

# The State of Reentry

Second Chance Month  
2024

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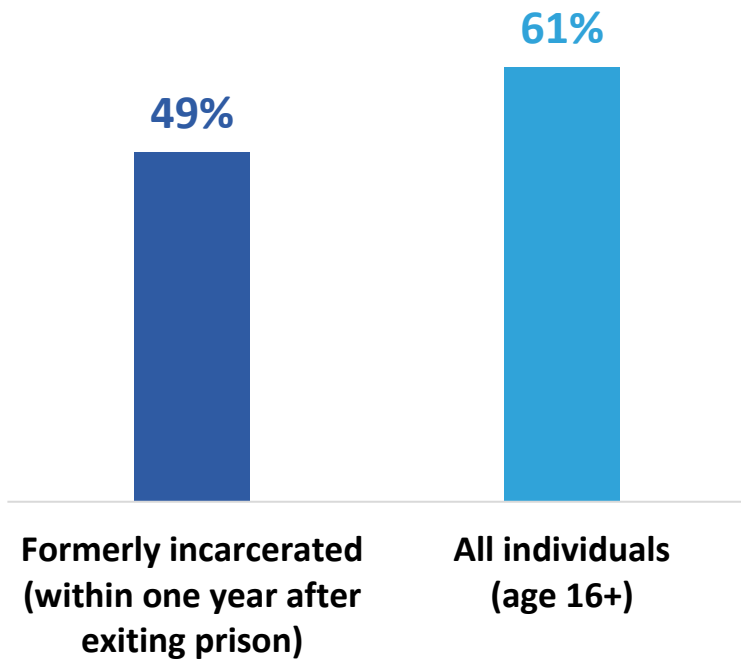
Labor & Economic Analysis Division (LEAD)

**April 16, 2024**

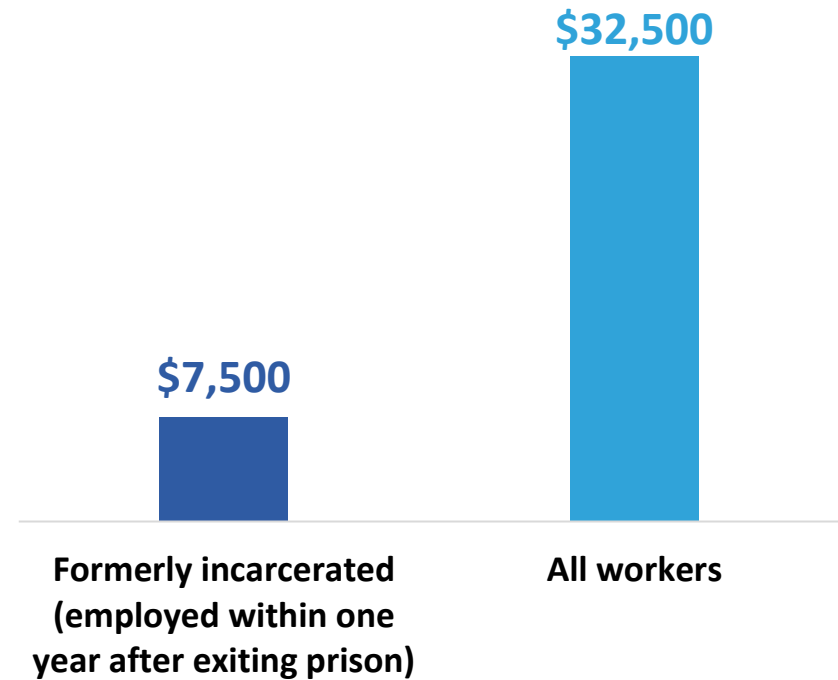
# Despite strong economy, the formerly incarcerated remain on sidelines of workforce

