The Institute for Community Justice was founded as part of Philadelphia FIGHT’s commitment to working to reduce not only the number of people in prison living with HIV, but also the lasting effects of mass imprisonment on communities most affected.

The mission of ICJ is to create a stigma-free space with innovative, prevention-focused programs that empower, educate and support people affected by the parallel crises of HIV and mass imprisonment, to protect community health, and raise consciousness around issues of social justice.

Special thanks to:
Khia Naylor
Lorin Jackson
Jameil Johnson
Madeline Smith-Gibbs
Theresa Sullivan
Assata Thomas
Terry Trudeau
A special heartfelt thank you to all the participants and volunteers of ICJ. This was created for you and by you to help others. I stand in awe. —K.
You’re home and now you have to get back on your feet. In a perfect world it would be as easy as a snap of the fingers. We all know the reality is that, that will not happen. So now is the time to get to work and get some needs addressed.

**Safe housing** – If you are not released home or to a halfway house there are several shelters in the Philadelphia area that offer food, clothing, and hot showers.

**Transportation** – Because you will need to get around tokens are a must.

**Proper identification** – You are in need of a State ID and possibly need a copy of your birth certificate and social security card.

**Access to a phone** – Free phones are available at Budget Mobile, Assurance Wireless, and Safelink Wireless.

**Public Assistance** - This includes food stamps, cash benefits, and medical insurance.

**Medical / dental / mental health care** – There are several places throughout the city that are able to provide health care for free if you do not have medical insurance or will be able to refer you to a place that will.

**Further educational and/or vocational training** – If you do not have but want your GED or any other certificates there are classes available; some for a low cost or even free.

**Professional services (attorney, accountant, counselor, etc.)** – You may need to talk with someone, or need legal advice. There are several sites thought out the city that offer these services for free.
Safe Housing:
Emergency Housing Intake—215-686-7150
Emergency Assistance Response Unit—215-658-9087 — 5252 N. 13th Street
House of Passage— Women Only, 111 N. 49th Street, Philadelphia, After 4PM
Station House—Men only, 2601 N. Broad Street, After 4PM

Transportation: SEPTA is the main form of public transportation in the city.
Cash Fare $2.25
Tokens—2 for $3.60, 5 for $9.00, 10 for $18.00
TransPass— $24.00 for the week, $91.00 for the month

ID: Go to any PENNDOT location the cost of the ID is $29.50.

Social Security Card: Go to any Social Security Office in the city. You will need a state issued ID and certified copy of your birth certificate. There is no charge for a replacement card.

Birth Certificate: Visit the Division of Vital Records, 110 N. Eighth Street, Suite 108
The cost is $20.00 and you will need ID. If you do not have valid ID you may have someone request it for you. (Parent, sibling, child, spouse)

Free Phone: Budget Mobile 5246 Market Street, Philadelphia or 2362 N. Front Street, Philadelphia

Public Assistance: Visit any Philadelphia County Assistance office
If you are still in need of help stop by the ICJ office someone here will be more than happy to assist you.
Now you are home, and you need a job. Here are some tips that might make the process easier and less stressful.

1. **Set a goal:** If you are not currently working submit at least five job applications every day. Remember looking for a job is a job. You will not be able to find a job filling out one online application a week.

2. **Make yourself a “GREAT FIT”:** Study the job description and any information on the position. Do not be afraid to use the words in the job / position description in your resume and cover letter. Showcase your strengths; make yourself what the employer is looking for. Remember for every one job posting there can be 100 potential candidates.

3. **Do not stop at online applications:** It is not always about what you know but who you know. Do not be afraid to use your family, friends and social media. You never know who may know of an opening or who may be in a position to “get you in.”

4. **Know your digital footprint:** What comes up when you Google yourself? Would your hire you based on your Facebook, Instagram or twitter accounts? Potential employers can and some will take a look at your social media accounts. Make sure your privacy settings are set accordingly.

5. **Apply even if you do not qualify:** There are a lot of people who cannot fulfill all of the criteria listed in their job descriptions. Keeping that in mind go for it, even if you are not a cookie cutter fit. Remember companies often have positions open that are not advertised.

6. **Don’t let your record stop you:** Apply to temporary agencies, and do not be afraid to start at rock bottom and work your way up. You may have to take the first job offered just to have a job. Keep in mind it is easier to find a job when you have a job.

