paper-based referrals will remain in place until the ARS system is fully functional and the users are trained.

***Local Grant Code***

All INVEST participants shall be enrolled in CalJOBS under the INVEST local grant code

and all activities provided must be tracked in this system. All rules and regulations regarding CalJOBS shall be adhered to when utilizing the system for the INVEST program. The local grant code to be used for this program is **960 – INVEST**. Instructions on how to activate and use the local grant code are provided in the attached Help Sheet (Attachment C).

Participants should also be co-enrolled into WIOA or other programs, when necessary and beneficial for the participant.

## **ACTION**

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Los Angeles County AJCCs shall implement the procedures described in this directive and ensure that the information provided herein is communicated throughout the operations, management and governance structure of the AJCC.

All AJCCs shall assign designated INVEST CDSs and INVEST BSRs, by submitting Attachment D to [INVEST@wdacs.lacounty.gov](mailto:INVEST@wdacs.lacounty.gov). In case of change in assignment, Attachment D shall be resubmitted to WDACS within five (5) business days of the change.

All AJCCs shall ensure their assigned INVEST staff are provided all necessary training and supports to enable them to provide targeted and tailored services for the re-entry population, at a minimum the Offender Workforce Development Specialist training.

## **INQUIRIES**

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Inquiries regarding this directive and the policies and procedures described herein should be directed to [INVEST@wdacs.lacounty.gov](mailto:INVEST@wdacs.lacounty.gov).



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**Irene Pelayo, Program Manager**  
**Workforce and Community Services Branch**

Attachments:

Attachment A: INVEST Coordinated Field Referral Eligibility Checklist

Attachment B: County of Los Angeles Coordinated Optimal Rehabilitative Efforts (CORE)  
Consent and Release Agreement

Attachment C: CalJOBS Help Sheet – How to use INVEST Local Grant Code

Attachment D: INVEST Staff Contact Information Form