

LEARN ABOUT

MASS INCARCERATION, REENTRY & FAIR CHANCE EMPLOYMENT

CAUSES HARM

- There are 2 million people in U.S. prisons and jails—a 500% increase over the last 40 years. Changes in sentencing law and policy, not changes in crime rates, explain most of this increase. These trends cause prison overcrowding and fiscal burdens on states, despite evidence that mass incarceration does not achieve public safety
- In the year after their release, only 55% of individuals who are formerly incarcerated reported any earnings, with the median income being \$10,090
- The unemployment rate for returning citizens is nearly five times higher than the general population
- The strongest indicator of recidivism is poverty. Individuals with a secure job within two months of release are far less likely to return to prison in comparison to those who don't have paid work
- There are 11,138 laws and regulations nationwide that restrict the ability of formerly incarcerated individuals to obtain occupational licenses

CREATES OPPORTUNITY

- Recidivism rates are nearly cut in half for returning citizens who have full-time jobs compared with those who are unemployed
- A study of job performance among call center employees found that individuals with criminal records had longer tenure and were less likely to quit than those without records
- When returning citizens have access to reentry programs, they are more likely to find work and establish a stable life. Interventions that also provide healthcare, housing, skill development, mentorship and social networks are best
- 93% of those who secured employment through a supervised release program were successful in returning to their communities
- Eighteen states and more than 150 cities and counties have committed to “banning the box” requiring applicants to disclose criminal records, and other fair chance hiring policies. Major corporations like Target, Bed Bath & Beyond, Walmart, Home Depot and Starbucks have also chosen to ban the box