

# Illinois Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Advisory Group

2024 SAG Portfolio Planning Process  
IQ South EE Committee Leadership Team EE Idea Submittal:  
Support Returning Citizens entering the Clean Energy Workforce

## 1. Submitter Contact Information

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Company or Organization: IQ-S Energy Efficiency Committee (LIEEAC): Returning Citizens Subcommittee  
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2. **Description and Rationale:** Describe the proposed EE Idea and rationale for submission. Explain why this idea is needed and what main objectives the implementation of the idea would accomplish. Describe whether this is an idea that could be implemented in an existing EE program, or whether the idea involves establishing a new program. Please indicate whether additional research may be required before implementation.

*Questions to consider:*

- *What issue will this proposed energy efficiency idea resolve?*
- *Will the proposed change increase participation and result in increased energy savings?*
- *Will this reduce costs? Will this increase customer satisfaction?*
- *Will this help achieve statutory energy savings goals?*
- *Does the idea make EE portfolios more equitable?*
- *Would this idea require shifting budgets or resources? If so, where should the budget be shifted from?*

The IQ-S Returning Citizens Subcommittee is proposing a Program Proposal to include Returning Citizens in the next four-year Ameren IL portfolio plan. The purpose of the Program would be to implement strategies and tactics to further support successful identification, training, hiring, and retention of “Returning Citizens” in the EE, solar and related efforts workforce. The Subcommittee is also interested in a program that would implement strategies and tactics to help prepare those who are currently incarcerated to join the Clean Energy Workforce upon release.

To help direct this effort, the IQ-S Returning Citizens Subcommittee proposes the following high-level goals to guide the development and measure the success of the Program. These goals are formed from direct feedback and communication with the IQ-S Returning Citizens Subcommittee Members:

- Identify, engage, support and connect Returning Citizens with clean energy jobs in the utility service territory for at least ten (10) Returning Citizens/per service territory/year
  - Support would also include connecting Returning Citizens to cohorts of fellow Returning Citizens who can support and learn from each other. Returning Citizens who have found success in the Energy Efficiency Contracting Industry will be particularly valuable to this effort.
- Identify at least ten (10) Implementers, Program Allies or other companies that support the EE portfolio who either have experience with or are willing to hire Returning Citizens; provide support and organize a cohort of employers who can support and learn from each other.
- Identify the best recruiting process: Access to returning citizens that are interested in long-term clean energy employment may require creative processes and out-reach.
- Determine if companies want to invest in re-entry, training, or are they limiting participation to hiring returning citizens. Each position has differing degrees of investment.

3. **Illinois Utility Impacted:** Identify which utilities are impacted by the proposed EE Idea:

Check	Illinois Utility Impacted
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ameren Illinois
<input type="checkbox"/>	ComEd
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nicor Gas
<input type="checkbox"/>	Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All Illinois Utilities

4. **Energy Efficiency Sector:** Identify which sector(s) the proposed EE Idea applies to:

Check	Energy Efficiency Sector
<input type="checkbox"/>	Residential Customers – Single Family (non-income qualified/income eligible)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Residential Customers – Multifamily (non-income qualified/income eligible)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Residential Customers – Single Family Income Qualified/Income Eligible
<input type="checkbox"/>	Residential Customers – Multifamily Income Qualified/Income Eligible
<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Business Customers (commercial & industrial sector)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium/Large Business Customers (commercial & industrial sector)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research & development, emerging technologies, or market transformation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (market development initiatives, Trade Ally support, reporting, etc.)

5. **Background:** Describe where the EE Idea originated from, including whether this idea has been successfully implemented in other jurisdiction(s). Provide specific background information that will help utilities and SAG participants understand the proposed idea.

*Questions to consider:*

- *If this idea has been successfully implemented outside Illinois, do you have information on eligible customers, participation achieved, and/or savings achieved?*
- *Are reports available describing the successful idea / program approach?*

Solutions for Energy Efficient Logistics (SEEL) has been a long-time promoter of supporting Returning Citizens working in the energy efficiency space. Partnering with SEEL, the Subcommittee aims to support existing efforts to help include Returning Citizens in the energy efficiency industry within Illinois, especially as there is a shortage of weatherization and HVAC contractors. By developing a pipeline targeted towards Returning Citizens, Illinois has the opportunity to build capacity to fully take advantage of incoming federal funding for energy efficiency work.

