

Employment Outcomes for Youth Released From Juvenile Rehabilitation

Employment is an important outcome for youth leaving residential facilities in Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR). The Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) continues to look for ways to support improved employment opportunities in line with the Governor’s Executive Order 16-05. This brief provides a baseline of employment outcomes for youth released from fiscal year (FY) 2014 through fiscal year 2018. Only officially reported income to Washington State’s Employment Security Department was used to calculate this outcome.

Table 1 shows the percent of youth who had any employment by age at release and fiscal year of release. Any employment was determined if the youth had at least one hour of reported employment in the year (hour quarters) after the quarter they were released from a residential facility. Special rules apply in order for youth under 18 to gain employment. Also, youth who are under the age of 18 have a higher likelihood of being in school full-time. For these reasons, the remainder of the analysis in this report will examine only those who were 18 or older when they were released from residential care. Table 1 shows that with few exceptions, as youth get older, their likelihood of having any employment in the year after release increases.

Table 1: Percent of youth who had any employment in the year post-release by age of release.

	Release Fiscal Year				
	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
14 or younger	1.9%	3.8%	4.6%	0.0%	0.0%
15	4.1%	15.4%	15.5%	14.8%	23.6%
16	18.4%	18.5%	22.9%	30.4%	27.1%
17	39.7%	35.3%	45.1%	42.5%	45.1%
18	41.2%	45.7%	55.5%	56.2%	60.7%
19	67.7%	51.4%	70.4%	53.1%	54.6%
20 or older	76.5%	48.3%	81.8%	52.0%	60.7%
Total released	558	584	523	552	465

Table 2 shows how many quarters youth worked in the year after their release by fiscal year. In FY14, 49.5% of youth 18 and over, obtained some official employment in the year after their release. 18.1% worked one quarter, 13.7% worked two quarters, 8.2% worked three quarters and only 9.2% of youth released worked all four quarters in the year after their release. Over the years, the pattern shows that if youth obtained any employment, they were most likely to work one or two quarters out of the year. Table 2 also shows the percent of youth over 18 at release who obtained any employment in the year after their release. In FY14, 49.5% had any employment, compared to 47.2% in FY15, 61% in FY16, 55.1%

in FY17 and 59.6% in FY18. Based on these years, it appears that employment rates increased in FY16 and have remained higher than they were in FY14 and FY15.

Table 2: Number of quarters working in the year after release for youth released from JR who were over 18 at release.					
	Release Fiscal Year				
	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Did not work in year after release	50.6%	52.8%	39.0%	44.9%	40.5%
Worked one quarter	18.1%	10.3%	15.3%	14.6%	16.9%
Worked two quarters	13.7%	13.3%	18.6%	14.6%	19.1%
Worked three quarters	8.2%	8.7%	12.4%	12.9%	9.0%
Worked four quarters	9.3%	14.9%	14.7%	12.9%	14.6%
Any work in the year post-release	49.5%	47.2%	61.0%	55.1%	59.6%
Total releases over 18 years old	182	195	177	178	178

Table 3 shows when youth started work in the year after release. If youth get employment, they are most likely to start work in the first quarter after release. Of those released in FY18 who were at least 18 years old, 59.6% of individuals obtained employment in the year after their release. About 40% of youth started working in the first quarter after their release, 12.4% started working in the second quarter, 5.1% started work in the third quarter, and 2.3% started work in the fourth quarter after their release. As time goes on, youth become less and less likely to start employment, which highlights the importance of the transition from JR to the community.

Table 3: Quarter youth started working year after release for youth released from JR who were over 18 at release.					
	Release Fiscal Year				
	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Did not work in year after release	50.6%	52.8%	39.0%	44.9%	40.5%
Started in first quarter	25.8%	31.3%	39.0%	32.0%	39.9%
Started in second quarter	8.2%	7.7%	11.3%	11.2%	12.4%
Started in third quarter	8.2%	4.6%	7.9%	7.9%	5.1%
Started in fourth quarter	7.1%	3.6%	2.8%	3.9%	2.3%
Total releases over 18 years old	182	195	177	178	178

Table 4 shows the rates of employment by release year and race and ethnicity. We did not calculate rates based on fewer than 10 individuals. Employment rates varied significantly by race and ethnicity in FY14, FY15, FY16 and overall during the five-year period included in the study. Across the five years, Asian and Hispanic youth had the highest rate of employment, while Native American youth had the lowest rate of official employment.

