

U. S. PROBATION OFFICE Southern District of Florida



HIRING EX-OFFENDERS

Working with employers and the community to provide offenders a successful reintegration into the community

Ex-Offender and Employment

There is a strong correlation between employment and successful reintegration into the community. Studies nationwide reveal that unemployed offenders are three times more likely to return to prison than an offender who is employed. Statistics show that unemployed offenders with a higher risk of recidivism are revoked.

The legal restrictions and social perceptions associated with felony convictions create barriers to employment, which make employment challenging for offenders. A survey of offenders reveal obtaining employment is one of the most challenging issues they face upon being released into the community.



Ex-Offenders Preparing to Become Work Ready

Training, including industry-accredited courses, occurs within federal prisons. Prior to release, inmates attend various types of training to help them make a successful transition back into society and the workforce. They attend various courses, such as preparatory courses that provide them with entry-level skills, including some obtaining GED certificates and U.S. Department of Labor registered Apprenticeship Programs.

Job Preparation includes resume preparation, interviewing, and mock job fairs, where inmates explain the reasons they committed an offense and what they have accomplished while incarcerated.

MYTHS ABOUT EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS

Ex-offenders represent a cross section of the workforce. Many of them have useful skills and qualifications. Some employment myths are:

- Ex-offenders are only capable of doing manual or repetitive work. **Individuals with criminal records come from all areas of our society.**
- Ex-offenders are not educated. **Nearly one in three graduated high school and/or college.**
- Ex-offenders are unreliable - they arrive late or not at all. **In general, ex-offenders are as reliable as other workers are.**
- Ex-offenders are a high risk - they are at a higher risk than the average employee. **It is the policy of the U.S. Probation Officer to notify employers of any third party risk.**
- Other employees will not want to work with them. **There is no need for employees other than line managers to know of the employee's criminal past. You will be surprised how quickly an ex-offender will fit in, given the opportunity.**
- Our company policy excludes ex-offenders because of the type of work involved or legal restrictions. **It is a common misunderstanding that certain professions and trade licenses bar people with criminal records. In fact, refusal is determined by type of offense not by the existence of offense.**



Benefits of Hiring an Ex-Offender

Why should I go out of my way to employ and ex-offender when there are so many other unemployed people available?

With correct recruitment procedures, you will be employing an ex-offender based on their merit and skills as with any other unemployed applicant.

- Probation officers are a direct point of contact and resource for the company, and they assist with employee retention;
- As a condition of release, the ex-offender must maintain gainful employment;
- Ex-offenders are all randomly drug tested;
- Job readiness and skills training provided (this can be coordinated prior to release, so that individuals come to your company work-ready, such as through an apprenticeship program.
- An ex-offender once employed, becomes a taxpaying citizen in the community where they live.
- Federal work tax-credit provides up to \$2,400 for each ex-offender employed; and the
- Federal Bonding Program can provide insurance for employers who hire convicted felons. Information is available about this program at:

www.Bonds4jobs.com



Pre-Screening Applicants

The U.S. Probation Office will work with the employer to predetermine the employer's needs to fill the company's shortages.

Through careful screening, we will match applicant's skills to your company's needs. This will help increase productivity for your company by limiting employee turn over.

MORE BENEFITS for the employers hiring ex-offenders...

The U.S. Probation Office will follow up with applicant's progress on a regular basis. This will provide you with timely solutions to any problems.

Conclusion

If you are an employer or know of an employer who is willing to hire an ex-offender, please contact the U.S. Probation Office, Southern District of Florida.

For additional information or to employ an ex-offender, please contact a Defendant Offender Workforce Development Officer at the U.S. Probation Office near you. All information is kept confidential.

West Palm Beach Office

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Boca Raton Office

One Boca Place
2255 Glades Road, Suite 226A
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Officer: Ms. Marisa Gutheil
Direct Line: (561) 999-4816

Ft. Lauderdale Office

101 N.E. 3rd Avenue, Suite 200
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Officer: Ms. Ann Roman
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Doral Center Office

8240 N.W. 52nd Terrace, Suite 410
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Officer: Ms. Evelyn Mesa-Ojeda
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Snapper Creek Office

10300 Sunset Drive, Suite 351
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Officer: Ms. Sheila Stanfield-Will
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