6. **References:** If any additional information will be useful to Illinois utilities and SAG participants in reviewing the EE Idea, please provide a description and links or attachment(s) to the source of information.

Below is a list of programs focused on Employing Returning Citizens developed by Deondre Rutues

**1. Job Training and Mentoring Program | Flip the Script | Goodwill Industries (goodwilldetroit.org)**

Goodwill Industries. (2023). Flip the Script: Job Training and Mentoring Program. Retrieved from <https://www.goodwilldetroit.org/services/for-individuals/flip-the-script/>

**2. Hope Network Workforce Development - Services for Job Seekers**

Hope Network. (2023). Workforce Development - Services for Job Seekers. Retrieved from <https://hopenetwork.org/workforce-development/>

**3. LACOR nolareentry (nolacor.org)**

LACOR. (2018). NOLA Reentry. Retrieved from <https://www.nolacor.org/take-action>

**4. A Worker Co-op for Returning Citizens | Grassroots Economic Organizing (geo.coop)**

Grassroots Economic Organizing. (2017). A Worker Co-op for Returning Citizens. Retrieved from <https://geo.coop/story/worker-co-op-returning-citizens>

**5. Four Reasons Why You Should Consider Hiring an Ex-Offender (yello.co)**

Yello. (2023). Four Reasons Why You Should Consider Hiring an Ex-Offender. Retrieved from <https://yello.co/blog/four-reasons-why-you-should-consider-hiring-an-ex-offender/>

**7. Optional Additional Information:**

- a. **Estimated Budget:** Provide the total estimated budget for each program year (2026 – 2029).
- b. **Estimated Participation:** Provide participation totals for each program year (i.e. number of measures installed, number of customer participants, etc.)
- c. **Estimated Savings:** Provide estimated savings for each program year (i.e. total numbers of therms for gas EE programs; total number of kWh for electric EE programs).

**8. Presenting to SAG:** EE Idea submittals will be presented to SAG in April. The SAG Facilitator is reviewing whether to schedule one of the April SAG meetings in-person. Are you interested in presenting this proposed EE Idea in-person?

Check	Are you interested in presenting to SAG in-person?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

**9. Appendix**

**a. Appendix 1.0: Returning Citizens Literature Review**

**Research on States/Local Jurisdictions**

**With Energy Efficiency and Programs that Train Returning**

**Citizens for the Clean Energy Workforce**

## California

1. **Reentry Hubs:** California has established reentry hubs in various counties. These hubs serve as centralized locations where returning citizens can access a range of services and resources, including employment assistance, housing support, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, and more.
2. **Employment Assistance:** Many returning citizens face challenges when trying to find stable employment. California offers programs that provide job training, job placement services, and incentives for employers to hire individuals with criminal records. The California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) is a key agency in this effort.
3. **Housing Support:** Stable housing is crucial for successful reintegration. California offers housing programs specifically designed to assist returning citizens in finding safe and affordable housing. These programs may provide rental assistance, transitional housing, or support for individuals with housing-related barriers.
4. **Education and Training:** Access to education and vocational training programs is essential for improving the employment prospects of returning citizens. California has initiatives that provide educational opportunities within correctional facilities and support continued education upon release.
5. **Healthcare and Mental Health Services:** Many returning citizens have healthcare and mental health needs. California provides access to healthcare services through Medicaid (Medi-Cal) and offers mental health support to help individuals address any underlying issues.
6. **Substance Abuse Treatment:** For those struggling with substance abuse issues, California offers programs that provide treatment, counseling, and support to help individuals overcome addiction.
7. **Legal Assistance:** Returning citizens may face legal challenges related to their criminal records. California has organizations and legal aid services that can help individuals with record expungement, sealing, or other legal matters related to their past convictions.
8. **Community-Based Organizations:** Numerous community-based organizations and nonprofits in California focus on reentry services. These organizations often play a crucial role in providing support, mentoring, and resources to returning citizens.
9. **Reentry Task Forces:** Many counties in California have established reentry task forces or councils composed of government agencies, community organizations, and other stakeholders. These groups collaborate to develop and implement reentry strategies and initiatives.
10. **Policy Changes:** Over the years, California has implemented various criminal justice reforms aimed at reducing the impact of incarceration on individuals and communities. These reforms include changes to sentencing laws, bail reform, and initiatives to divert individuals away from the criminal justice system when appropriate.

