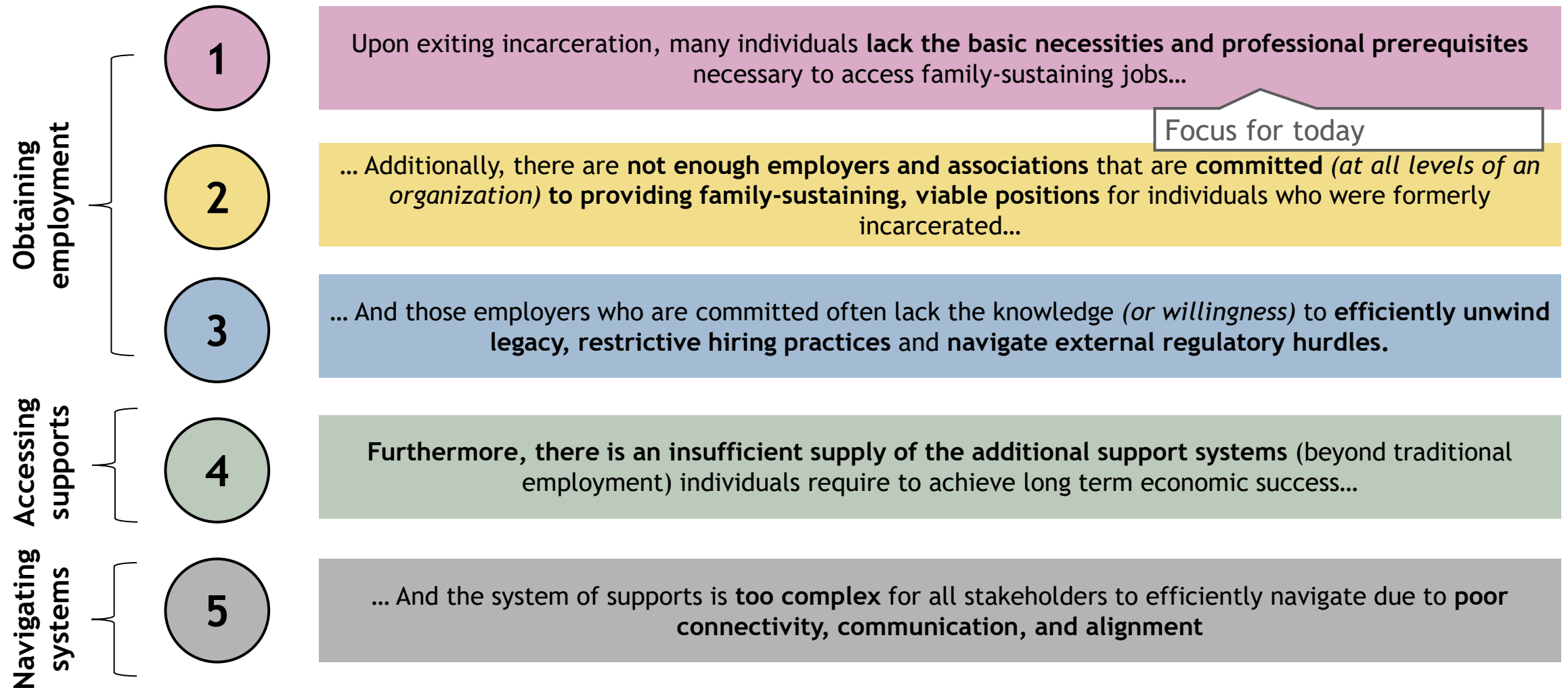# Illinois Reentry Council:
Access to employment / training resources within IDOC facilities

The Reentry Council has identified five obstacles that limit individuals' economic opportunities upon exiting prisons

Obtaining employment

1 Upon exiting incarceration, many individuals **lack the basic necessities and professional prerequisites** necessary to access family-sustaining jobs…

Focus for today

2 … Additionally, there are **not enough employers and associations** that are **committed** *(at all levels of an organization)* **to providing family-sustaining, viable positions** for individuals who were formerly incarcerated…

3 … And those employers who are committed often lack the knowledge *(or willingness)* to **efficiently unwind legacy, restrictive hiring practices** and **navigate external regulatory hurdles.**

Accessing supports

4 **Furthermore, there is an insufficient supply of the additional support systems** (beyond traditional employment) individuals require to achieve long term economic success…

Navigating systems

5 … And the system of supports is **too complex** for all stakeholders to efficiently navigate due to **poor connectivity, communication, and alignment**

Cross Agency meetings took place to strategize against this first obstacle

Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

Working Team: Julio Rodriguez, Lisa Jones, Kelly Lapetino, Bryan Ellis, Annamarie Dorr, LaMonica Pruitt

