



SECOND CHANCE OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING REFORM IN FLORIDA

February 2024

In Florida, state law often prevents ex-offenders from working in occupations that require a license, even if they have served their time and the crime was nonviolent.

NEARLY
6 million
Floridians
have a criminal record.¹



OVER
30,000
Floridians are released
from prison each year and
reenter society.²



60% of ex-offenders
in Florida are
arrested again



in three years following their
release, often because of a
**failure to reintegrate into
society and find a job.**³

Recidivism costs
Florida more than

\$300
million annually.⁴



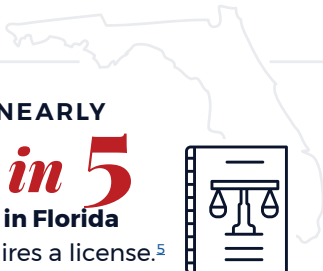
Former inmates who **stay
employed for one year**
post-release are

35% LESS LIKELY



to commit another crime
compared to those who don't
have a job.

NEARLY
1 in 5
jobs in Florida
requires a license.⁵



9%



States with
more barriers
to occupational
licensing
experienced a
9% increase in
recidivism rates.⁶

States with
fewer barriers
experienced a
2.5% decrease in
recidivism rates.⁷

2.5%



Florida policymakers should support occupational licensing reforms that create a path for ex-offenders without a history of violent felonies or sexual offenses to earn a license, such as:

- ★ Allow ex-offenders to petition a licensing board to see if they are disqualified from the license before they complete training, education, or exams.
- ★ Require licensing boards to consider whether an ex-offender has been rehabilitated, personal character references, and other materials during the application process.
- ★ Require licensing boards to notify applicants of the board's decision in writing.
- ★ Prevent licensing boards from denying a license based on vague "good moral character" or "moral turpitude" requirements.
- ★ Prevent licensing boards from denying a license to an ex-offender due to a crime committed many years ago for which the threat of recidivism is low.
- ★ Block licensing boards from denying a license to an ex-offender based on their criminal records unless the crime is directly related to the occupation.
- ★ Prevent licensing boards from denying a license to an applicant based on an arrest that did not lead to a conviction of a crime.