

IS A CRIMINAL RECORD KEEPING YOU UNEMPLOYED?*

Tips from the **D.C. Employment Justice Center** on how to:

Get a copy of your criminal record

Your criminal record is a print out that tells what arrests and convictions you have. You may need to check your records from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), D.C. Superior Court, U.S. District Court, and the FBI. Call or write to the following offices:

MPD Records Division

300 Indiana Ave., NW, Room 5153
Washington, DC 20001
Phone number: 202-727-2228

U.S. District Court House

333 Constitution Ave. NW, Clerk's office
Washington, D.C. 20001
Phone number (202) 354-3000

D.C. Superior Ct.

Criminal Information Center
500 Indiana Ave. Room 4001
Washington, D.C. 20001
Phone number 202-879-1373

FBI

CJIS Division, Attn: SCU, Mod. D-2
1000 Custer Hollow Rd.
Clarkburg, WV 26306
Phone number 304-625-3878

For more information on how to get records, call **(202) 828-9675** or come to the **Workers' Rights Clinic Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. at 1525 7th St. NW.** Near the Shaw/Howard University Metro on the Green Line.

What to look for on your criminal record

- Incomplete entries. Example- if there is no outcome to the case
- Incorrect entries. Example- if you see the charge is wrong
- Double entries. Example- the same charge should not be listed twice.
- Your juvenile records should NEVER appear on your criminal record.

Mistakes like these can be corrected if you ask the attendant for help. You can also write a letter explaining what happened. **Keep a copy of the letter for yourself.**

Expunge or seal a case on your criminal record

You can seal an **arrest that did not lead to conviction** in limited circumstances.

You can **expunge a conviction** on your record in **some** circumstances, like your first misdemeanor for drug possession.

To learn more, call **(202) 828-9675** or visit the **Worker's Rights Clinic**

Were you denied a job or fired because of your record?

If you are a minority and you are fired, denied a job, or denied a promotion because of your criminal record, you may be able to bring a discrimination claim against the employer. Find out more about this and your other rights at the D.C. Employment Justice Center. For more information call **(202) 828-9675** or visit the **Workers' Rights Clinic.**

*Created by the D.C. Employment Justice Center 2001.

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

YOU'VE PAID YOUR DEBT*

Tips from the **D.C. Employment Justice Center** on facing questions about your criminal record on a job application or interview.

Filling out a job application

Do not give up all hope of getting a job when you see questions on an application about your criminal record! The application is the place to make yourself stand out from the other applicants. Here are some helpful hints for filling out an application:

- **Only answer what is asked.**
Read all questions carefully! For example, if a question asks "have you ever been convicted of a felony," you can say "no" if you only have MISDEMEANORS.
- **Answer truthfully**
Saying "no" to a question about your record when the answer should be "yes" has consequences. If your employer finds out, you could be denied the job or fired later for lying on your application.
- **Don't leave it at "yes"**
If you answer a question about your record by writing, "Yes, but I got my GED while I was incarcerated," you show that you are educated, focused, and want to better yourself. Another suggestion is to attach a prepared, written explanation of your situation.

Answering questions in an interview

If the employer likes your application, you will probably be called for an interview. You might have to talk about your criminal record in an interview. To get ready:

- **Come prepared with an explanation**
Practice makes perfect. If you think about and practice what you are going to say about your record before you go, you will be less nervous.
- **Steer the conversation toward the positive**
If the interview starts getting into details of your criminal history, you can politely tell the interviewer you would rather focus on the good things you have done.
- **Focus on your life NOW**
Your life now is what is important. Make the interviewer aware of why you want to move forward in life and how you plan to do it through working hard at a responsible job.
- **Stay relaxed to show confidence**
When you get to questions about your criminal record in an interview, try not to "freeze." If you are comfortable answering questions, your body language will show confidence. An employer may get nervous about hiring you if you look to nervous to answer the question.

For information on criminal records issues call the D.C. Employment Justice Center at **(202) 828-9675** or come to the **Workers' Rights Clinic** **Wednesdays 6-8 p.m. at 1525 7th St. NW**

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