Illinois Department of Corrections

Working Team: Angie Mecagni, Jessica Mayhew, Amanda Burrell

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)

Working Team: Carrie Thomas, Janice Brown, Antoinette Golden

Collaborated through ongoing meetings over past 3 months

ILLINOIS REENTRY COUNCIL

Together, we have outlined four primary steps to guide this work

1 **Understand the need**

2 **Build factbase of what exists today**

3 **Define our ambition and roadmap**

4 **Collaborate and take action**

- Understand which employment and training resources would be **most beneficial** for people to have access to while incarcerated, including through speaking to people with lived experience

- Catalogue the various types of resources DCEO and IDES generally are capable of providing and **which are available in facilities today**

- **Develop maps for each region,** including all LWIAs and closest IDOC facility

- Identify **any infrastructure and resources available within IDOC faculties** that could be leveraged

- **Outline clear objectives for the type of employment resources** we strive to bring to each IDOC facility

- **Develop a path to increase collaboration amongst agencies,** regionally and locally, in order to achieve these objectives

- Locally, facilitate structured **connectivity between local services providers** to increase consistency in access to employment resources

- Regionally, support local teams and **share best practices across the state**

To discuss today

Factbase of what exists today

Our initial step began with developing a deeper understanding of the structure of IDOC facilities

Facility Type	No. of facilities*	Avg. population**	Typical time remaining	Additional logistical considerations	What resources exists today
Adult Transition Centers / Reentry Centers	5	200-300	18 months – 3 years	• Fewer regulations on meeting capacity, making it easier for larger groups to congregate • Outside facilitators able to enter facility with fewer logistical hurdles *(pending approval)*	• Various employment / training programming in-place within facility (IDOC, LWIAs and community partners) • Opportunity to visit reentry resource room at least 1x in year prior to release • Vocational trainings • Job application support (resume building, interview preparation)
Minimum Security	16	400-500	18 months – 5 year		
Medium Security	10	1100-1200	Variable	• Potential staffing constraints due to additional security coverage needed for every individual • More regulations / limitations on number of people able to gather in same room	• Variety of virtual events in place today (incl. virtual job fairs) • Opportunity to visit reentry resource room at least 1x in year prior to release • Vocational trainings (in select facilities)
Maximum Security	4	1500-1600	Variable		

Availability of resources in place today also dependent on resource counselor within each facility

Additionally, we sought to understand key logistical infrastructure and resources within facilities

Within each IDOC facility, there is:

A dedicated reentry counselor

- A **dedicated reentry counselor** responsible for supporting reentry programming in facility

- Reentry counselor coordinates reentry resource room and resources

- Resources led by reentry counselor are often customized for their facility / community and are not always standardized across facilities

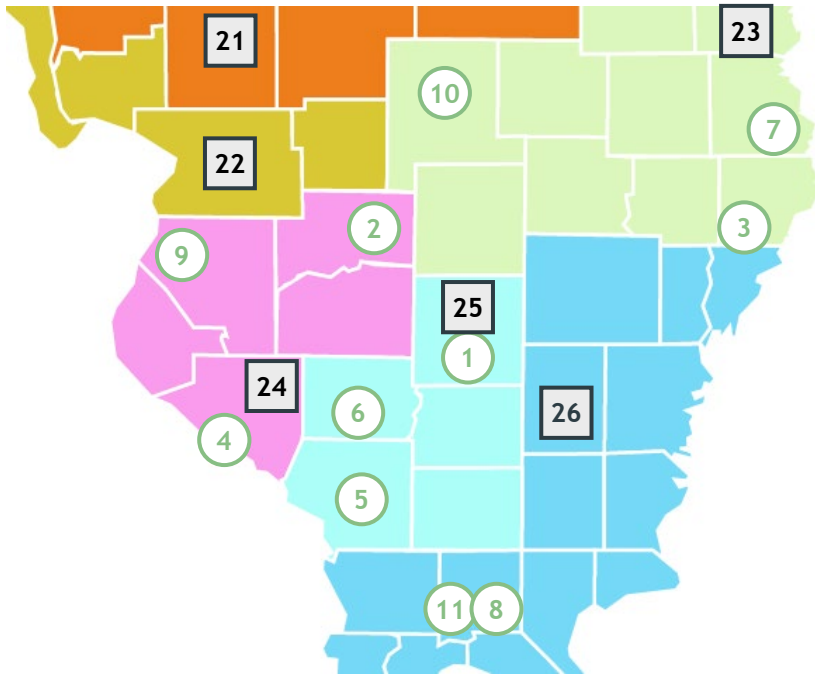## Logistical support for reentry programming and resources