## Outcomes of workers in North Carolina (2021)

**% employed**

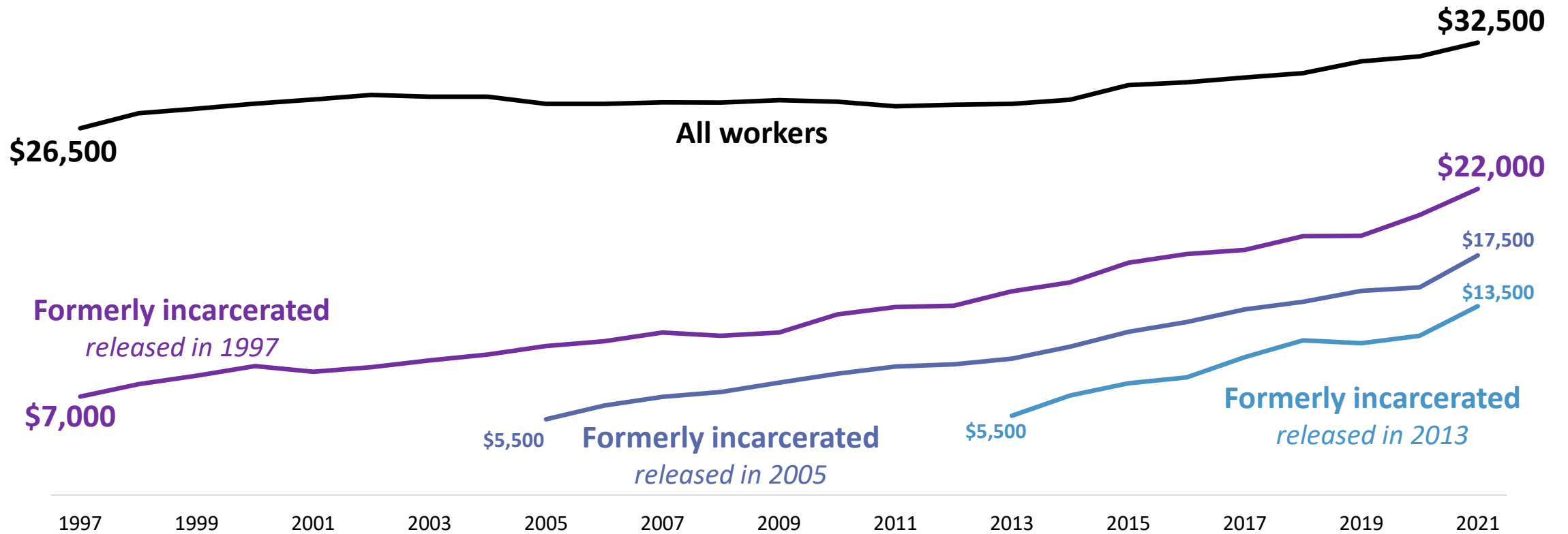


**Median annual wage earnings**



# Wage earnings improve following release, but remain relatively low

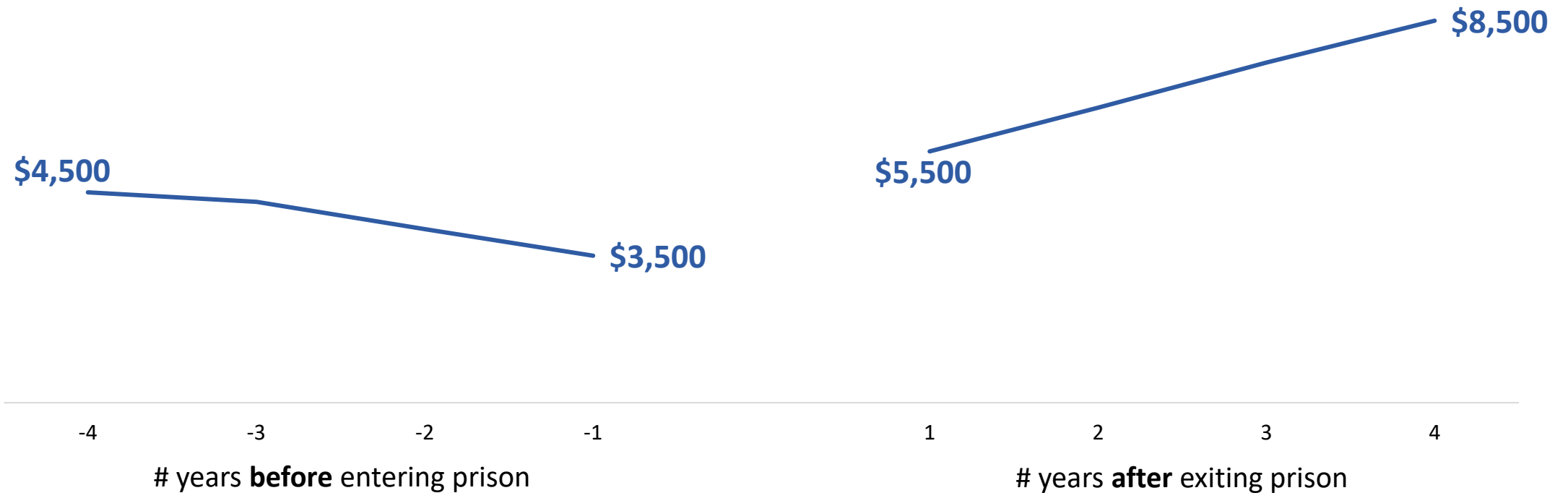
Median real annual earnings of employed workers in North Carolina



# Poor outcomes aren't caused by prison

## Low wage earnings *before* prison as well

Real median annual earnings of employed former prisoners North Carolina  
Exiting prison in 2015



# Labor market barriers

## Little work experience, low educational attainment

Attributes of individuals in North Carolina age 25-to-40  
(2021)

