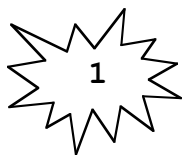


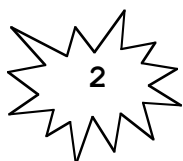
HOW TO ACE THE EMPLOYMENT OBSTACLE:

Five Tips on Preparing for Success!



The Job Application

- Read and answer the questions carefully. You may not have to reveal arrests that did not lead to conviction or convictions that occurred a long time ago.
- It is important that you answer truthfully, because it is a crime to lie on an application for certain jobs. In almost every case, lying on your application is a reason for an employer to fire you.
- Do not only say “yes” to a question about your criminal record. If you feel that you can provide an explanation, say so. Some options are to bring a prepared statement or answer “will explain in interview.”



The Interview

- Be prepared. Practice your interview skills and have something ready to say about your conviction or your past in general.
- Acknowledge and explain your record, but try to focus on your life NOW. Discuss the positive things you have done. Try not to let the conversation get sidetracked on the details of your arrest or your time in prison.
- Remember that you never have to discuss your juvenile records, because juvenile cases in D.C. do not result in convictions. A juvenile record is not equal to a conviction.
- Be respectful, polite, and dress professionally.



You're hired—now what?!

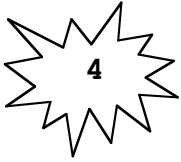
- Employers can do a background check at any time. Sometimes the employer will do the check using a credit agency.
- The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) prohibits employers from getting your consumer report if you do not agree in writing and do not give permission beforehand. The employer is required to give your information about what the search will contain.

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For questions about this topic, please contact DCPLSP at (202) 775-0323.

- NOTE: Read all employment applications very carefully because they often have a clause that states that if you sign the application you give your consent for a background check.

- Even though most negative information is removed from your credit or background check in seven years, your criminal history may remain on a credit or background check indefinitely.

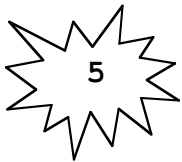


Discrimination

- There is no law that prohibits employment discrimination against those with criminal records, but if an employer discriminates against someone because of his/her criminal record, it MAY be considered racial discrimination. If you think that this is the case, you can contact D.C. Prisoners Legal Services Project, or the agencies below.
- If you feel that you have been discriminated against, you can file a claim with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the Office of Human Rights, which both handle cases dealing with private employers in D.C.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
1400 L Street N.W. Suite #200
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 275-7307 or (800) 669-4000

D.C. Office of Human Rights
441 4th Street N.W. Suite #970-North
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 727-3900



Get Help!

- Learn how to search for a job.
- Build your resume.
- Get involved in community service. This is a good way to build your resume, get into the habit of working again, and may even lead to a permanent job.
- Participate in mock interviews.
- Get bonded through the federal bonding program, by calling 1-800-233-2258.
- Learn about the Workforce Opportunity Tax Credit and tell your employer about taking advantage of the program, by asking at the Department of Employment Services.
- Consider getting an occupational license or joining a union apprenticeship program to boost your desirability to employers.

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DISCLAIMER: This document is not intended to replace the advice of any attorney. This document does not represent legal advice by the DCPLSP, and should not be relied upon as an ex-offender's sole resource in dealing with employment issues.