

# The Business Case: Becoming a Fair-Chance Employer

Our broken criminal justice system has dire effects on our communities and families—particularly on people of color. When we look past the stigma of a record, we find talented and qualified workers. Giving a fair chance to work opens your talent pool, and is good for the economy and public safety.

# 70 million or almost 1 in 3 adults have

records.1



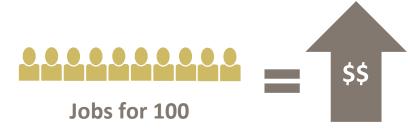
\$78-87 billion lost to In 2014, our economy lost billions because people with records couldn't work.



Employment is the single most important influence on reducing re-offending.<sup>3</sup>



Workers with records have been found to be more productive, have less turnover, and promoted faster.<sup>4</sup>



Jobs for 100 formerly incarcerated people saves millions.<sup>5</sup>

\$55 million lifetime earnings \$1.9 million income tax \$770,000 sales tax "We need to move beyond the two prongs of 'bottom-line' and 'growth' as companies, and understand that we all will thrive when we include the third prong of 'investing in the community." — Business owner<sup>6</sup>

## Employers can be part of the solution.

- **1. Lead a fair-chance culture shift.** Negative stereotypes of people with records are tenacious. Changing hearts and minds will require a genuine commitment from leadership internally and publicly.
- 2. Understand your hiring policy and align it with existing laws. Misconceptions are common. Federal anti-discrimination law actually prohibits blanket bans against any person with a record.
- 3. Create a better policy. Ban-the-box and delay inquiries until the conditional offer. We are all subject to biases—conscious or not. To minimize unfairness, evaluate each job candidate's talents and skills before considering a record.
- **4. Provide training, assess outcomes, and innovate.** To implement the new policy, educate, create buy-in, and train personnel. Commit to evaluating the effectiveness of the new policy and continuously improve.

### Learn more.

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#### **End Notes**

- 1 NELP (2016)
- 2 Bucknor & Barber, CEPR (2016).
- 3 Berg & Huebner (2011).
- 4 Study and employers cited in Research Summary, NELP (2016).
- 5 Economy League of Greater Philadelphia (2011).
- 6 Derek Barrett, founder and CEO of D and B Painting Co., Inc.