Median # years of formal work experience  
in North Carolina between 1993-2021

% with a high school education  
or above

% with at least some  
college education

**Formerly  
incarcerated**

**3 years**

**50%**

**17%**

**All individuals**

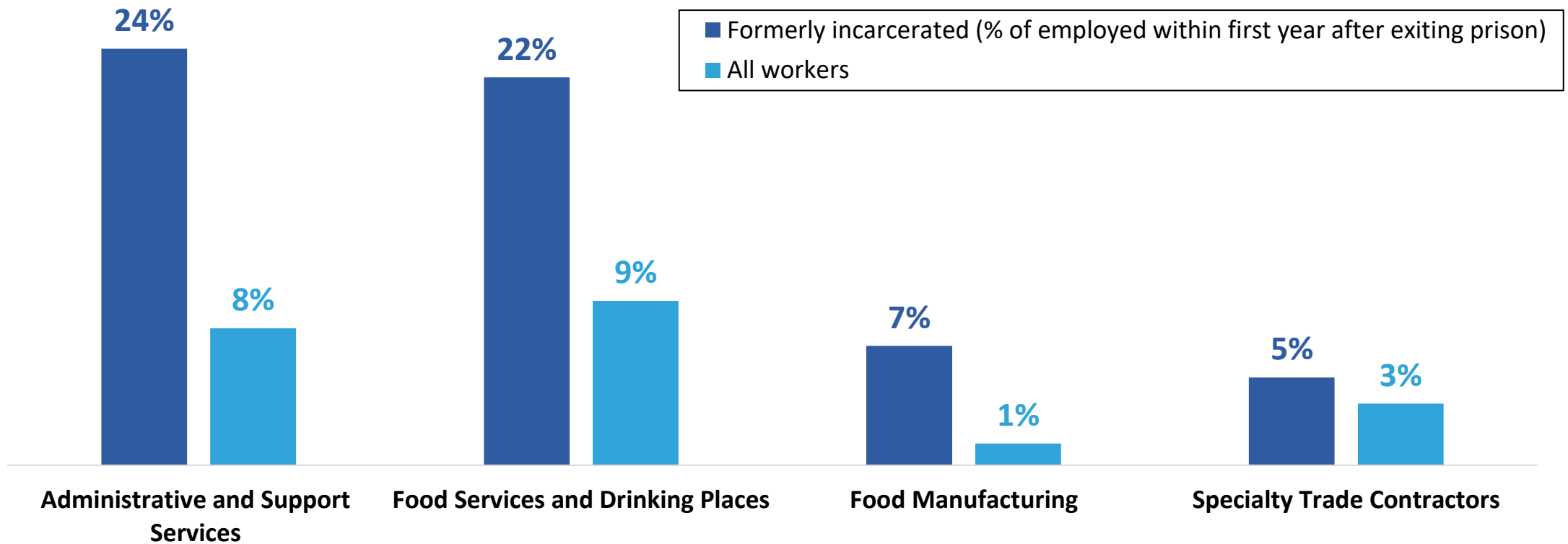
**7 years**

**93%**

**69%**

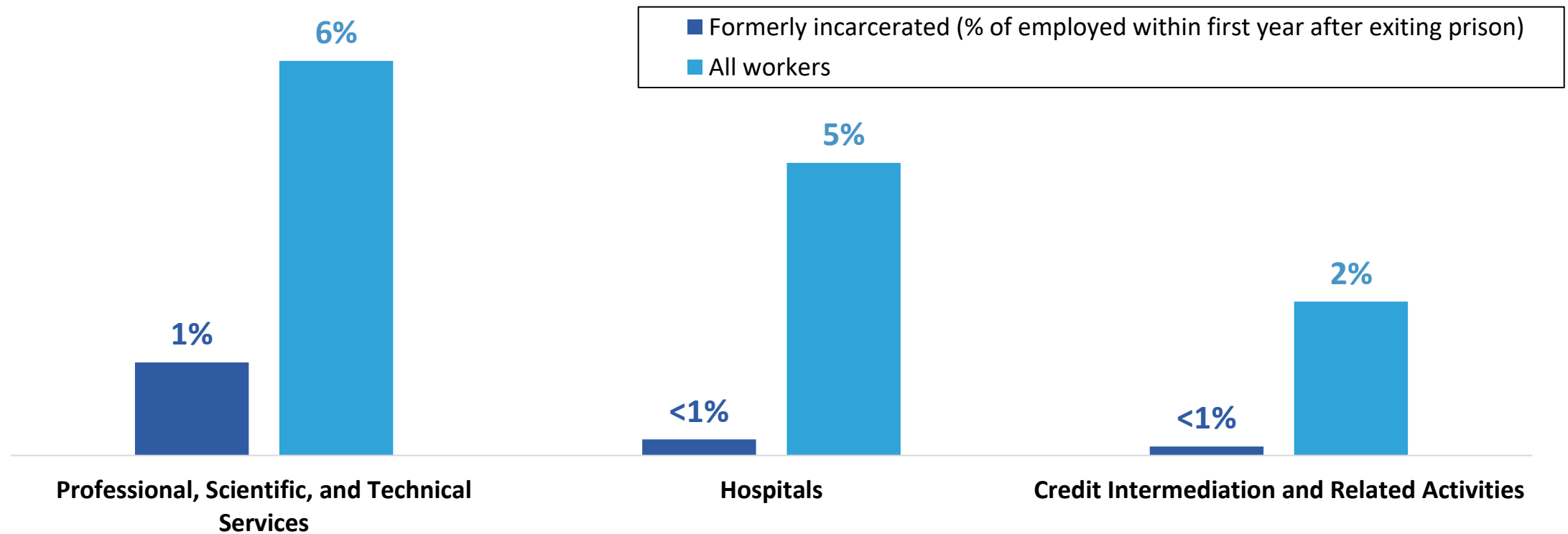
# The formerly incarcerated are segregated into a handful of lower-paying industry sectors...

