State of Illinois
JB Pritzker, Governor

Department of Employment Security

Winning Job Opportunities

A Guide for Returning Citizens in Illinois – 2019

IDES
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

Introduction

The Illinois Department of Employment Security has helped hundreds of returning citizens to find jobs, and we want to help you. Having a prison record may make it harder for you to get certain jobs, but there are many employers looking for workers with a good attitude and a willingness to work hard.

This publication describes some of the best jobs in Illinois for each education level. The jobs listed here provide both the most openings each year and the most opportunities for the returning citizen. Take a look at the list for your education level to see which jobs seem best for you. Then, take a look at the jobs at higher education levels to plan your future. The more education and training you obtain, the more job opportunities you will have and the more money you will be able to earn.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security offers specialized services to job seekers and employers through its Re-entry Employment Service Program (RESP). RESP prepares returning citizens for work, develops jobs for them, and helps them transition into their new jobs.

Re-entry Liaisons are available at IDES offices throughout Illinois to help match employers with qualified returning citizen job seekers.

To find the RESP Liaison nearest you, please call 312-793-1597 or look online at http://www.ides.illinois.gov/RESP.

For more information about careers, visit the Illinois Career Information System (CIS) website at http://www.ides.illinois.gov/careerinfo.

CIS provides a wealth of resources to help you plan your career. Features include comprehensive information on occupations, education, and region-specific data, including wage information, annual job openings, and projected employment. For any questions, please call our toll-free number at: 877-566-6230 or e-mail us at des.cis@illinois.gov.

Best wishes in your job search!

Helpful Links

Illinois Career Information System
http://www.ides.illinois.gov/careerinfo

IL Dept. of Employment Security – Re-entry Employment Service Program
http://www.ides.illinois.gov/RESP

Employer Tax Credits
http://www.ides.illinois.gov/TaxCredits

IL Dept. of Financial and Professional Regulation
www.idfpr.com

Adult Basic Education Programs
www.ilcco.net/AdultEd/index1.cfm

Illinois Legal Aid Online
www.illinoislegalaid.org

Illinois Occupations with the Most Openings Each Year

The table lists those occupations which are most accessible to the returning citizen and are expected to provide the most annual job openings each year. Short-term on-the-job training is where the average worker can achieve the necessary skill levels in just a few days, weeks, or months through observing experienced workers and asking questions.

Short-Term On-the-Job Training

Occupational Title	Annual Openings	Hourly Wages Entry	Hourly Wages Experienced	Skills	Description
Laborers & Freight & Stock Movers, Hand	22,718	$10.49	$16.49	Coordination, Critical Thinking, Operation & Control	Manually move freight, stock, or other materials or perform other unskilled general labor.
General Office Clerks	16,119	$11.23	$21.23	Active Listening, Reading Comprehension, Speaking	Perform duties too varied and diverse to be classified in any specific office clerical occupation, requiring limited knowledge of office management systems and procedures.
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	14,269	$10.16	$16.20	Speaking, Active Listening, Social Orientation	Receive, store, and issue sales floor merchandise, materials, equipment, and other items from stockroom, warehouse, or storage yard to fill shelves, racks, tables, or customers' orders.
Janitors & Cleaners, ex. Maids/Housekeepers	12,259	$10.31	$16.77	Active Listening, Coordination, Critical Thinking	Keep buildings in clean and orderly condition. Perform heavy cleaning duties, such as cleaning floors, shampooing rugs, washing walls and glass, and removing rubbish.
Food Preparation Workers	6,864	$9.85	$13.24	Active Listening, Monitoring, Speaking	Perform a variety of food preparation duties other than cooking, such as preparing cold foods and shellfish, slicing meat, and brewing coffee or tea.
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	6,219	$10.08	$14.43	Service Orientation, Coordination, Active Listening	Perform any combination of light cleaning duties to maintain private households or commercial establishments, such as hotels, restaurants, and hospitals, in an orderly manner.
Receptionists & Information Clerks	5,444	$10.34	$16.61	Active Listening, Speaking, Service Orientation	Answer inquiries and obtain information for general public, customers, visitors, and other interested parties.
Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	5,362	$10.87	$17.45	Operation & Control, Critical Thinking, Speaking	Landscape or maintain grounds of property using hand or power tools or equipment.
Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	3,388	$12.83	$19.72	Operation & Control, Operation Monitoring, Coordination	Operate industrial trucks or tractors equipped to move materials around a warehouse, storage yard, factory, construction site, or similar location.