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Table 4: Percent of youth with any employment in the year post-release by race and ethnicity. Only youth 18 or older at release.

	Release Fiscal Year						n
	FY2014*	FY2015*	FY2016*	FY2017	FY2018	FY14 to FY18**	
African American	40.7%	22.6%	59.0%	62.5%	58.3%	51.3%	197
Asian	LT	LT	LT	LT	LT	71.4%	14
Hispanic	82.6%	60.6%	75.8%	60.0%	60.9%	67.4%	147
Multiracial	42.4%	65.4%	53.6%	67.9%	58.3%	56.8%	139
Native American	LT	27.3%	LT	LT	LT	27.0%	37
White	48.3%	48.3%	60.3%	46.9%	60.3%	52.1%	359
Other	LT	LT	LT	LT	LT	47.1%	17
Total released	182	195	177	178	178		910
<i>LT if less than 10 youth</i>							
**p<.01; *p<.05							

Table 5 shows the rates of any employment for those released from JR who were 18 or older. Males gained employment at a rate consistently higher than females, however, because of the low numbers of females released, these differences were not statistically significant.

Table 5: Percent of youth with any employment in the year post-release by gender. Only youth 18 or older at release.

	Release Fiscal Year						n
	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY14 to FY18	
Male	50.0%	48.1%	62.6%	55.4%	58.7%	54.8%	845
Female	42.9%	35.7%	42.9%	50.0%	72.7%	47.7%	65
Total released	182	195	177	178	178		910
**p<.01; *p<.05							

Table 6 shows wage information by release year for those released from JR who were 18 or older. The average yearly wage for all who were over 18 and just those who did gain employment is presented. The average is presented as both the mean and the median (mid-point). The average number of hours in a year and the average hourly wage is also presented. Across the five-year period, those who were 18 or older at release had mean annual earnings of about \$3,168. If we look at only the 54.3% who actually gained some employment, the mean goes up to about \$5,835 per year. The average hourly wage slowly increased from \$10.41 in FY14 to \$13.48 in FY18.

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Table 6: Description of annual wages in the year post-release.

	Release Fiscal Year					
	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY14 to FY18
All youth over 18 at release						
Mean annual wages	\$2,071.70	\$2,988.43	\$3,790.32	\$3,519.56	\$3,514.03	\$3,167.76
Median annual wages	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$736.29	\$197.89	\$659.37	\$222.50
Youth over 18 at release who had any work						
Mean annual wages	\$4,189.43	\$6,334.18	\$6,211.91	\$6,393.67	\$5,900.92	\$5,835.34
Median annual wages	\$1,975.74	\$3,006.27	\$3,599.43	\$4,014.23	\$2,998.17	\$3,062.34
Average hours worked	394.0	543.2	509.1	464.9	420.5	466.7
Average hourly wage earned	\$10.41	\$11.28	\$11.79	\$13.47	\$13.58	\$12.15
Percent with any work	49.5%	47.2%	61.0%	55.1%	59.6%	54.3%
Total released over 18	182	195	177	178	178	910

Summary

Employment data for the 910 youth released from FY14 to FY18 from JR at age 18 or older, shows that about 54% obtained any employment in the year after their releases. This rate has been increasing in the most recent years. If the youth do find employment, it is most likely to occur in the first quarter after their release (FY16, FY17 and FY18). Most youth who do obtain employment, only work one quarter in the year after release. Starting work quickly and retaining that work, seems to be an important issue for youth released from JR. There are significant variations in employment by race and ethnicity and gender. While hourly wages seem to be increasing, youth are largely under-employed with the average youth making only \$3,168 per year. Those who do find work, average 467 hours in the year after their release, this is about nine hours per week of paid employment. Although the relationship between employment and recidivism is not clear cut, having full-time employment can open doors for these youth, and ultimately a successful transition into society and adulthood will include employment. JR should continue to find ways to help youth with their transition back into their communities, and this transition should include assistance preparing for and finding employment. JR should also expand engagement with employers to explore the barrier and potential solutions to ensure youth leaving confinement are able to obtain and retain employment after their release.

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