

envoy



Morton Grove Fair Chance Hiring Initiative

October 30, 2023

OUR TEAM & SAMPLE CLIENTS



Envoy is a social impact consulting firm with a practice area specializing in Fair Chance employment. We collaborate with companies and associations to open up new talent pipelines for recruitment and expand opportunity for people with past convictions.

We work directly with employers to implement Fair Chance programs. Together, we conduct a policy review to remove barriers for justice impacted talent and then work with high-quality community partners to create a Fair Chance pilot resulting in strong referrals and supports to create a sustainable long-term partnership.



JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.



WHAT IS FAIR CHANCE HIRING?

- Fair Chance hiring is intentionally and proactively expanding opportunities to employment and greater upward mobility for people with prior convictions.
- Fair Chance employers work with community partners that refer, train, and support candidates with past convictions to maximize the likelihood of long-term success with an employee.
- Candidates with past convictions will experience the same application and interview process as candidates without conviction histories.

WHY IS XYLEM INVESTING IN FAIR CHANCE EMPLOYMENT?

Xylem is committed to creating a work environment that supports candidates and employees with a broad range of backgrounds and experiences.

Untapped Talent

Xylem believes expanding opportunity to the 70M+ people with a past arrest or conviction record will introduce skilled, motivated, and diverse candidates who frequently go overlooked.

New Partnerships

By collaborating with high-quality community partners, candidates are prepared, trained, and supported as they join the Xylem team.

Community Impact

Employment dramatically increases the likelihood of successful reentry, and in turn helps improve the quality of life in all our communities.

IMPACTING YOUR COMMUNITY

- 1 in 2 Americans have a family member who has experienced incarceration ([FWD.us](https://www.fwd.us/))
- Employment is the greatest predictor of successful prison reentry ([Prison Policy Initiative](#))
- Three million of Illinois' 12.7 million residents have conviction or arrest records ([Heartland Alliance](#))
- The unemployment rate among formerly incarcerated Americans is 27%, compared to Cook County's overall unemployment rate of 3.9% ([BLS](#))
- Over 45,000 known collateral consequences exist for those impacted by the justice system ([NICCC.org](https://www.niccc.org/))

IMPACTING BUSINESS OUTCOMES

- **Increasing Retention:** Employees with past convictions stay longer and advance faster at their firms than their peers. ([Northwestern](#) & [Harvard/UMass](#))
- **Broadening the Talent Pool:** Fair Chance hiring is a competitive talent acquisition strategy that increases access to qualified job seekers. Employees with past convictions are terminated for cause at the same rate as those without. ([Northwestern](#) & [Harvard/UMass](#))
- **Listen to the Experts:** 85% of HR professionals and managers expressed willingness and openness to working with individuals with criminal records. ([SHRM](#))

KEY ELEMENTS OF FAIR CHANCE PILOT IMPLEMENTATION

Employers building Fair Chance initiatives should develop both internal and external strategies to ensure that hiring practices, partnerships, and culture all align to prepare for implementation and maximize the chances of success.

Rationale & Roadmap

- Build the internal case and roadmap for the Fair Chance initiative, with the goal of facilitating discussion and buy-in from leadership and developing a clear path forward to launch a pilot

Policies & Practices

- Review HR policies and practices to maximize access and opportunity for candidates with past convictions and develop an individual assessment process to assess qualifications and readiness of candidates whose convictions may be flagged for potential disqualification

Pilot(s) & Community Partnerships

- Create proactive hiring partnerships with proven reentry, workforce, and training partners in priority pilot market(s), and create a model for employee readiness, candidate referrals, supports, and quality assurance as part of a comprehensive collaboration

Measurement, Adaptation & Growth

- Create metrics and data collection strategies to assess internal and external impact and explore opportunities for continuous improvement and replication to new sites



THE VALUE OF A COMMUNITY PARTNER

- Reliably identify and refer qualified job seekers with past convictions
- Provide training, soft skill development, and reentry support
- Work closely with employers to refer candidates aligned to job needs
- Provide wrap-around support to job applicants and employees throughout the hiring and onboarding process
- Remain involved with the employer post-hire to support if any challenges arise



MISSION

Build an inclusive economy by developing employment pathways to advance transformative individual and community success.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Founded in 1991
- Placed 13,398 people in jobs since 1991
- Average participant age is 39
- 55% of participants are justice-impacted.
- Annual Budget: \$12.6M
- Website: caracollective.org

CARA COLLECTIVE: THE PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

All Cara graduates complete a three-week program Monday through Thursday 9:00-5:00pm comprised of workshops focusing on social emotional skills and job readiness.