For a complete listing of occupations, wages and skills information, visit Labor Market Information at http://www.ides.illinois.gov/LMI/Pages/default.aspx. For the Career Information System visit http://www.ides.illinois.gov/careerinfo. Data source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, Economic Information and Analysis Division, 2016-2026 Long-Term Projections; 2018 Wage data.

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Short-Term On-the-Job Training (continued)

Occupational Title	Annual Openings	Hourly Wages Entry	Hourly Wages Experienced	Skills	Description
Shipping, Receiving, & Traffic Clerks	3,233	$12.48	$19.69	Speaking, Active Listening, Critical Thinking	Verify and keep records on incoming and outgoing shipments. Prepare items for shipment.
Cooks, Fast Food	2,634	$8.89	$11.20	Active Listening, Service Orientation, Speaking	Prepare and cook food in a fast food restaurant with a limited menu.
Packaging & Filling Machine Operators	2,570	$11.49	$18.71	Monitoring, Operation Monitoring, Active Listening	Keep buildings in clean and orderly condition. Perform heavy cleaning duties, such as cleaning floors, shampooing rugs, washing walls and glass, and removing rubbish.
Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	1,841	$9.30	$13.05	Active Listening, Monitoring, Service Orientation	Feed, water, groom, bathe, exercise, or otherwise care for pets and other nonfarm animals, such as dogs, cats, ornamental fish or birds, zoo animals, and mice.
Production, Planning, & Expediting Clerks	1,448	$15.50	$27.78	Active Listening, Reading Comprehension, Speaking	Coordinate and expedite the flow of work and materials within or between departments of an establishment according to production schedule.
Farmworkers/Laborers, Crop/Nursery/ Greenhouse	1,192	$10.10	$16.59	Coordination, Critical Thinking, Monitoring	Manually plant, cultivate, and harvest vegetables, fruits, nuts, horticultural specialties, and field crops. May repair fences and farm buildings, or participate in irrigation activities.

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Moderate-Term On-the-Job Training

Occupational Title	Annual Openings	Hourly Wages Entry	Hourly Wages Experienced	Skills	Description
Customer Service Representatives	15,626	$11.96	$21.31	Active Listening, Speaking, Service Orientation	Interact with customers to provide information in response to inquiries about products and services and to handle and resolve complaints.
Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor Trailer	8,184	$14.88	$27.64	Operation & Control, Operation Monitoring , Time Management	Drive a tractor-trailer combination or a truck with a capacity of at least 26,000 GVW, to transport and deliver goods, livestock, or materials in liquid, loose, or packaged form.
Bookkeeping, Accounting,& Auditing Clerks	6,173	$13.50	$23.92	Active Listening, Reading Comprehension, Speaking	Compute, classify, and record numerical data to keep financial records complete.
Construction Laborers	4,261	$14.31	$36.08	Active Listening, Coordination, Operation Monitoring	Perform tasks involving physical labor at building, highway, and heavy construction projects, tunnel & shaft excavations, & demolition sites. May operate hand & power tools of all types.
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, & Weighers	2,560	$12.28	$23.87	Quality Control Analysis, Active Listening, Critical Thinking	Inspect, test, sort, sample, or weigh materials or processed, machined, fabricated, or assembled parts or products for defects, wear, and deviations from specifications.
Social & Human Service Assistants	1,649	$10.83	$18.32	Active Listening, Service Orientation, Social Perceptiveness	Assist professionals from a wide variety of fields, such as psychology, rehabilitation, or social work, to provide client services, as well as support for families.
Printing Machine Operators	1,005	$12.69	$25.42	Quality Control Analysis, Operation Monitoring, Active Listening	Set up or operate various types of printing machines, presses, or screen printers to produce print on paper or other materials.
Roofers	646	$15.69	$36.77	Coordination, Active Listening, Critical Thinking	Cover roofs of structures with shingles, slate, wood, and related materials. May spray roofs, sidings, and walls with material to bind, seal, insulate, or soundproof sections of structures.
Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	238	$15.51	$33.76	Monitoring, Critical Thinking, Operation & Control	Identify, transport, or dispose of hazardous materials, including asbestos, lead-based paint, waste oil, fuel, transmission fluid, radioactive materials, contaminated soil, etc.

