



Pennsylvania  
**Department of Labor & Industry**

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**Department of Corrections**

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**Department of Health**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Shapiro Administration Expands On-the-Spot Birth Certificate Initiative to Support Reentrants, Remove Barriers to Employment**

*“...a birth certificate is more than just a document; it is a fundamental requirement for securing employment and building a stable future.” - Secretary of Health Dr. Debra Bogen*

**Philadelphia, PA** – The **Pennsylvania Departments of Labor & Industry (L&I), Health (DOH), and Corrections (DOC)** today joined community partners at Kintock to provide people returning to the workforce from the justice system with on-the-spot birth certificates, helping to remove a significant barrier that can stand in the way of work, training, housing, and reentry.

During the event, DOH's **Division of Vital Records** issued over 30 birth certificates to people living at the Community Corrections Center, giving participants access to an essential document many need before they can apply for jobs, sign up for workforce programs, or secure housing and identification.

The on-the-spot initiative builds on the **Shapiro Administration's** work to make state services easier to access and help connect more Pennsylvanians to opportunities.

“Lack of access to essential documents should not be a barrier for someone reentering daily public life who's trying to apply for a job, sign up for training, or take the next step in rebuilding their life,” said **L&I Secretary Nancy A. Walker**. “This is about solving a real problem in a practical way and making sure people have a fair chance to succeed.”

The event was hosted at Kintock, a community partner that works with people returning to the workforce after incarceration. Many residents at the site are already connected to PA CareerLink® services through regular reentry outreach, making the location a natural fit for this effort.

“The DOC works to ensure that incarcerated individuals leave our facilities with birth certificates and other necessary documents, because they’re essential building blocks of successful reentry,” said **DOC Secretary Dr. Laurel R. Harry**. “Events like today’s that remove barriers and demonstrate collaboration between state agencies and our reentry partners reflect a holistic approach to supporting returning citizens, which will lead to safer, stronger communities.”

Applications were completed ahead of time so that DOH staff could verify identities and issue certificates on site in just a few minutes. The pre-event preparation helped the process move quickly and allowed participants to leave with documents in hand the same day.

“The Department of Health is proud to partner with our colleagues at Labor & Industry to streamline access to essential vital records for Pennsylvanians re-entering the workforce,” said **Secretary of Health Dr. Debra Bogen**. “At the Department of Health, we recognize that a birth certificate is more than just a document; it is a fundamental requirement for securing employment and building a stable future.”

For many returning citizens, not having a birth certificate can delay job applications, keep them from enrolling in workforce programs, and make it harder to secure identification or housing. By bringing this service directly to people at the reentry site, the Commonwealth is helping remove one more obstacle that can slow down the process of getting back to work.

The event also shows how PA CareerLink® services can reach people beyond the brick and mortar of a traditional career center. By bringing workforce-related support directly into community settings, the Shapiro Administration is helping more Pennsylvanians get connected to services where they are.

Birth certificates issued during today’s event were funded through Wagner-Peyser resources, supporting efforts to help Pennsylvanians prepare for and enter the workforce.

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