Transitional Employment

At the end of Week 2, participants are eligible to acquire on-the-job skills through compensated transitional employment with one of Cara's two social enterprises, CleanSlate or CaraConnects

Placement

After graduation from the program, participants transition from working with training and engagement teams to coaching and employment services teams. Placement typically takes place 45-60 days after Send Out Eligibility is earned.

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Admissions

Cara collects basic demographic information, conducts background check, and drug screen.

One-on-One Coaching

Participants work closely with their designated job coach from the beginning of the program to after placement.

Send Out Eligibility

At the end of week 3, participants are eligible to be assessed for Send Out Eligibility by the 4+ departments across Cara that have worked with them.

Wraparound Support Provided by Supportive Services Team

CARA COLLECTIVE: THE EMPLOYER EXPERIENCE

Strong Fair Chance community partners have clearly defined processes for engaging employers

Communication

- Cara worked directly with Xylem to learn about roles, company KPIs, and pain points to understand fit beyond job description
- Cadence of check-ins is flexible based on hiring needs and Xylem's preferences
- All communication can happen via Xylem's preferred method – email, website, platform etc.

Referral Process

- Xylem will alert Cara when there is a “job order” and they will make referrals from eligible pool of candidates including facilitating resume sharing, application submissions, and scheduling interviews
- Cara will also include short excerpts on why each candidate was referred for the specific opportunity

POST-HIRE EMPLOYER SUPPORT

Cara Collective encourages direct communication between Xylem managers and Cara job coaches about employee performance, advancement and retention.

Communication

Cara welcomes feedback and continued scrutiny of their own process and encourage high-level feedback on how the partnership is going, what is working, and what needs improvement.

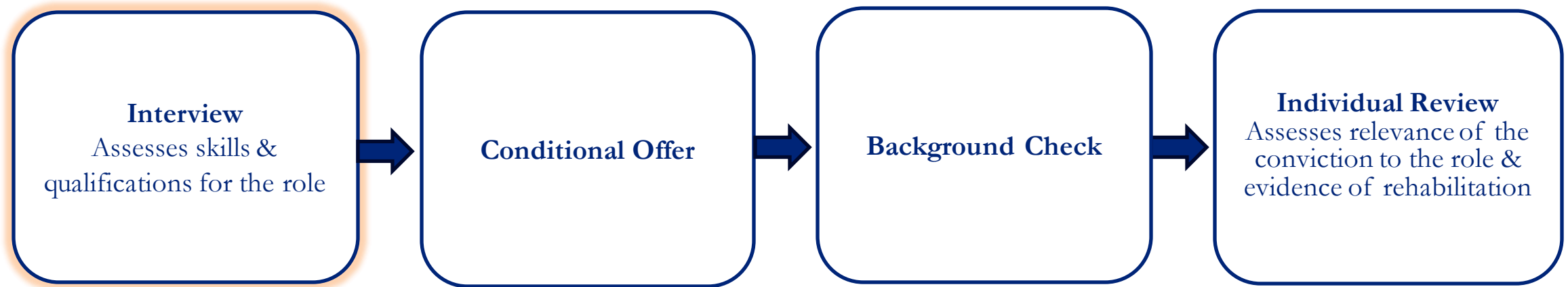
Retention

Each placed candidate continues with a Cara job coach for one year with a minimum of 2 check-ins per month to provide continued support and intervention, as needed.

Advancement

Cara assists in data collection and tracks conversion data for referrals to placement as well as wage progression and advancement.

FAIR CHANCE INTERVIEWING: PROCESS BEST PRACTICE



FAIR CHANCE INTERVIEWING: BEST PRACTICES

Interviewing tips to help provide candidates the best opportunity to present their strengths

Focus on Skills & Assets

- Review in advance the role's skills and competencies
- Prepare consistent questions that assess relevant qualifications
- Avoid questions about gaps in work history or past arrest or conviction history

Explain the Process

Let all candidates know that:

- The interview is to understand their qualifications for the role
- Successful candidates will receive conditional offers and be screened for recent, job-relevant convictions, which are considered case-by-case

Prepare for Candidate Disclosure

If a candidate chooses to mention their conviction:

- Remind them the interview is about their qualifications; convictions are address after the conditional offer
- Encourage that if skills and qualifications were earned during incarceration, they are welcome to share

MORTON GROVE ACTIVITY TIMELINE

October

Introductions

- Mutual site visits between Cara Collective and Xylem completed
- Fair Chance hiring workshop

November - February

Relationship Building & Referrals

- First round of referrals
- Bilateral feedback between Cara and Xylem
- 30-60 day learnings

Post-February

Referrals & Reflection

- Continued partnership and communication with Cara
- Referrals and retention support
- Data collection