

## Center for Employment Opportunities

In December 2020, the Kenneth King Foundation was asked to respond to participant needs for cold weather gear, including hats and work gloves during the Winter, given many participants new to the Center for Employment Opportunities' transitional work crews were ill-prepared for working outside during Colorado's winter months. The Foundation responded with unrestricted funds to help participants ensure they had what they needed to complete their shifts successfully and comfortably. The Center for Employment Opportunities had a greater need in year 2020 because more individuals were seeking assistance due to the impact of COVID-19. By investing in CEO, the Foundation created an opportunity for previously incarcerated individuals to achieve financial stability, develop personal agency, and redefine their relationship with their community.

Despite the disruptions presented by COVID-19, the Center for Employment Opportunities has continued to provide immediate access to transitional work and daily pay for formerly incarcerated individuals. Reentry after incarceration is difficult at any time, but the COVID-19 crisis made the transition even more difficult. Participants rely on the income they receive through transitional work to provide stability and a chance to move forward from their past. During the winter months this work becomes even more challenging, because many participants lack proper protective clothing. Kenneth King Foundation supported CEO in purchasing 168 hats and 374 pairs of gloves for current and future participants.