## Oakland

1. **Job Training Programs:** Oakland has likely continued to offer job training programs in the clean energy sector. These programs may include opportunities for returning citizens to acquire the skills and certifications needed for careers in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and related fields. Organizations like nonprofit agencies, community colleges, and workforce development programs may offer such training.
2. **Green Jobs Initiatives:** The city may have initiatives that focus on creating green jobs, which could provide employment opportunities for returning citizens interested in clean energy development. These initiatives may partner with local businesses and organizations to connect job seekers with opportunities in the renewable energy and sustainability sectors.
3. **Clean Energy Incentives:** Oakland may offer incentives and support for clean energy projects, including solar panel installation, energy-efficient home improvements, and clean transportation. These incentives could encourage clean energy businesses to hire and train local residents, including returning citizens, to participate in these projects.

4. **Workforce Development Partnerships:** The city could have partnerships with workforce development agencies and organizations to facilitate job placement and career development in the clean energy sector. These partnerships may include outreach efforts targeting underserved communities, including returning citizens.
5. **Entrepreneurial Support:** Oakland may provide resources and support for individuals interested in starting clean energy businesses. This could include access to funding, mentorship programs, and assistance with business planning and development.
6. **Green Building Initiatives:** If returning citizens are interested in construction and building-related fields within the clean energy sector, Oakland might have green building initiatives that promote energy-efficient and sustainable construction practices. Training and job opportunities could be available in these areas.
7. **Environmental Justice Efforts:** Oakland may have programs and policies that prioritize environmental justice, ensuring that underserved communities, including returning citizens, have equitable access to clean energy jobs and benefits.

## San Quentin

1. **Vocational Training:** Many correctional facilities, including San Quentin, offer vocational training programs that teach inmates practical skills that can be applied in the job market upon release. In some cases, this training may include skills relevant to clean energy, such as solar panel installation, energy-efficient construction, or other green technologies.
2. **Educational Programs:** Some correctional facilities provide educational programs, including courses in environmental science, sustainability, and clean energy technologies. Inmates can earn certificates or degrees that may be useful in clean energy-related careers.
3. **Work Release Programs:** San Quentin and other correctional institutions may have work release programs that allow inmates to gain work experience outside the facility, often with employers in various industries, including clean energy.
4. **Reentry Services:** In preparation for release, many correctional facilities offer reentry services that assist inmates in securing employment, housing, and other resources. These services can help individuals transition into the workforce, including careers in clean energy development.
5. **Partnerships with Community Organizations:** San Quentin may collaborate with local community organizations and workforce development agencies to provide additional training and support to inmates interested in clean energy development.
6. **Entrepreneurship Programs:** Some facilities offer entrepreneurship and business development programs that can help individuals start their own clean energy-related businesses upon release.

## States that have returning citizens w/focus on EE

1. **Boston:** <https://fedcapgroup.org/community-work-services-launches-new-apex-clean-energy-institute-in-boston/>
2. **California:** California has a strong focus on clean energy and sustainability. The state offers workforce development programs and initiatives to train and employ returning citizens in various clean energy sectors, including solar energy and energy efficiency.
  1. <https://gridalternatives.org/headquarters/news/second-chances-through-solar-returning-citizens>  
 1171 Ocean Avenue, Suite 200  
 Oakland, CA 94608  
 Phone: (510) 731-1310  
 Fax: (510) 225-2585  
 Email: [info@gridalternatives.org](mailto:info@gridalternatives.org)

3. **New York:** New York has implemented programs to promote clean energy job training and employment opportunities for underserved populations, including returning citizens. Initiatives like the Green Jobs Green New York program aim to create pathways to clean energy careers.
  - a. <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Goals-Building-Clean-Energy-Economy>  
[info@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:info@nyserda.ny.gov)  
  