- A **reentry resource room** that all individuals have the opportunity to visit once within 1 year of their release

- At least one room equipped with WebEx for virtual events (e.g., job fairs)

- 3-5 computers with pre-approved websites, such as:
  - Community college resources
  - Financial literacy websites
  - Select IDES resources

Variation across facility type / level of security to be discussed on following page

We then mapped each IDOC facility to nearby resources, including LWIAs
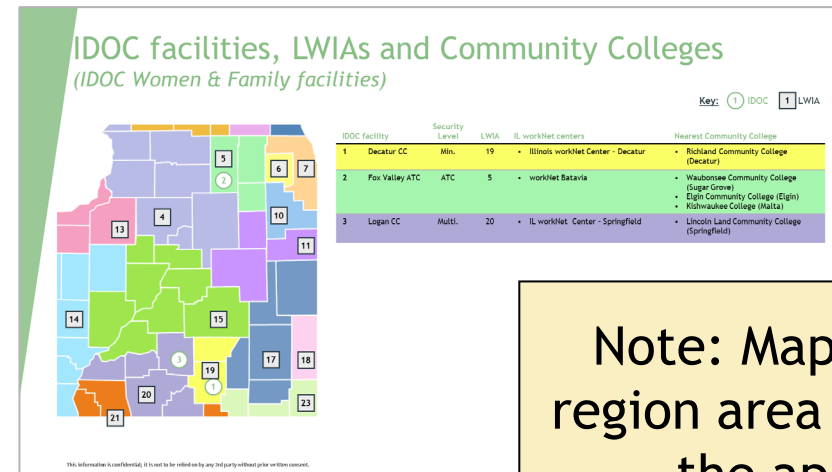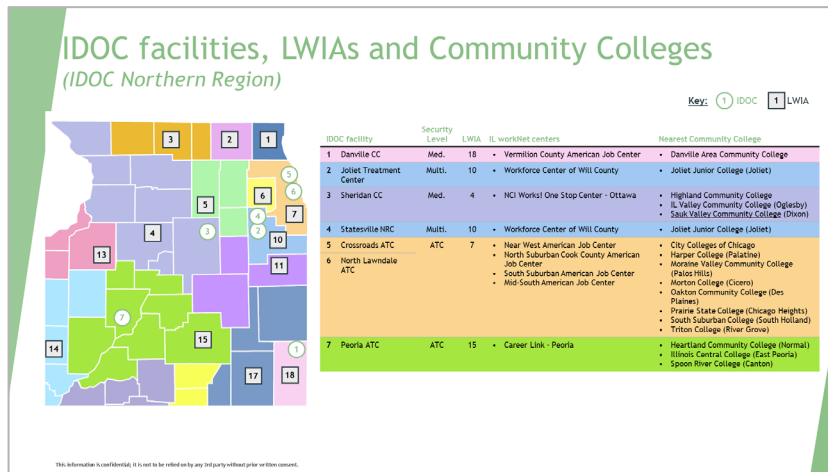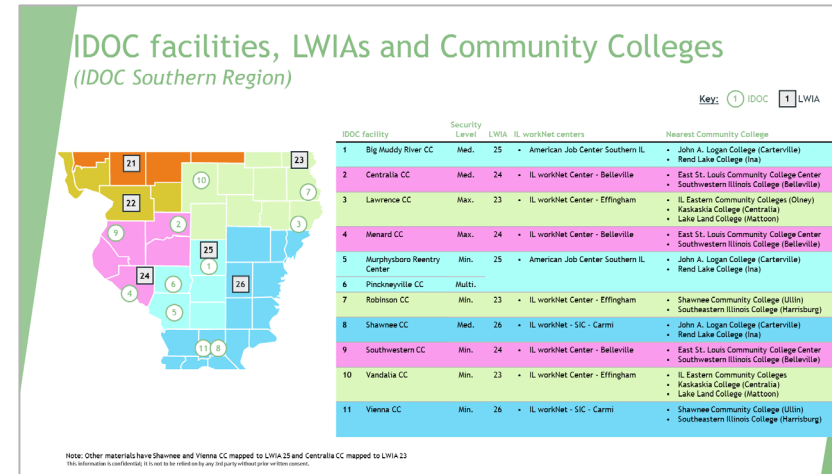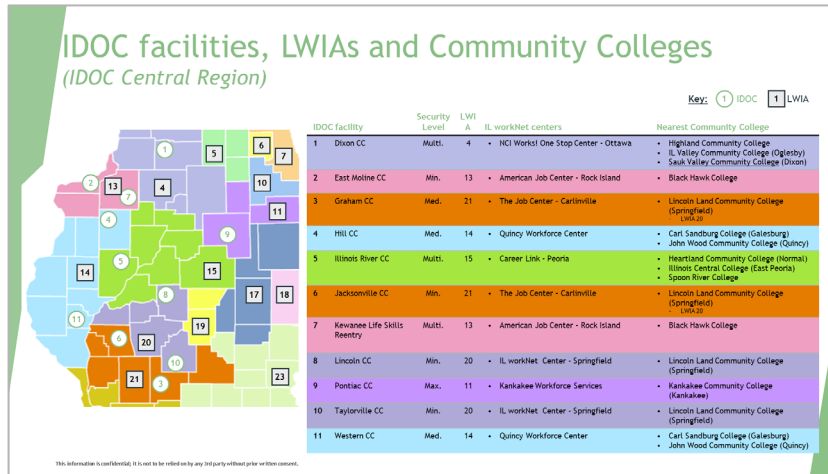
Key: (1) IDOC   [1] LWIA