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Long-Term On-the-Job Training

Occupational Title	Annual Openings	Hourly Wages Entry	Hourly Wages Experienced	Skills	Description
Cooks, Restaurant	7,461	$10.26	$14.86	Coordination, Monitoring, Active Listening	Prepare, season, and cook soups, meats, vegetables, desserts, or other foodstuffs in restaurants.
General Maintenance & Repair Workers	6,108	$12.52	$25.77	Equipment Maintenance, Repairing, Troubleshooting	Perform work involving the skills of two or more maintenance or craft occupations to keep machines, mechanical equipment, or the structure of an establishment in repair.
Supervisors of Food Preparation Workers	5,316	$10.61	$18.12	Speaking, Active Listening, Coordination	Supervise workers engaged in preparing and serving food.
Machinists	3,625	$12.02	$23.81	Operation Monitoring, Critical Thinking, Operation & Control	Set up and operate a variety of machine tools to produce precision parts and instruments.
Carpenters	3,250	$15.73	$39.93	Active Listening, Monitoring, Speaking	Construct, erect, install, or repair structures and fixtures made of wood, such as concrete forms; building frameworks, hardwood floors, window and door frames.
Electricians	2,580	$22.80	$43.28	Troubleshooting, Repairing, Active Listening	Install, maintain, and repair electrical wiring, equipment, and fixtures.
Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters	2,158	$22.13	$46.19	Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Judgement/ Decision Making	Assemble, install, alter, and repair pipelines or pipe systems that carry water, steam, air, or other liquids or gases.
Bakers	1,189	$10.94	$16.06	Monitoring, Active Learning, Active Listening	Mix and bake ingredients according to recipes to produce breads, rolls, cookies, cakes, pies, pastries, or other baked goods.
Automotive Body & Related Repairers	718	$14.00	$26.67	Repairing, Active Listening, Complex Problem Solving	Repair and refinish automotive vehicle bodies and straighten vehicle frames.

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1-2 Years of Vocational Training or College (Associate's Degree)

Occupational Title	Annual Openings	Hourly Wages Entry	Hourly Wages Experienced	Skills	Description
Hairdressers, Stylists, & Cosmetologists*	3,021	$8.95	$17.08	Active Listening, Speaking, Service Orientation	Provide beauty services, such as shampooing, cutting, coloring, and styling hair, and massaging and treating scalp.
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	3,005	$12.25	$27.27	Equipment Maintenance, Repairing, Troubleshooting	Diagnose, adjust, repair, or overhaul automotive vehicles.
Computer User Support Specialists	2,218	$15.21	$30.63	Active Listening, Speaking, Reading Comprehension	Provide technical assistance to computer system users.
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	1,537	$15.03	$23.46	Critical Thinking, Operation & Control, Reading Comprehension	Use hand-welding, flame-cutting, hand soldering, or brazing equipment to weld or join metal components or to fill holes, indentations, or seams of fabricated metal products.
Bus/Truck Mechanics & Diesel Eng. Specialists	960	$16.64	$30.11	Repairing, Troubleshooting, Operation & Control	Diagnose, adjust, repair or overhaul trucks, buses, and all types of diesel engines. Include mechanics working primarily with automobile diesel engines.
Medical Records & Health Info Technicians	530	$14.26	$25.90	Reading Comprehension, Active Listening, Critical Thinking	Compile, and maintain medical records of hospital and clinic patients in a manner consistent with medical, administrative, ethical, and legal requirements of the health care system.
Farm Equipment Mechanics	172	$14.46	$25.42	Equipment Maintenance, Repairing, Troubleshooting	Diagnose, adjust, repair, or overhaul farm machinery and vehicles, such as tractors, harvesters, dairy equipment, and irrigation systems.
Prepress Technicians & Workers	154	$14.62	$27.38	Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Monitoring	Set up and prepare material for printing presses. Include prepress functions, such as typesetting, layout, paste-up, camera operating, scanning, film stripping, and photoengraving.

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**Requires licensing by the State of Illinois. A Certificate of Relief from disabilities may remove barriers to employment for the returning citizen.*