



What is Fair Chance Employment?

Summary: Fair Chance employment is the adoption of practices that expand career opportunities for job seekers and employees with past convictions. Companies approach Fair Chance employment with a range of goals and motivations, and deploy many strategies to achieve their objectives. While the definition of Fair Chance is by no means universal, there are five key tenets of a Fair Chance approach, which demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity and opportunity for people impacted by the justice system.

1. **Fair Chance Employers have intentional human resources policies that enable qualified candidates with past convictions to access jobs.** These policies extend from the application and job posting language, through interviewing protocols, through background screening and candidate assessment. Fair Chance employers write HR policies designed to maximize opportunities for candidates and employees with past convictions, allowing them to present their full qualifications and be assessed based on their individual circumstances and fit.
2. **Fair Chance employers proactively engage job seekers with past convictions as part of their recruitment strategy.** Recognizing that candidates impacted by the justice system are an under-tapped talent pool, Fair Chance employers work to partner with organizations serving people with past convictions to become an employer of choice. Additionally, Fair Chance employers use their communication tools to inform job seekers that they are open to candidates with past convictions.
3. **Fair Chance employers consider and address potential barriers to success and advancement by candidates with past convictions.** This often means reviewing and minimizing barriers to promotion and understanding and communicating where regulatory or third-party constraints may impact candidates' career paths. It may also mean considering benefits and supports designed to help employees with past convictions successfully transition back to the workplace.
4. **Fair Chance employers use their influence and platforms to promote inclusivity and opportunity.** In addition to developing their inclusive talent strategies, Fair Chance employers can use a diverse range of tools to encourage and promote inclusive hiring. This may include volunteerism and philanthropy related to criminal justice and job readiness, procurement practices that encourage Fair Chance practices among suppliers, or communications or public policy strategies that broadcast and articulate the importance of Fair Chance employment.
5. **Fair Chance employers are constantly learning and evolving to maximize opportunity.** Like all talent strategies, Fair Chance employment is constantly evolving. Fair Chance employers can keep pace by assessing and measuring their outcomes, reviewing their practices and language on a regular basis, gaining feedback from employees, job seekers and partners, and participating in external convenings and coalitions to learn best practices from their peers.

While Fair Chance employment is an ongoing journey for every company, pursuing progress across these areas will help build a culture of opportunity and inclusivity.