Transcript for **Connecting Probationers to Adult Education in Virginia**

**Slide 1**

Hello. My name is Katie Irby. I am the Adult Programs Monitoring Specialist with the Virginia Department of Education, Office of Adult Education. Welcome to this recorded video about connecting probationers to adult education in Virginia.

This presentation is meant to inspire and support greater collaboration between Virginia’s Probation and Parole offices and adult education providers to support the Stand Tall initiative by enhancing and strengthening the continuum of educational services for returning citizens.

**Slide 2**

On August 15, 2024, Governor Youngkin issued Executive Order 36, establishing the Stand Tall-Stay Strong-Succeed Together initiative. Virginia knows that education contributes to a stronger re-entry for individuals, a lower recidivism rate, and safer communities. Adult Education is proud to be part of the Stand Tall initiative, and we look forward to expanding the partnership between Adult Education and VADOC Probation and Parole.

**Slide 3**

Adult education providers serve the entire Commonwealth. The map on this slide and the Administrator’s Directory can help Probation and Parole officers find the adult education administrator that oversees services in their regions.

Adult education providers funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or WIOA, and administered by the Virginia Department of Education provide adult basic and secondary education, English language acquisition, and integrated English literacy and civics education. These services are provided in the community and also in many local and regional jails as correctional education.

The Virginia Department of Corrections provides educational services in DOC facilities.

**Slide 4**

Adult education providers offer a continuum of services to support returning citizens. Closer coordination with Probation and Parole offices can strengthen that continuum and help individuals maintain their momentum toward their educational and occupational goals.

Services in local and regional jails include instructional services and preparation services for release. Some programs are offering integrated education and training or IET, which will be discussed later in this presentation. Of note is the federal mandate that priority of service be given to those individuals who are within five years of their release.

Services in the community include the instructional services, integrated education and training (IET), career services and coordination with the local workforce development boards and Career Works Centers, as well as preparation for transitioning to postsecondary education and further training.

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Adult education instructional services are provided through many types of delivery modes that offer flexibility for participation. The list here includes in-person and remote synchronous instruction such as through teleconferencing platforms. Blended learning and online learning combine synchronous and asynchronous learning activities. Distance education is available either through online platforms or with print-based materials for individuals with limited Internet. One-on-one tutoring can also be facilitated either directly through the adult education program or in collaboration with literacy volunteers in the community.

These flexible delivery methods can be leveraged by Probation and Parole offices to serve their clients year-round. If clients need to be supervised, you may want to coordinate instruction to be offered on a Probation and Parole site with an in-person instructor or a remote instructor who provides instruction during a teleconference. If clients have personal Internet access and a laptop, they may be able to participate in online courses or in distance education curricula at their own pace.

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Integrated education and training or IET is a newly allowed service under WIOA. In this service model, adult education providers coordinate academic instruction, workforce preparation, and occupational training instruction to be delivered in an accelerated course. Students complete their secondary credential if necessary, earn an industry-recognized credential, and prepare for employment. Adult education providers partner with a training provider for the occupational training instruction and tuition assistance. Assistance with the credential test fee is often available for students. IET students receive career coaching, including exploration of which jobs and employers are open to employees with criminal backgrounds.

Talk to your local adult education administrator about the IET courses offered in your community and how Probation and Parole clients might participate.

**Slides 7**

We know how important it is for adults to complete their secondary credential. The secondary credential unlocks future potential for further education and training as well as employment opportunities and higher earnings.

The Department of Education supports a “Test for Free in Virginia” campaign with the GED® Testing Service to offer eligible adult education students free testing vouchers – a $144 value. Students are eligible if they:

* Enroll in adult education after release
* Attend at least 12 hours of instruction in any modality, and
* Earn a passing score on the GED® Ready practice test.

We also know that many individuals leave incarceration without having completed the high school equivalency credential. They may have passed a few of the sub-tests but need to finish up. Helping clients maintain their motivation and momentum by enrolling in adult education upon release is critical to reaching that milestone.

This slide is about the Take the GED® Test for Free, but we should also mention that many adult education providers offer the National External Diploma Program, the NEDP, as well. This path to a secondary credential is a fully online, competency-based model that is self-paced and self-directed. It may be a good choice for clients who have work hours or family obligations that don’t allow for regular attendance in a class. Talk to your local adult education provider to learn more about the NEDP.

**Slide 8**

Adult education is an active partner in the Virginia workforce development system. Administrators are embedded in the community networks that support employment and workforce development. Administrators serve on local re-entry councils, workforce development boards and committees, and other community efforts. Adult education practitioners can help students get connected to employment opportunities in their regions.

**Slide 9**

We hope Probation and Parole offices will reach out to their local adult education administrators to create stronger and more seamless educational transitions for clients from incarceration to the community. We look forward to working together.