IDOC Southern Region

IDOC facility		Security Level	LWIA	IL workNet centers	Nearest Community College
1	Big Muddy River CC	Med.	25	• American Job Center Southern IL	• John A. Logan College (Carterville) • Rend Lake College (Ina)
2	Centralia CC	Med.	24	• IL workNet Center – Belleville	• East St. Louis Community College Center • Southwestern Illinois College (Belleville)
3	Lawrence CC	Max.	23	• IL workNet Center – Effingham	• IL Eastern Community Colleges (Olney) • Kaskaskia College (Centralia) • Lake Land College (Mattoon)
4	Menard CC	Max.	24	• IL workNet Center – Belleville	• East St. Louis Community College Center • Southwestern Illinois College (Belleville)
5	Murphysboro Reentry Center	Min.	25	• American Job Center Southern IL	• John A. Logan College (Carterville) • Rend Lake College (Ina)
6	Pinckneyville CC	Multi.			
7	Robinson CC	Min.	23	• IL workNet Center – Effingham	• Shawnee Community College (Ullin) • Southeastern Illinois College (Harrisburg)
8	Shawnee CC	Med.	26	• IL workNet – SIC - Carmi	• John A. Logan College (Carterville) • Rend Lake College (Ina)
9	Southwestern CC	Min.	24	• IL workNet Center – Belleville	• East St. Louis Community College Center • Southwestern Illinois College (Belleville)
10	Vandalia CC	Min.	23	• IL workNet Center – Effingham	• IL Eastern Community Colleges • Kaskaskia College (Centralia) • Lake Land College (Mattoon)
11	Vienna CC	Min.	26	• IL workNet – SIC - Carmi	• Shawnee Community College (Ullin) • Southeastern Illinois College (Harrisburg)

Note: Other materials have Shawnee and Vienna CC mapped to LWIA 25 and Centralia CC mapped to LWIA 23; Maps are aligned to IDOC regions

We then mapped each IDOC facility to nearby resources, including LWIAs

Note: Maps for each region area available in the appendix

With these connections established, we then wanted to explore what exists for returning residents today

DCEO / IDES resources available within facilities

DCEO and IDES already offer a range of resources within facilities

Amount of employment and training resources varies by type of facility

- **All facilities:**
  - **Access to Illinois workNet and Illinois Career Information System**
  - **Illinois workNet digital resources (Returning Citizens Guide, digital literacy guides, career exploration)**
    > **Illinois Job Link:** white-listed website individuals can use to view potential employment opportunities
  - **Veteran in-reach:** Direct support to prepare veterans who are incarcerated for reentry
  - **Occasional workshops** on 'how to' leverage your American Job Center post-release (e.g., resources offered)
- **Examples in some facilities customized to local areas (based on LWIA):**
  - **LWIA sponsored reentry resources** in select facilities based on local needs, for example:
    > **LWIA 10 (Will County)** facilitated on-site workforce workshops at Statesville Prison Reentry Summit
    > **LWIA 25 "Pathways to integration"** program provides welding training during incarceration and opportunity to receive a recognized welding certificate
- **Reentry / ATC facilities**
  - **Application prep** (resume, interview prep)
  - **On & off-site occupational training programs** in partnership with Community Colleges and other training providers
  - **Virtual job fairs** coordinated with local employers
  - **Workshops** on job search techniques, career readiness and employability skills
  - **On-the-job training opportunities** (e.g., on-site with employers) where successful completion may result in full-time employment

- Overview of resources LWIAs provide within facilities today, including access to Illinois workNet and Illinois Career Information System

