

AFTER PRISON: ROADBLOCKS TO REENTRY

A REPORT ON STATE LEGAL BARRIERS FACING PEOPLE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS

Report Card

ILLINOIS

Roadblocks are defined as unfair and counterproductive barriers to the reentry into society of people with criminal records, so the fewer the roadblocks, the better the score. Each of the 7 categories has a maximum of 10 roadblocks, so the highest (and worst) possible score is 70 roadblocks.

EMPLOYMENT: 0 ROADBLOCKS

Employers cannot ask about arrests that did not lead to a conviction. No standards exist prohibiting employment discrimination by public or private employers or occupational licensing agencies based on a conviction record. Opportunity does exist for people with criminal records to obtain Certificates of Relief from Disabilities and Certificates of Good Conduct to remove occupational licensing restrictions and to provide a presumption of rehabilitation.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND FOOD STAMPS: 2.5 ROADBLOCKS

Denies cash assistance to individuals convicted of certain felonies. Individuals convicted of other felonies are not eligible for cash assistance for two years from the date of conviction, unless they are in a drug treatment program, aftercare program or similar program.

ACCESS TO CRIMINAL RECORDS: 2 ROADBLOCKS

Certain arrests can be expunged immediately and others expunged after a period of time has elapsed. Certain misdemeanor offenses and certain class 4 felony may be sealed three or four years, respectively after the completion of the sentence provided the person has not been convicted of a crime during that waiting period. Individuals with sealed/expunged records may deny the existence of the record. Records of individuals currently incarcerated are available on the Internet.

VOTING: 3 ROADBLOCKS

Bars people who are incarcerated for a felony conviction from voting.

PUBLIC HOUSING: 0 ROADBLOCKS

The Chicago Public Housing Authority does not consider arrests that never led to conviction and makes individual eligibility determinations based on relevance of criminal history.

ADOPTIVE AND FOSTER PARENTING: 0 ROADBLOCKS

Individualized determinations about suitability to be an adoptive or foster parent.

DRIVERS' LICENSES: -1 ROADBLOCKS

Licenses are automatically revoked or suspended for one year or more when individuals are convicted of drug or alcohol-related driving offenses. Opportunity for first offenders to obtain restricted licenses for employment, education, medical care, and alcohol rehabilitation purposes.

TOTAL ROADBLOCKS: 6.5

Rank: 1st best out of 51