

## Guidelines for Hiring Applicants with Records (Ex-Offenders)

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Dallas County recognizes that people with records (ex-offenders) often face challenges to finding gainful employment after being incarcerated. To help minimize the challenges to reentering the workforce, the Dallas County Commissioner's Court hereby establishes these guidelines for hiring applicants with records:

- Dallas County seeks to promote the successful reintegration of persons with a criminal history by providing them with opportunities to obtain gainful employment within Dallas County.
- Dallas County recognizes that qualified individuals may be screened out from employment consideration due to the required disclosure of a criminal history.
- Dallas County will delay requesting information regarding criminal history until later in the employment process (interview process or prior to job offer) for those positions that does not automatically require a background check (working with the elderly, juvenile, law enforcement, etc.).
- Dallas County encourages every applicant, including those with a criminal background, to research job vacancies and apply, if qualified.
- Dallas County job vacancy announcements will state if a criminal background check may be required.
- Dallas County Departments will notify applicants selected for an initial job interview if a criminal background check is required. The applicants will be given the option to accept or reject the interview.
- Dallas County does not automatically disqualify an applicant with a criminal history.
- Dallas County departments should considers the nature and severity of the offense in conjunction with the length of time since the conviction/offense, age at time of conviction, resolution/completion of the sentence, the seriousness of the conviction/offense, frequency of criminal incidents, evidence of rehabilitation, occurrences in the life of the applicant since the offense(s); and, the relevance of the offense based on nature of the job held or sought by the applicant, and other mitigating factors HR will encourage departments to balance the nature and severity of the offense with other factors.
- Because background checks results may contain errors, candidates should be allowed an appeal process to be given an opportunity to review the results of the background check relevant to the position in question and present information related to the "accuracy" of the information.
- For those positions in the County where a criminal background check is required (law enforcement, those working with children, the elderly or other sensitive areas) the requirement that applicants must pass a criminal background check should be noted in the job vacancy announcement.
- In accordance with the Texas Department of Public Safety, Chapter 411, §411.1295, HR can be granted access to criminal history record information for persons who are applicants for employment by the County. This authority does not include access to criminal history record information that is reserved for law enforcement agencies for enforcement and/or security related purposes.

Should you have questions, contact the Employment Division at (214) 653-7634 or (214) 653-6515.