

An effective community strategy

#Clean Slate: Second Chances

Everyone makes mistakes, but people who have served their time deserve a **second chance**. While laws already exist to expunge past criminal convictions, **only 6.5%** of the people eligible take advantage of the process. That's why Safe & Just Michigan supports **Clean Slate** legislation, which would **remove certain convictions** from a person's record and decrease employment licensing restrictions.

Automating the process helps the other 93.5% of people eligible for public record sealing, while leaving the records accessible to law enforcement. This empowers people who have been incarcerated to **work toward a better future**, while **creating safer communities**, filling Michigan's workforce gap, boosting the state economy, and eliminating undue burden on our court system.

Strengthening Michigan's Economy :

- Michigan has **low unemployment** and a **talent gap** of over 811,000 openings in the skill trades by 2024 that is preventing businesses from growing and meeting future workforce needs. People with criminal records are **untapped resources** and could be critical to meeting Michigan's talent and **workforce needs**.
- **Underemployment** of formerly incarcerated people **costs the U.S. economy** between \$78 to \$87 billion in GDP annually.
- Within two years of receiving an expungement, a person's **likelihood of being employed increases** significantly and their **personal income increases 25%**.
- Research proves that second-chance employees are generally **more loyal** and have **lower turnover** rates than other employees.

Making Michigan Safer:

- Clean Slate legislation does not impact law enforcement, prosecutorial, or **court access** to criminal history information. This legislation is about allowing employers access to a **wider talent pool** and helping people that deserve a second chance.
- Research also proves that simply employing someone who is formerly incarcerated is one of our best available **recidivism reduction tools**. The broader the clearance, after an appropriate period of time, the larger the public safety benefit.
- **A past conviction does not predict future criminal conduct** and should not prevent employers from having access to the widest possible pool of employees. If a person stays out of trouble for five years or more, they are very unlikely to get into trouble again.

Questions? Contact John Cooper, Executive Director of Safe & Just Michigan, at 517.258.1134 or john@safeandjustmi.org

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www.safeandjustmi.org

Last updated Sept. 6, 2019