7. **Never give up:** It can definitely be hard to find work, and it might help to know that others are feeling the same frustration. Always stay at the top of your game and keep your spirits up. Surround yourself with positive encouraging people. Life can sometimes be unfair, how you respond has everything to do with your outcome.

8. **Your resume is a first impression:** Would you hire you based on your resume? Make sure it looks neat, clean and professional. Don’t be afraid to ask for help when completing your resume. Remember your resume can be the difference between getting the interview or not.

9. **Top 10 reasons you should visit ICJ!**

1. We are right downtown located at 1207 Chestnut Street on the 2nd Floor.

2. We have a computer lab. You can look for a job, create an email and check your Facebook!

3. We have some great classes. Stressed? Take yoga. Like to write creative writing may be for you.

4. We will do your laundry. Yes your laundry. But you have to ask us how first.

5. We have a clothes closet. So if you are looking for a suit, dress or even shoes we just may have what you are looking for.

6. We have a job board. We know looking for a job is hard. So we look for you and post what we find.

7. We will help you with your resume and even do a mock interview with you.

8. We can help with more than jobs. We can help with critical issues as well.

9. We offer a safe place. We know coming home is hard and sometimes you just need sit and talk with your peers. You can do that here...without judgment.

10. Our group of staff and volunteers is simply amazing. We will love you, fuss at you, and laugh with you because at the end of it all we are family.
Body Language

Body language is a kind of nonverbal communication, where thoughts, intentions, or feelings are expressed by physical behaviors, such as facial expressions, body posture, gestures, eye movement, touch and the use of space. Keep in mind in an interview or when doing an in person application that you never know who is watching.

Body language do’s and don'ts

- **DO**
  - Firm handshake
  - Eye contact
  - Smile!
  - Open posture
  - Relaxed, but alert
  - Look neat & professional
  - Adopt appropriate dress code
  - Listen actively – ‘head nods’
  - Sit in the right seat
  - Arrive early

- **DON’T**
  - Limp/clammy handshake
  - Bring in carrier bags/duffer
  - Wear jeans
  - Look down
  - Cross arms(?)
  - Flop into chair
  - Wave arms
  - Stare out of window
  - Adopt a threatening posture
Tips for Contacting Potential Employers

Sometimes the best way to find that job is to go beyond the online application here are a few tips on contacting potential employers.

**Cold Calling:** When you are calling a business to see if they have any jobs available.

- **Do research on the company** - Find out about what they do and what is involved in the job you are looking for. When you call you will be able to show you are the person for the job but also how much you know about the company.

- **Write a script** - This is an easy way to 1) remember what you want to say and 2) help you speak clearly.

- **Know when to call** - There is always a good time and bad time to call especially when you are making a cold call. Try to avoid calling to close to the start or the end of the day or at lunchtime.

**Cold Emailing:** A cold email is like a handshake, so make sure it is strong.

- **Know something about the person you are emailing** - Just like you would research the company you should know something about the person you are emailing (name, title, etc).

- **Take note of your subject line** - The person you are emailing may receive tons of messages a day so a subject line that says simply “job wanted” may have yours deleted. Keep is short but make it pop.

- **Keep it short and sweet** - Your email should be about three paragraphs. Introduce yourself, note why you would be a great fit for the company and close.

- **Walk In:** Most companies want applications completed online but some welcome walk in applications.

- **Ask for the person in charge of hiring** - Do not just ask about job opportunities from the first person you see. They may or may not know of openings, may not have time or may not be able to answer any employment questions.

- **Introduce yourself** - Create a connection right away. Using your first and last name with a strong handshake and eye contact can go a long way.

- **Get to the point** - Ask if the company is hiring and ask for an application. Explain your qualifications and why you want to work for the company.

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Success Story

“An employer told me to get three references from people who have known me for a long period of time. He wanted to know who I was before and after jail, and to account for the employment gap. He suggested a pastor, a district rep and a lawyer. I got the references, and got the job.” - Tye Underdue

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Case Management & Reentry Services

If you are in need of case management or just some additional help when you come home please visit:

- **Goldring Reentry Initiative**
  3815 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104
  215-573-7941

- **Institute for Community Justice (ICI)**
  1207 Chestnut St, 7th Floor, Philadelphia PA 19107
  215-525-0460

- **Kingdom Care Reentry Network (KCRN)**
  1606 Mifflin St, Philadelphia, PA 19145
  215-334-3343

- **Mayor’s Office for Reintegration Services for Ex-Offenders (RISE)**
  990 Spring Garden Street, 7th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19123
  215-683-3370

- **Pennsylvania Prison Society**
  245 North Broad Street, Suite 200, Philadelphia, PA 19107
  215-564-4775

- **People for People, Inc**
  800 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130
  215-235-2340

- **Resources for Human Development –New Start**
  3653 N. 15th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140
  215-228-2323

- **The Center for Returning Citizens**
  1501 Cherry Street, Suite 129, Philadelphia, PA 19102
  267-519-5334

- **The Salvation Army**
  1340 Brown Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123
  215-797-2962
How to...