- Breakdown of what is standard across facilities vs. what is unique

DCEO / IDES resources available outside facilities

Many resources are also available after release in American Job Centers

Overview of resources offered in American Job Centers post-release

- **Illinois Career Information System** is a one-stop-shop to view potential occupations online

- **American Job Center:** center for individuals post-release to understand resources available
  - Job search assistance and online job listings
  - Career counseling and occupational trainings funds for high-growth, in-demand jobs
  - Hiring events with local employers
  - Practice interviewing and resume building support
  - Access to resources (computers, phones, free internet)
  - Referrals to community resources and other agencies
  - Additional supportive services (e.g., travel expenses and required occupational tools and equipment)

  Virtual or in-person workshops on 'how to' navigate American Job Center resources occasionally offered within facilities

- Coordination / additional partnerships with community-based organization to identify specific community employment needs / opportunities

> Many resources available post-release can be brought into facilities upon request (as capacity allows)

- Overview of resources available outside IDOC facilities within American Jobs Center resources

- Description of the type of content available on IL Career Information System

We also explored existing examples of local collaboration to bring innovative resources into IDOC

Examples of resources available in some facilities customized to local areas
(Non-exhaustive)

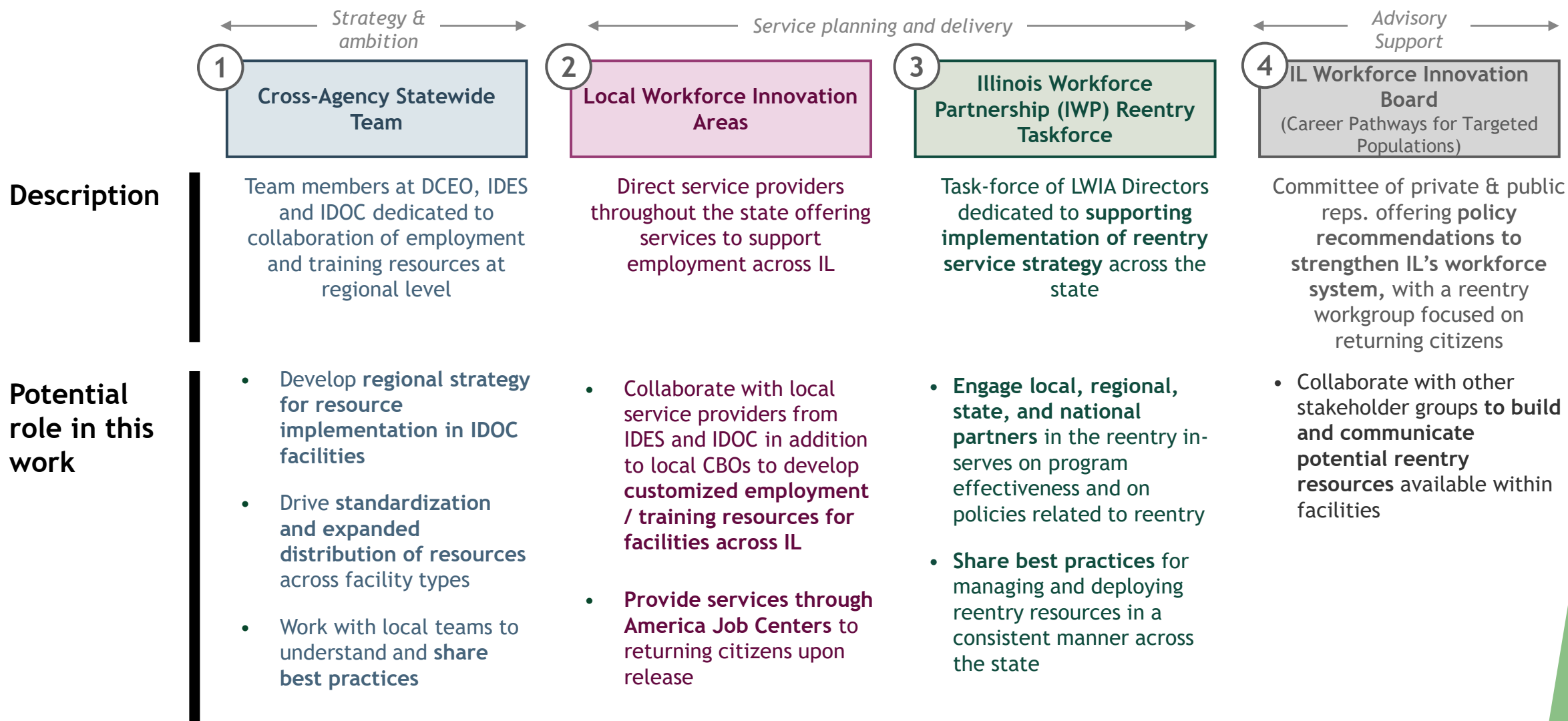| **Will County** (LWIA 10)	**Henry County** (LWIA 13)	**Jackson County** (LWIA 25)
The "Connecting Returning Citizens to the Workforce" group participated **in the Reentry Summit at Stateville Prison** and facilitated several **on-site** workforce reentry workshops	Workforce system partners and local businesses collaborate to provide pre-release Career & Training services at **Kewanee Life Skills Reentry Center**	"Pathways to Reintegration" project assists individuals in obtaining vital documents **prior to release and provides nationally recognized welding training**

