

# Second Chance Month Spotlight

## Financial Literacy



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**(BOP)** April is recognized nationally as Second Chance Month, a time dedicated to supporting the successful reentry of individuals returning to their communities. In alignment with this mission, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) is highlighting the financial literacy and employment readiness programs that play a vital role in reducing recidivism. This focus also aligns with National Financial Awareness Month, which underscores the importance of building financial stability as part of reentry preparation.

Through the First Step Act and the Second Chance Act, the BOP continues to expand access to meaningful education, particularly in financial literacy. The 2018 reauthorization of the Second Chance Act increased grant funding for financial education and supported continued access to Pell Grants for eligible incarcerated individuals. These resources help address significant needs. More than 88,000 individuals in BOP custody have an identified finance or poverty related need, and over 93,000 require employment assistance.

To support these needs, the BOP offers 12 standardized First Step Act approved programs focused on finance and poverty, along with 21 programs that strengthen employment readiness. Many institutions deliver financial literacy courses developed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, including Money Smart for Adults and Money Smart for Older Adults.

Reentry preparation also includes the Release Orientation Program, offered 18 to 24 months before release. This program covers practical skills such as budgeting, opening a bank account, and understanding credit. Inmates can also participate in résumé workshops and mock interviews, which help them address employment gaps and discuss their criminal history with future employers.

Financial stability and employment are essential to successful reentry. By expanding access to these programs, the BOP continues to support individuals in building the skills, confidence, and knowledge needed to thrive after incarceration.

As we continue to observe Second Chance Month, additional information on First Step Act programming and reentry resources is available on the BOP's [First Step Act page](#).