



“Ban the Box” Private Employment

- July 19, 2014, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed into law Public Act 98-0774, which created “Ban the Box” for private employment in the state of Illinois. This law will allow the state of Illinois to open a door that has long been shut to people with criminal records by encouraging hiring managers at private companies to assess applicants based on their work history, education, time since conviction, evidence of rehabilitation and factors other than just their records.
- National Employment Law Project estimates that nearly 4 million adults in Illinois have a criminal record, excluding them from jobs and employment. (1)
- A study conducted in Chicago by the American Bar Association Commission on Effective Criminal Sanctions as well as other studies have found that people with criminal records who cannot secure employment are three times more likely to recidivate than those individuals who are able to find work.

What will “Ban the Box” do?

- **Effective January 1, 2015**, this law will require that private employers with more than 15 employees remove the criminal conviction question from their employment applications. Employers may not inquire as to an applicant's criminal record prior to the initial interview.
- Exemptions include companies employing persons with licenses under the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems, Private Detective, Private Alarm, Private Security, Fingerprint Vendor, and Locksmith Act and positions requiring fidelity bonds
- The Illinois Department of Labor shall investigate any alleged violations of this Act by an employer or employment agency. If the Department finds that a violation has occurred, the Director of Labor may impose civil penalties, including fines and adjudication through the Office of the Illinois Attorney General.
- This Public Act is a significant step toward reducing employment barriers for people with criminal records in the State of Illinois. It will allow the state to join Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Minnesota, California, Hawaii, in moving the question about convictions to a later stage of the hiring process. This will allow people with records to be seen as human beings and be considered for employment prior to their record being examined.

For information or referrals, contact:

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(1) *Progress Illinois, “No Priors” Hiring All Too Common, ; <http://www.progressillinois.com/posts/content/2011/03/23/no-priors-hiring-all-t>*