Create a professional email address
All online applications require you to provide an email address. It is a good idea to stick with some variation of your name or initials. Gmail and Ymail are the most widely used for email addresses.
- Use your full name not a nick name
- Avoid Complicated Formatting
- Use Something Professional for the Username
- Avoid gender, political or age references

Create a resume
A resume is the best way to introduce yourself to a potential employer. Keep in mind the first glance of your resume may only take 10 to 25 seconds.
- Have a great format
- Find a job for your resume - tailor your resume to the job you want
- Avoid generic descriptions
- Note your accomplishments

Check your record
Potential employers can and often will preform a background check. It is a good idea to know what they know.
- Pennsylvania Access to Criminal History www.epatch.pa.us
- The Philadelphia Courts www.courts.phila.gov
- The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania www.ujsportal.pacourts.us
- United States Courts (Federal) www.uscourts.gov

Be strong enough
To stand alone,
Smart enough to
Know when you
Need help, and
Brave enough to
Ask for it.

The Interview

Congratulations all of your hard work has paid off and you landed the interview!! Now what? Here are some tips on making a lasting impression.

- Research the job, employer, and hiring manager: Having a strong foundation can lead to a successful interview. You will be better able to answer interview questions and ask follow up questions.

- Dress for Success: Make sure your closed are clean pressed and fit properly. It is better to be over dressed than under dressed.

- Arrive on time: Try to be about 10 to 15 minutes early. This will allow you time to complete any paperwork and observe the office

- Make a good first impression: Be polite to everyone you meet. You never know who is watching.

- Review and practice common interview questions: Compose detailed yet concise responses. Focus on specific accomplishments and examples. A

- Stay focused, confident, candid and be yourself: Always be truthful to interview questions. Always keep your responses short and to the point. NEVER bad mouth anyone your previously worked with.

- Ask questions: After the interview you will be asked if you have any questions. Always ask questions. It is a good idea to have your questions written out in advance.

- Close the deal: Ask about the next steps, and how soon you should expect to hear back. Thank each interviewer (if more than one) in person and send thank you notes via email or postal mail.

Something to Consider
Every job interview goes two ways. Yes you interviewing for a job, but you are also interviewing the company. So ask questions. You may decide you no longer want the job after the interview.
How to Explain Your Record to Employers

Potential employers have the right to perform a background check prior to offering employment. It is a good idea to be prepared if you are asked about your criminal history. Be honest and prove your qualifications.

Don’t avoid the question: Yes, this can be an awkward moment but be prepared be honest, and set a positive tone for your answer.

Take responsibility for your actions: Do not blame others or deny your role in what happened. Explain what happened, determine what you could have done differently, and move on.

Watch your words: Think about the situation and how you can explain it. For example instead of saying burglary try “I took something that was not mine.”

Put time on your side: Make your time away seem longer ago than it was. Think which sounds further in the past 10 years ago or 2006.

Share your AHA moment: When did you realize you made a mistake or regretted your actions? What made you determined to change? Just remember to keep it brief.

Show who your are now: What in your life has changed? Have you gotten married, become a parent, started school? Share what is going on in your life that is your incentive to stay home.

Turn a negative to a positive: Remind them why they should hire you. Highlight your skills, qualities and what makes you work the risk.

Stay Positive Be Confident: Remember no one is perfect and we have all made mistakes. Only you can hold yourself back.

Did You Know?
Most Philadelphia employers cannot ask if you have a criminal record on the initial job application or during your first interview.