Going forward, DCEO, IDOC and IDES will collaborate regularly at local and regional level to manage resources in IDOC facilities

The goal of this work is to:

1 **Improve consistency in our employment & training offerings within IDOC facilities**, such that all individuals in incarceration have access to a variety of resources that will prepare them for a successful reentry

2 **Establish a stronger, more regular collaboration structure** between the individuals providing and coordinating these services within all IDOC facilities (e.g., IDOC Reentry Counselors, LWIAs)

3 **Develop clearer processes for sharing best practices** on employment & training resources within and across LWIAs / IDOC throughout the state

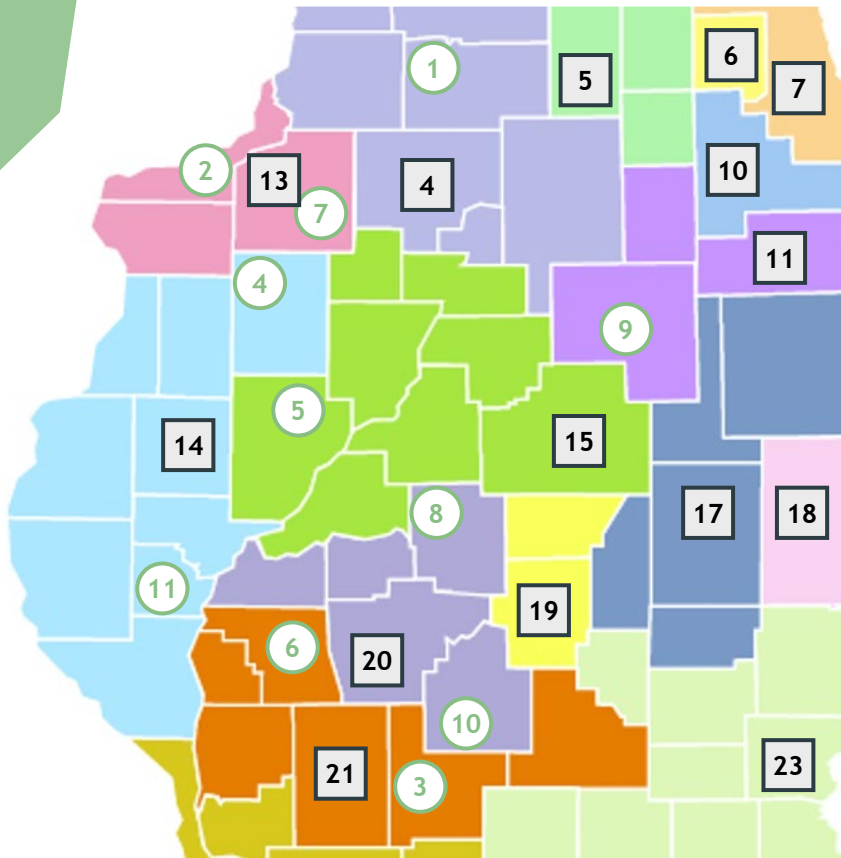# Within DCEO, there are four stakeholder groups we can engage to provide resources within IDOC facilities

	Strategy & ambition	*Service planning and delivery*		*Advisory Support*
	1 Cross-Agency Statewide Team	**2** Local Workforce Innovation Areas	**3** Illinois Workforce Partnership (IWP) Reentry Taskforce	**4** IL Workforce Innovation Board (Career Pathways for Targeted Populations)
Description	Team members at DCEO, IDES and IDOC dedicated to collaboration of employment and training resources at regional level	Direct service providers throughout the state offering services to support employment across IL	Task-force of LWIA Directors dedicated to **supporting implementation of reentry service strategy** across the state	Committee of private & public reps. offering **policy recommendations to strengthen IL's workforce system,** with a reentry workgroup focused on returning citizens
Potential role in this work	• Develop **regional strategy for resource implementation in IDOC facilities** • Drive **standardization and expanded distribution of resources** across facility types • Work with local teams to understand and **share best practices**	• Collaborate with local service providers from IDES and IDOC in addition to local CBOs to develop **customized employment / training resources for facilities across IL** • **Provide services through America Job Centers** to returning citizens upon release	• **Engage local, regional, state, and national partners** in the reentry in-serves on program effectiveness and on policies related to reentry • **Share best practices** for managing and deploying reentry resources in a consistent manner across the state	• Collaborate with other stakeholder groups **to build and communicate potential reentry resources** available within facilities

