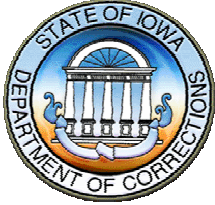


Lettie Prell  
Director of Research

Curt Smith  
Executive Assistant to the Director



## Data Download



### More Offender Reentry and Employment Issues

The previous *Data Download* reported that a recent Iowa Workforce Development study found that offenders who obtained a high school diploma or GED (with the majority achieving the latter) had higher employment rates than those who did not. In addition, offenders with a high school diploma or GED consistently earned higher wages than those who did not.

The IWD study also found that the accommodation and food service industries provide among the lowest pay, yet employ the highest average number of female offenders (comprising 50.7% to 64.6% of those employed, depending on the quarter), and ranked second in employment of male offenders (comprising 17.8% to 22.5% of those employed, depending on the quarter). Such findings are of particular significance in that a 1999 study by Christopher Uggen found a small but consistent relationship between job quality (e.g. job satisfaction, net pay) and recidivism.

Reentry efforts aimed at improving the quality of post-release employment for all offenders appears to hold promise for further reducing recidivism; manufacturing jobs, for example, were among the highest paying jobs held by both male and female offenders.

Findings by race and ethnicity were one last topic in the IWD study. Although each race and ethnicity showed at least a slightly higher average employment rate per quarter after the release period than before, non-Hispanic Blacks and American Indians/Alaska Natives had the lowest employment rates and the lowest wages compared to other groups.

These findings with regard to race and ethnicity suggest that efforts to boost employment for blacks and American Indians/Alaska natives would target the groups most in need of assistance.

Current economic challenges make this a critical time to ensure that funding for prison education and job training continue to be priorities.

The full report, *Offender Re-entry and Employment in Iowa*, can be obtained from Iowa Workforce Development.