Many employers require job applications be completed online. No computer, no worries. Check these places out for free computer, internet access, and classes:

- **Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM)**
  600 W. Diamond Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122
  215-235-6070

- **Casa Monarca**
  1448 South 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146
  215-253-3033

- **Congreso De Latino Unidos**
  2800 North American Street, Philadelphia, PA 19133
  215-763-8870

- **Dignity Housing**
  5227 – R Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144
  215-686-5372

- **Mercy Neighborhood Ministries**
  1939 West Venango Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140
  215-227-4393

- **Methodist Family Services of Philadelphia**
  4300 Monument Road, Philadelphia, PA 19130
  215-877-1925

- **Philadelphia Unemployment Project**
  112 North Broad Street, 11th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102
  215-557-0822

Did you know?
The Free Library of Philadelphia offers computer classes and has computer access at all of its locations.

Find out more by visiting [www.freelibrary.org](http://www.freelibrary.org) or call 215-686-5322
Computer Access

Spotlight:
Computer Labs at Philadelphia FIGHT

Philadelphia FIGHT offers four computer labs

AIDS Library
1233 Locust Street, 2nd floor | 215-985-4851
Monday 1pm-5pm, Tuesday-Thursday 1pm-7pm, Friday 1pm-5pm

Critical Path
1233 Locust Street, 3rd floor | 215-985-4448
Tuesday-Friday 10am-1:30pm

Institute for Community Justice
1207 Chestnut Street, 2nd floor | 215-525-0460
Tuesday-Friday 1pm-5pm

Youth Health Empowerment Project (ages 13-24)
1417 Locust Street | 215-564-6388
Monday 7pm-11pm (LGBTQ drop-in ages 13-29), Tuesday 1pm-4pm,
Wednesday-Thursday 3pm-6pm, Friday 1pm-4pm

More Options
For more information about FREE computer use, internet access, and training, visit www.phillykeyspots.org.

Job Training Resources
If you been away from home for a while here are some job training resources that can give you a leg up.

Action AIDS Center City - 1216 Arch Street, 6th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107 215-981-0088

Connection Training Services - 2233 West Allegheny Avenue, 2nd floor, Philadelphia, PA 19132 215-430-0381

JEVS – Jewish Employment and Vocational Service - 1845 Walnut Street, 7th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103 215-854-1800

Mayor’s Office of Community Services - 1234 Market Street, 16th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107 215-685-3600

Nonprofit Technology Resources - 1524 Brandywine Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130 215-564-6686

Resources for Human Development - 4700 Wissahickon Avenue, Suite 126, Philadelphia, PA 19144 215-951-0300

Tradeswomen of Purpose - 2300 Alter Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146 215-545-3700

District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund - 10, 100 S Broad St, Philadelphia, PA 19110 (215) 568-2220
Ban the Box FAQ

By Support Center for Prison Advocacy coordinator Madeline Smith-Gibbs

What is “Ban the Box”?

The Fair Criminal Records Screening Standards Ordinance, commonly known as Ban the Box, is a Philadelphia city law that came into effect in July 2011. The ordinance encourages the hiring of qualified ex-offenders by ensuring that a potential employer's first impression of an applicant is their work qualification, not their prior criminal history. An estimated one-fifth of Philadelphia’s population has a criminal record, and job discrimination poses a significant barrier to successful reentry. Ban the Box aims to reduce recidivism through the employment of qualified returning citizens.

Specifically, Ban the Box prohibits potential employers from inquiring about criminal convictions on the job application or during the first interview. If an employer does not conduct any interviews, then it is not permitted to conduct any inquiries regarding criminal records. Ban the Box applies to all city and private employers with 10 or more employees except criminal justice agencies (e.g., prisons, courts, police departments).

What should I do if I am asked about my criminal record?

Answer the question honestly. This can be frustrating, but lying or getting angry at the employer won’t help you get a job. We suggest checking “yes” and writing a note such as: “My conviction is not related to this position. I am happy to explain later.”

Since the employer is probably breaking the Ban the Box law, consider filing a complaint with the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR). If the complaint is based on an inquiry found on a job application, nothing more is required from you so long as you include a copy of the application. If the complaint concerns unlawful questions in a job interview, you will have to provide more information and may need to testify at a hearing.

The complaint form is available on the PCHR website, at www.phila.gov/humanrelations. Let the Support Center for Prison Advocacy know if you have any questions about filing a complaint — we’re happy to help!
Staffing Agencies

Staffing or Temp agencies can be a great way to get your foot in the door. Don’t let an opportunity pass you by just because it may be temporary. Remember a lot of temporary jobs go permanent within 90 days.