Appendix

IDOC facilities, LWIAs and Community Colleges
(IDOC Central Region)

Key: ① IDOC   1 LWIA

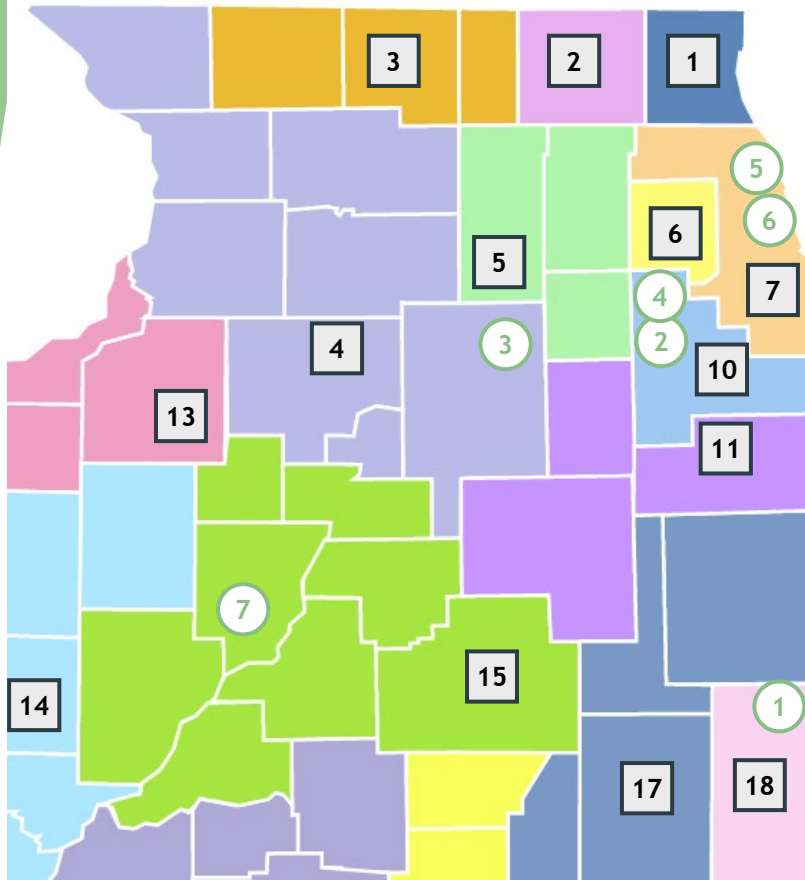|	IDOC facility	Security Level	LWIA	IL workNet centers	Nearest Community College
1	Dixon CC	Multi.	4	• NCI Works! One Stop Center - Ottawa	• Highland Community College • IL Valley Community College (Oglesby) • Sauk Valley Community College (Dixon)
2	East Moline CC	Min.	13	• American Job Center - Rock Island	• Black Hawk College
3	Graham CC	Med.	21	• The Job Center – Carlinville	• Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield) – LWIA 20
4	Hill CC	Med.	14	• Quincy Workforce Center	• Carl Sandburg College (Galesburg) • John Wood Community College (Quincy)
5	Illinois River CC	Multi.	15	• Career Link - Peoria	• Heartland Community College (Normal) • Illinois Central College (East Peoria) • Spoon River College
6	Jacksonville CC	Min.	21	• The Job Center – Carlinville	• Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield) – LWIA 20
7	Kewanee Life Skills Reentry	Multi.	13	• American Job Center - Rock Island	• Black Hawk College
8	Lincoln CC	Min.	20	• IL workNet Center – Springfield	• Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield)
9	Pontiac CC	Max.	11	• Livingston Workforce Service	• Heartland Community College (Pontiac/Livingston Area Career Center)
10	Taylorville CC	Min.	20	• IL workNet Center – Springfield	• Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield)
11	Western CC	Med.	14	• Quincy Workforce Center	• Carl Sandburg College (Galesburg) • John Wood Community College (Quincy)

Note: Maps are aligned with IDOC Regions

IDOC facilities, LWIAs and Community Colleges
(IDOC Northern Region)

