



Ithaca: A great place to create, dream, live, learn, work, and play!

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The City of Ithaca Joins the “Ban the Box” Initiative

Ithaca, NY – The City of Ithaca is pleased to join several employers in New York State and many major cities and counties throughout the country to “Ban the Box” in relation to employment applications. The Ban the Box Initiative began in 2004 and focuses on encouraging employers to remove the potential for bias and choose their best candidates on the basis of job skills and qualifications. Participating communities have agreed to remove the question on employment applications which asks if the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime.

While the City of Ithaca’s current hiring process is designed to provide a fair chance for applicants with felony and or misdemeanor convictions to obtain employment, the City believes that removing the question on applications will encourage more people to seek employment, especially those who have not had successful experiences obtaining employment or who are reluctant to apply for a job because of the question inquiring about criminal convictions. The City further believes that it is important for all of its residents to have a fair opportunity for employment, in order to be a truly thriving community.

"All residents should have the opportunity to compete for a job with the City of Ithaca. Discouraging good people from applying hurts our organization and prevents previously incarcerated people from doing the work needed to get their lives on track. This is just one more step towards ensuring that our economy works for everyone" stated Mayor Svante L. Myrick.

The City will conduct background and reference checks for all finalists in the hiring process. There are some City positions that have employment restrictions and prior convictions could preclude applicants from being hired, such as police officers, youth services positions, and public officers.

“As we can see from the number of unfilled positions in the county, this community cannot afford to pass up talented, capable people in search of a second chance. At the very least, Banning the Box may eliminate unconscious bias or the perception of it. We are excited to model through this initiative, what the City believes and practices” stated Schelley Michell-Nunn, Director of Human Resources.

The City of Ithaca encourages local employers to join the “Ban the Box” movement, and applauds those who have already taken the “Fair Chance Pledge!”

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