Accu Staffing Services - www.accustaffing.com
1601 Market Street, Suite 101, Philadelphia, PA 19103
Telephone: 215-568-2228

Aerotek - www.aerotek.com
2 Bala Plaza, Suite 400, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004.
Telephone: 614-257-3060

AmeriTemps, Inc. – www.ameritempsjobs.com
220 North 13th St, Philadelphia, PA 19107
Telephone: 215-627-2454

Best Personnel –
www.bestpersonnelinc.net
100 S Broad Street, Suite 933, Philadelphia, PA 19110
Telephone: 215-732-3100

Careers USA – www.careersusa.com
1800 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19102
Telephone: 215-561-3800

Core Staff – www.corestaffinc.com
1420 Walnut Street, Suite 716, Philadelphia, PA 19102
Telephone: 215-864-0500

Infinity Staffing – www.infinity-staff.com
2 Penn Center, 1500 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 404 Philadelphia, PA 19102
Telephone: 215-268-7575

J&J Staffing Resources – www.jjstaff.com
200 Gilbraltar Road, Suite 122, Horsham, PA 19044.
215-773-9773.

Kelly Service – www.kellyservices.com
1650 Market Street, Floor 36, Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-972-5145

Kaye Personnel, Inc. -
www.kayepersonel.com
1301 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147
215-336-6800

Labor Ready – www.laborready.com
867 Upland Avenue Upland, Pennsylvania, 19013
610-874-6131

Manpower – www.manpower.com
1600 John F Kennedy Boulevard, Suite 610, Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-240-8999

On Time Staffing – www.ontimestaffing.com
529 Washington Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19147
866-333-3007

The Protocall Group –
www.protocallgroup.com
111 South Independence Mall E #1110, Philadelphia, PA 19106
215-592-7400

Randstad – www.randstadusa.com
1700 Market St, Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-568-6810

Trinity Staffing - www.trinitystaffserv.com
2340 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19145
215-218-9300.

Why is it important to file a complaint?

Filing a complaint with PCHR forces noncomplying employers to either remove the question from their selection process or be fined. This helps level the playing field for Philadelphia’s returning citizens. Furthermore, Ban the Box complaints provide evidence that the ordinance is being violated. At present, PCHR has received relatively few complaints, suggesting relatively few violations – which we know is not the case. Evidence of widespread noncompliance will allow us get the City’s attention and demand more active enforcement of the ordinance.

What other rights do job-seekers with records have?

According to federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines, employers can only turn you away for a conviction if that conviction has some relationship to the job you are applying for. If the conviction is too minor, or too old, or for some crime that has no connection to the work that you would be doing, then the employer cannot use that conviction to deny you the job.

How can I get involved in the Ban the Box movement?

Great question! Citizens and community organizations around Philadelphia and around the country are working to eliminate job discrimination against people with criminal records. Contact the Support Center for Prison Advocacy for more information:

Support Center for Prison Advocacy
c/o Philadelphia FIGHT’s Institute for Community Justice
1207 Chestnut Street, 2nd floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-525-0460 x410
Here is a short list of companies that hire people with records. Don’t limit yourself to only companies that you know hire people with records. You never know what you may find.

**ABM**  
1650 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103  
215-226-2690

**Alpha Office Supply**  
2066 West Hunting Park Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19140.  
215-226-2690

**A&S Manufacturing**  
3246 Collins Street, Philadelphia, PA 19134  
215-425-6130

**Belgrade Parts and Services**  
2748 East Butler Street, Philadelphia, PA 19137  
215-744-1263 x10

**Cardone Industry**  
5660 Rising Sun Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19120  
215-912-3000

**C&C Distribution**  
4343 Whitaker Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19124  
215-291-8200

**Cintas**  
4700 West Jefferson Street, Philadelphia, PA 19131  
267-233-5612

**Giant Food Stores**  
2550 Grant Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19114  
215-464-8280

**Jerith Manufacturing**  
14400 McNulty Road, Philadelphia, PA 19154  
215-676-4068

**Philadelphia Cricket Club - St. Martins Clubhouse**  
415 West Willow Grove Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19118  
215-247-6001

**Philadelphia Coca-Cola Bottling Company**  
801 East Erie Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19134  
215-427-4500

**Philadelphia Furniture Surplus**  
5351 Lancaster Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19131  
215-871-0800

**Samuels and Son Seafood Company**  
3400 South Lawrence Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148  
215-336-7810

**South East Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA)**  
1234 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

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**Spotlight**

The Brown Family ShopRites have been allies and true community advocates for people with a criminal record. Most positions start as part-time and can lead to full-time. Search for jobs and apply at: www.shoprite.com/career-opportunities