Key: (1) IDOC [1] LWIA

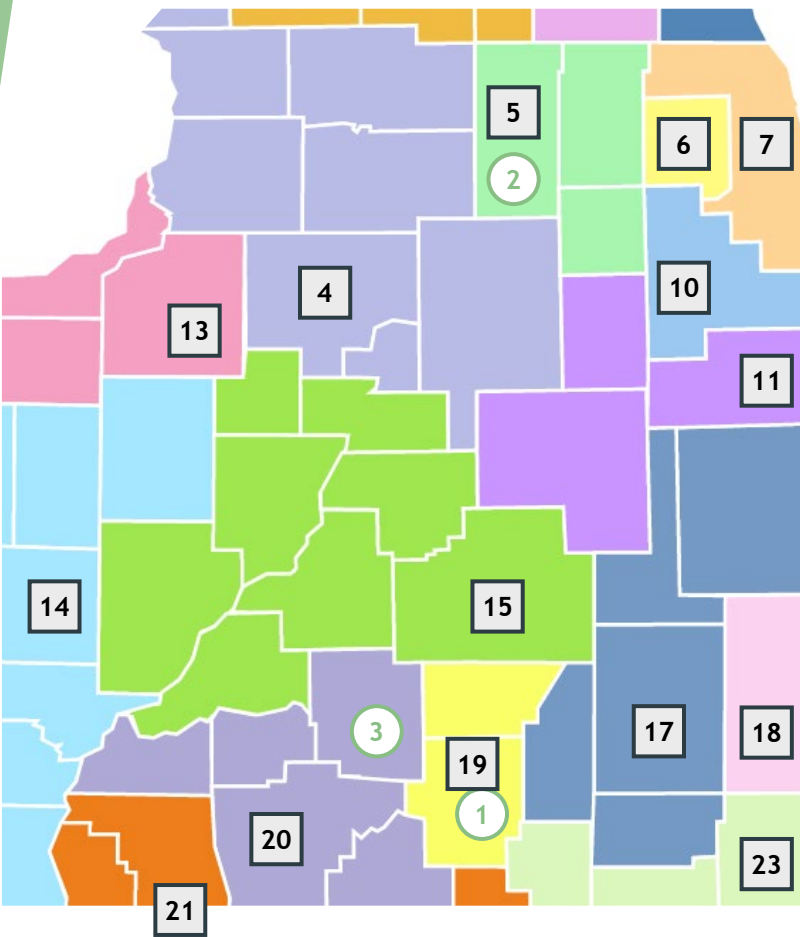|	IDOC facility	Security Level	LWIA	IL workNet centers	Nearest Community College
1	Danville CC	Med.	18	• Vermilion County American Job Center	• Danville Area Community College
2	Joliet Treatment Center	Multi.	10	• Workforce Center of Will County	• Joliet Junior College (Joliet)
3	Sheridan CC	Med.	4	• NCI Works! One Stop Center - Ottawa	• Highland Community College • IL Valley Community College (Oglesby) • Sauk Valley Community College (Dixon)
4	Statesville NRC	Multi.	10	• Workforce Center of Will County	• Joliet Junior College (Joliet)
5	Crossroads ATC	ATC	7	• Near West American Job Center • North Suburban Cook County American Job Center • South Suburban American Job Center • Mid-South American Job Center	• City Colleges of Chicago • Harper College (Palatine) • Moraine Valley Community College (Palos Hills) • Morton College (Cicero) • Oakton Community College (Des Plaines) • Prairie State College (Chicago Heights) • South Suburban College (South Holland) • Triton College (River Grove)
6	North Lawndale ATC				
7	Peoria ATC	ATC	15	• Career Link - Peoria	• Heartland Community College (Normal) • Illinois Central College (East Peoria) • Spoon River College (Canton)

Note: Maps are aligned with IDOC Regions

This information is confidential; it is not to be relied on by any 3rd party without prior written consent.

IDOC facilities, LWIAs and Community Colleges
(IDOC Women & Family facilities)

Key: (1) IDOC   [1] LWIA

IDOC facility		Security Level	LWIA	IL workNet centers	Nearest Community College
1	Decatur CC	Min.	19	• Illinois workNet Center - Decatur	• Richland Community College (Decatur)
2	Fox Valley ATC	ATC	5	• workNet Batavia	• Waubonsee Community College (Sugar Grove) • Elgin Community College (Elgin) • Kishwaukee College (Malta)
3	Logan CC	Multi.	20	• IL workNet Center – Springfield	• Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield)

Note: Maps are aligned with IDOC Regions

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