

For Immediate Release
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Restored Citizen Event Supports Entrepreneurship for Ex-Offenders

Columbus – The Ohio Department of Development supports entrepreneurship for all those who strive to improve their lives. Today, Development is announcing the third workshop, “How to Start a Business As a Restored Citizen” for ex-offenders and people with criminal records who desire to start their own business. The Department’s Entrepreneurship and Small Business Division, the Ohio Small Business Development Centers, and various local partners are hosting the day-long free Entrepreneurship Workshop.

“This workshop provides valuable business advice for those looking for a fresh start” said Christiane Schmenk, Director of the Ohio Department of Development. “The event will nourish their entrepreneurial spirit and give these future business owners the tools they need to succeed.”

This event is open to potential entrepreneurs and small business owners at no charge and runs from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on November 8, 2011 at the Center for Families and Children, 4500 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44103. For more information or to register, visit www.development.ohio.gov/WorkshopsRSVP, or call (800) 848-1300 ext. 4-8025. Registration begins at 8:00 that morning.

The workshop will assist potential entrepreneurs in gaining the knowledge and expertise that can help them overcome barriers that can arise from having criminal records. This issue is especially critical in Cuyahoga County, which sees 20-25 percent of statewide prison inmates return to the area, the majority of which return to the City of Cleveland.

“Providing ex-offenders with the skills necessary to become productive citizens is an important step toward reducing future crime,” said Gary Mohr, Director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. “This workshop, combined with other offender re-entry initiatives, is vital to easing their transition back into society.”

The following sessions will be offered at the workshop: Small Business 101, Make Your Business Legal, Welcome to the 21st Century, and Money, Money, Money. Representatives and business professionals from various entities throughout Cuyahoga County will give in-depth overviews of small business programs and services available to assist potential entrepreneurs and business owners. The workshop will end with a Resource Fair, allowing participants to explore resources available in their communities that could assist them with their small business needs.

Other individuals and agencies contributing to the workshop include: The Center for Families and Children – Greater Cleveland Integrated Re-entry Project, Catholic Charities, the City of Cleveland, Community Re-Entry, Inc., State Representative Marcia Fudge, the Ohio House of Representatives, the Cuyahoga County Office of Re-entry, Oriana House, Inc., Towards Employment, and the Urban League of Greater Cleveland SBDC.

*The **Entrepreneurship and Small Business Division** provides innovative programs and services to Ohio entrepreneurs and small business owners, through effective communication, collaboration, creativity, and technology support to encourage sustainable growth.*

Working with our partners across business, state and local governments, academia, and the nonprofit sector, the

Ohio Department of Development works to attract, create, grow, and retain businesses through competitive incentives and targeted investments. Engaged every day in marketing, innovating, investing, and collaborating, the **Ohio Department of Development** works at the speed of business to accelerate and support the teamwork that is necessary for success by providing financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio's future.

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