



2026 Employment Matching Award Application

The Center for Improving Youth Justice (CIYJ) created the Employment Matching Award in 2017 to support young people working while incarcerated and encourage agencies to develop and promote employment opportunities for the young people in their care.

To be eligible for the award, a young person must:

- Be in the care of a facility or under supervision of an agency that is part of the CIYJ community at the time the application is submitted,
- Be employed between July 1 - Sept. 1, 2026, and
- Submit a completed application to CIYJ by July 31, 2026.

Winners will be announced in August. Earnings will be matched only for the time the applicant is the agency's responsibility from July 1 - Sept. 1, 2026. Award checks will be mailed in the care of the designated facility staff in September and must be deposited or cashed by June 30, 2027. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact our Help Desk.

CIYJ shares the stories in these applications anonymously, without any names, to raise awareness about the need for this kind of support and raise money for future Employment Matching Awards. You are helping us achieve our mission by completing the application – ***thank you and good luck!***

Application Checklist

Please upload all materials online <https://improvingyouthjustice.org/employment-matching-upload/>:

- ☐ **Application Form (or other document with all requested Contact and Employment Information)**
- ☐ **Applicant's Essay (written on the essay form provided, or read and recorded)**
- ☐ **Staff Recommendation (a typed letter or written on the recommendation form)**
- ☐ **Proof of Employment (pay stub or other documentation from employer, i.e., a letter)**

Applicant Information

Name:

E-mail Address, if available:

If selected as a recipient, do we have permission to announce you by your first name only?

Staff Contact Name:

Staff E-mail Address:

Staff Telephone:

Agency and Facility/Program Name:

Facility/Program Address:

Applicant's Expected Release Date:

Employer/Supervisor Name:

Employer/Supervisor E-mail Address:

Employer/Supervisor Telephone:

Employment Information

Employer (Full name of business or organization):

Job Title:

Expected Hours Per Week:

Hourly Wage:

Are there any deductions made directly from these wages for restitution, court fees or other expenses?

Applicant's Essays

Please be sure to answer all three questions below thoughtfully and thoroughly. (A template document is available for download to write out the responses on a larger space.)

1. What kind of work do you want to do as your career and why?

What are three things you need to do to make that happen?

1-

2-

3-

2. What are three things you are learning in your current job that will prepare you for your career?

1-

2-

3-

What do you think is the most important skill you will bring to your work?

3. How will this Employment Matching Award impact your personal and professional development over the next year and in the future?



Staff Recommendation

Please tell us about the applicant and their job. How was the employment arranged? Are there special qualities about the applicant that make you recommend them? How do you think the Employment Matching Award will help them find a meaningful, gainful career?

(No more than 250 words, please.) (A template is available for download to write out the responses on a larger space.)

Proof of Employment

Please attach proof of the applicant's employment. It can be a pay stub or other documentation from the employer confirming the applicant is hired and is working.

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