Primary sector of employment in North Carolina (2021)



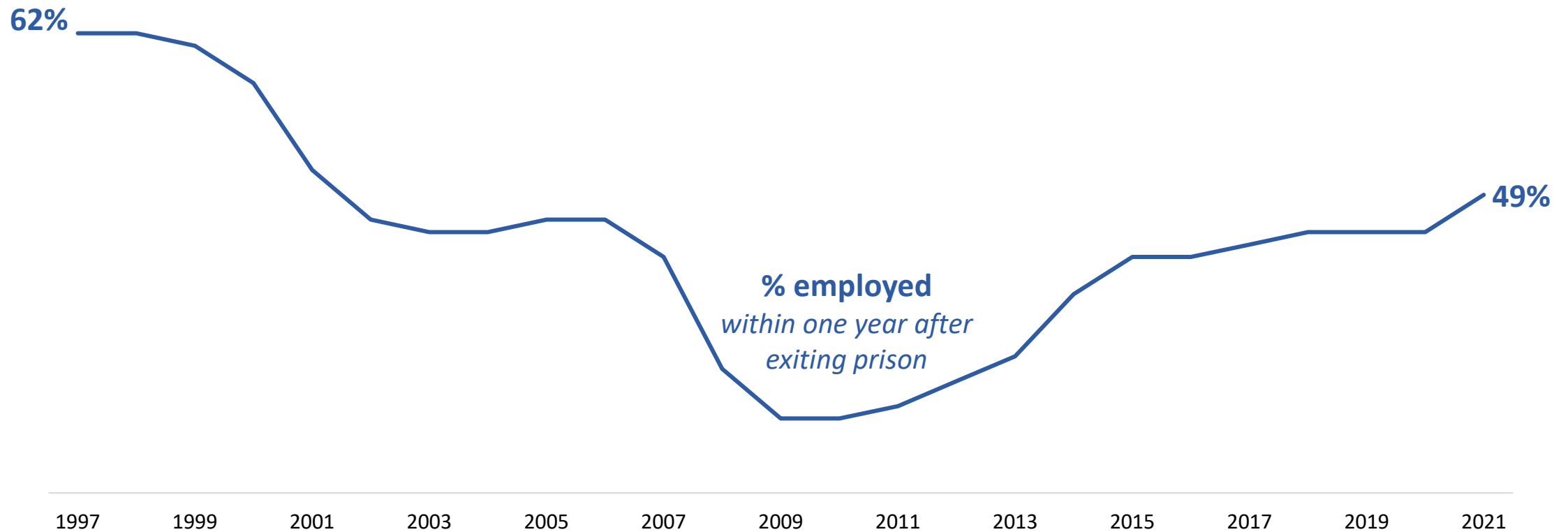
# ...and are excluded from high-paying sectors

Primary sector of employment in North Carolina (2021)  
Selected large and high-paying industry sectors