 (518) 862-1090  
  
 866-NYSERDA  
  
 17 Columbia Circle  
  
 Albany, NY 12203-6399
4. **Illinois:** Illinois has programs designed to engage returning citizens in green jobs and sustainability efforts. For example, the state has initiatives that focus on workforce development in renewable energy and energy efficiency.
  - a. [https://www.wrex.com/news/top-stories/winnebago-county-board-approves-new-partnership-with-rock-valley-college/article\\_4cebcd04-6340-11ec-a326-c3308c052536.html](https://www.wrex.com/news/top-stories/winnebago-county-board-approves-new-partnership-with-rock-valley-college/article_4cebcd04-6340-11ec-a326-c3308c052536.html)  
 3301 North Mulford Rd  
  
 Rockford, IL 61114  
  
 (815) 921-7821
  - b. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/classes-begin-at-new-green-job-training-center-in-chicago-301813294.html>  
  
[Info@548enterprise.com](mailto:Info@548enterprise.com)  
  
 3147 W. Douglass Blvd  
  
 Chicago, IL 60623  
  
 (773) 522-3050
  - c. [https://www.hpherald.com/evening\\_digest/cook-county-launches-rental-assistance-program-for-returning-citizens/article\\_6fabbc86-57ff-11ee-8f35-83975664ce6e.html#:~:text=Launched%20by%20the%20county's%20board,to%20Cook%20County%20after%20incarceration.](https://www.hpherald.com/evening_digest/cook-county-launches-rental-assistance-program-for-returning-citizens/article_6fabbc86-57ff-11ee-8f35-83975664ce6e.html#:~:text=Launched%20by%20the%20county's%20board,to%20Cook%20County%20after%20incarceration.)
5. **Colorado:** Colorado has invested in clean energy and offers workforce development programs that can benefit returning citizens. These programs aim to train individuals for jobs in renewable energy and energy conservation.
  - a. <https://coloradosun.com/2021/11/10/new-employment-program-reverse-recidivism-rate/>
6. **Oregon:** Oregon has a strong commitment to renewable energy and sustainability. The state has programs to support workforce development in clean energy sectors, providing training and job placement opportunities.

7. **Pennsylvania:** Pennsylvania offers job training and employment assistance programs for returning citizens interested in clean energy and related fields. The state has initiatives to promote clean energy projects and green jobs.
  - a. [https://reimagineappalachia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ReImagine-Appalachia\\_PeriBrief\\_PA\\_Jan2021.pdf](https://reimagineappalachia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/ReImagine-Appalachia_PeriBrief_PA_Jan2021.pdf)
  
8. **Maryland:** Maryland has been actively involved in clean energy development and offers programs to train and employ individuals, including returning citizens, in green industries.
  - a. [https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/ClimateChange/BETITF%20Meeting%20Materials/Task%20Force%20presentation%20on%20Priority%20Goals%20and%20Recommendations\\_10.12.23.pdf](https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/ClimateChange/BETITF%20Meeting%20Materials/Task%20Force%20presentation%20on%20Priority%20Goals%20and%20Recommendations_10.12.23.pdf)
  - b. <https://power52.org/>  
Power52EnergyInstitute  
  
8775CloudleapCourt, STE11  
  
Columbia, MD 21045
  
9. **Minnesota:** Minnesota has programs and partnerships aimed at training and hiring individuals in the clean energy sector. Initiatives focus on renewable energy, energy efficiency, and related industries.
  - a. <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2023/10/03/power-to-the-people-efforts-to-ensure-equitable-clean-energy-transition>
  - b. <https://www.minnpost.com/environment/2021/05/north-minneapolis-renewable-energy-training-center-to-get-a-boost-from-the-state/>
  
10. **Michigan:** Michigan has initiatives to promote clean energy jobs and workforce development, with a focus on renewable energy technologies and sustainability practices.
  - a. <https://www.craigslist.com/sponsored-content/michigans-economy-includes-returning-citizens>
  - b. M.A.D.E. Institute  
(810) 835-8304  
  
[jessica@madeinstitute.org](mailto:jessica@madeinstitute.org)  
  
503 E. Garland St.  
  
Flint, Michigan 48503
  
11. **New Jersey:** <https://www.nj.gov/governor/climateaction/documents/CGE%20Roadmap.pdf>
  
12. **Washington:** Washington State supports clean energy development and provides training opportunities for returning citizens interested in careers in renewable energy, energy conservation, and sustainability.