# Fewer are finding work after prison than they did in the late 1990s

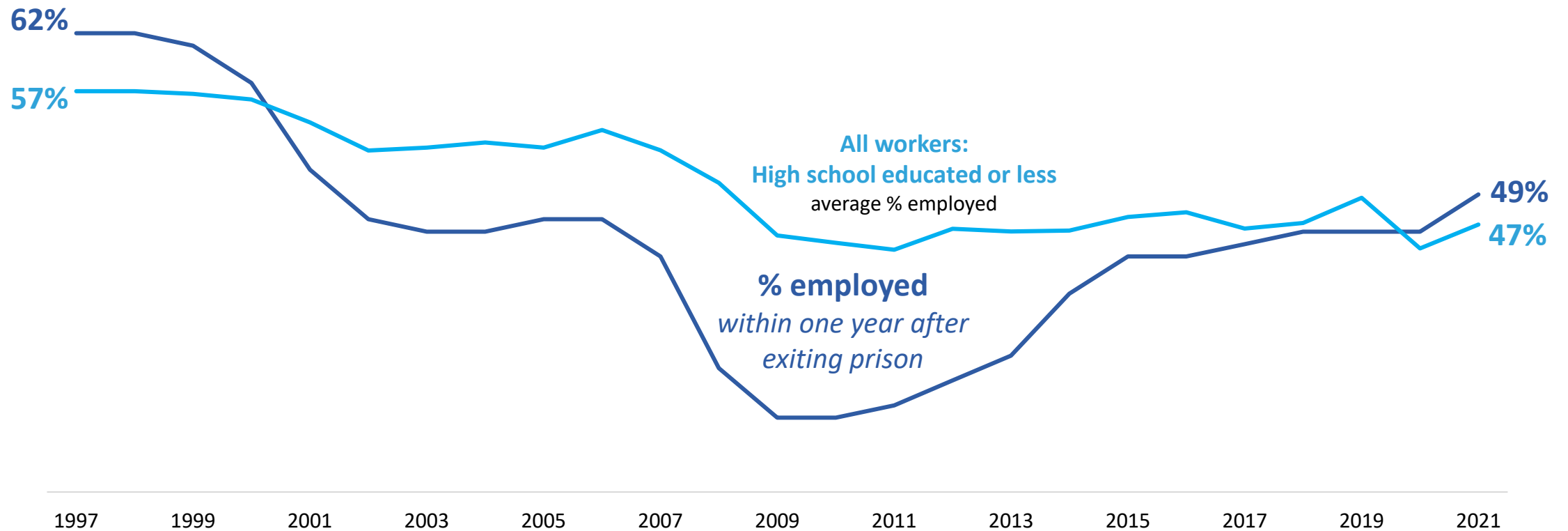
Employment outcomes of workers in North Carolina





# Labor market has gotten more difficult for *all* workers without college education

Employment outcomes of workers in North Carolina



# Now vs. then

## More employed in lower-paying sectors

Outcomes of formerly incarcerated individuals in North Carolina

|   | 1997 | 2021 |
|---|------|------|
| <b>Construction</b><br>% of employed within one year<br>after exiting prison                      | 18%  | 8%   |
| <b>Accommodation &amp; Food Services</b><br>% of employed within one year<br>after exiting prison | 17%  | 24%  |

# Now vs. then

## More employed in meatpacking

Outcomes of formerly incarcerated individuals in North Carolina

**1997**

**2021**

**Textile, Textile Product,  
Apparel, and Furniture Mills**

% of employed within one year  
after exiting prison

**8%**

**3%**

**Food Manufacturing**

% of employed within one year  
after exiting prison

**3%**

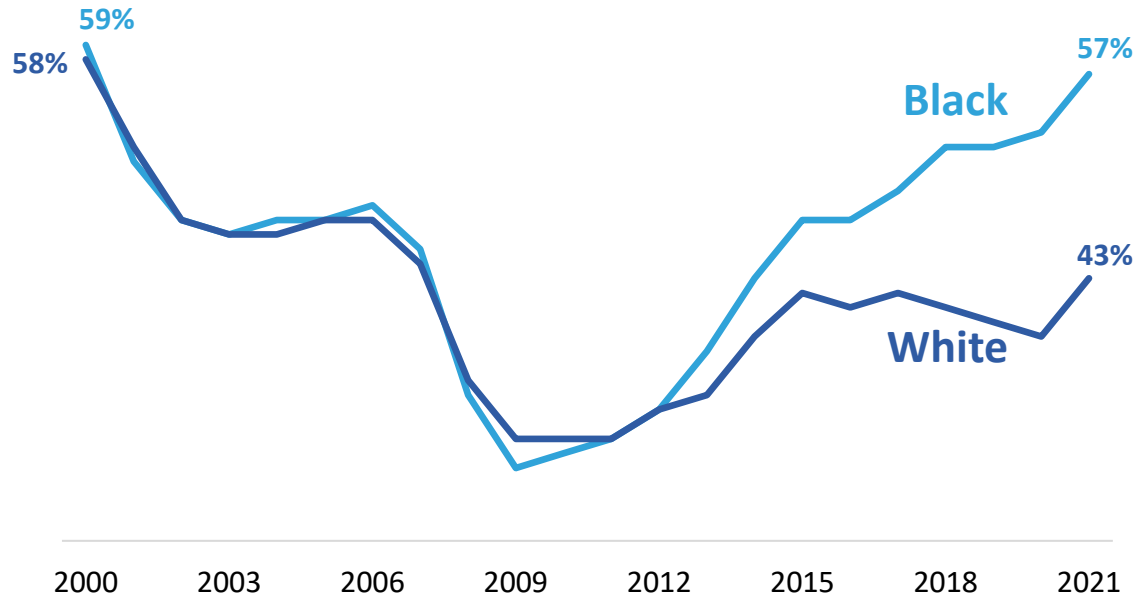
**7%**

# Racial disparities

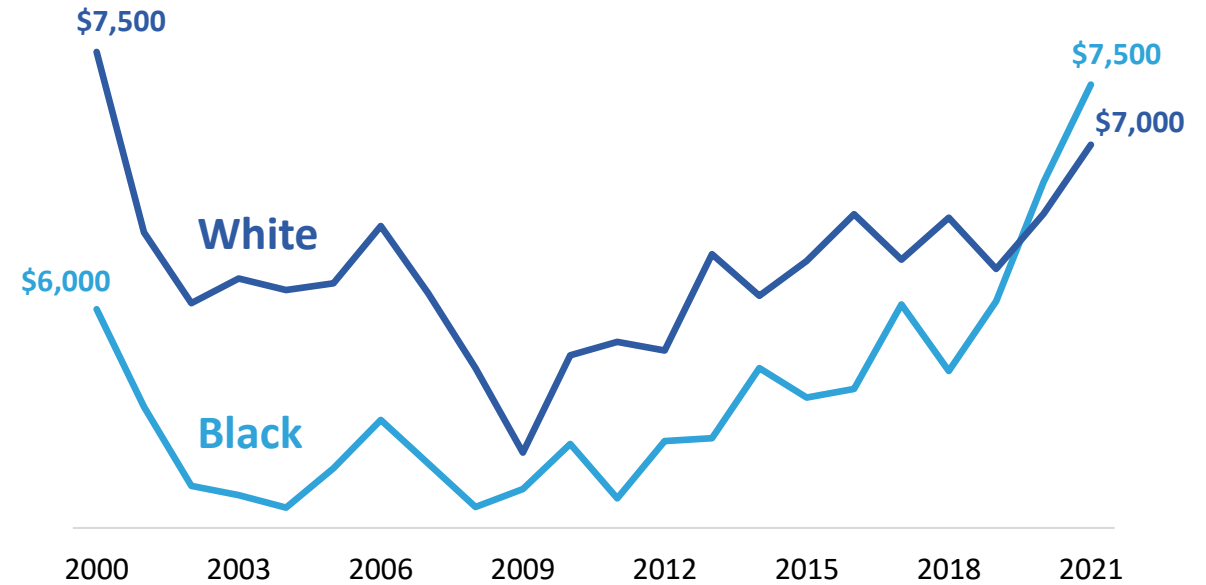
## Worsening outcomes for white workers

### Outcomes of former incarcerated individuals in North Carolina

**% employed**  
within one year after exiting prison



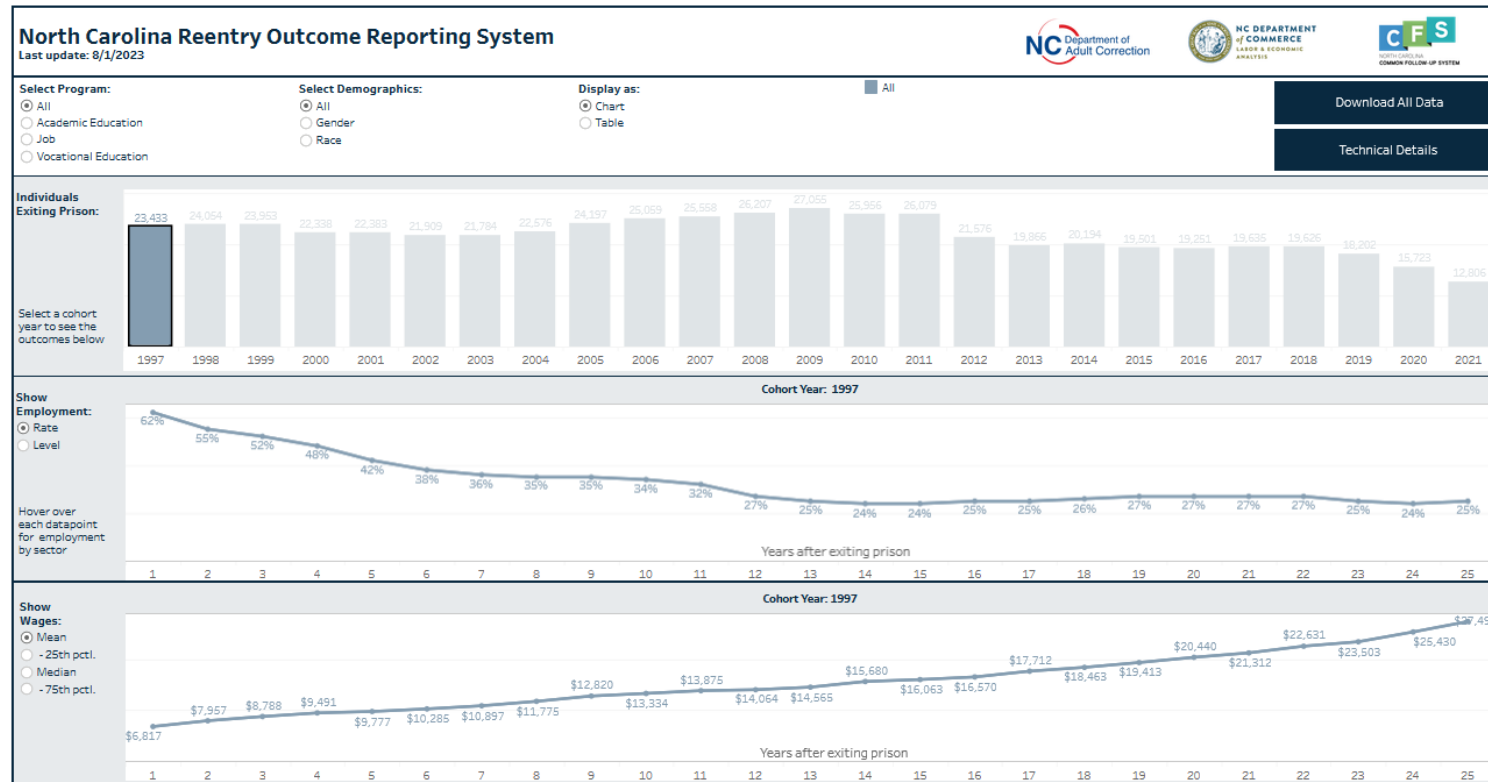
**Real median annual earnings**  
employed within one year after exiting prison



# NC Reentry Outcome Reporting System

## Access data on post-release employment

<https://analytics.nccommerce.com/NC-RORS/>



# Resources of interest

## Insights on Post-Prison Employment

<https://www.commerce.nc.gov/news/the-lead-feed/nc-post-prison-employment-outcomes>

## Insights on Post-Prison Job Quality

<https://www.commerce.nc.gov/news/the-lead-feed/nc-post-prison-reentry-outcomes>

## NC Reentry Outcome Reporting System (NC-RORS)

<https://analytics.nccommerce.com/NC-RORS/>

# “Thank you!”

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