



# THE STATE OF GEORGIA

## EXECUTIVE ORDER

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BY THE GOVERNOR:

- WHEREAS:** People with criminal records suffer from pervasive discrimination in many areas of life including employment, housing, education, and eligibility for many forms of social service benefits; and
- WHEREAS:** Approximately 97% of those sentenced to prison will eventually return to society, and currently over 1,300 offenders reenter into our communities every month without employment; and
- WHEREAS:** In their January 2014 Report to the General Assembly, the Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform for Georgians recognized that requiring prospective employees of the State of Georgia to disclose convictions on the initial employment application creates a barrier to employment. The Council appropriately recommended the implementation of “Ban the Box” hiring policies; and
- WHEREAS:** “Ban the Box” is a policy intended to improve public safety, enhance workforce development, and provide increased state employment opportunities for applicants with criminal convictions on their records by removing the criminal history related questions from the initial stage of the state employment application process. Such policies allow returning citizens an opportunity to explain their unique circumstances in person to a potential employer; and
- WHEREAS:** “Ban the Box” hiring policies enhance Georgia’s reputation as the number one place in which to do business by increasing qualified applicant pools and improving the likelihood that the employer will identify the best candidate for the position; and
- WHEREAS:** Georgia is positioned to enhance its reputation as regional leader by becoming the first state in the South to implement a fair hiring policy for applicants with criminal records, joining thirteen others including, New Mexico, New Jersey and Minnesota.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BY VIRTUE OF THE POWER VESTED IN ME AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA, IT IS HEREBY**

**ORDERED:** That government entities of the State of Georgia shall implement a hiring policy intended to encourage the full participation of motivated and qualified persons with criminal histories in the workforce, reduce recidivism, and assure public safety. The “Ban the Box” policy should establish practices that:

1. Prohibit the use of a criminal record as an automatic bar to employment.
2. Prevent the use of an application form that inappropriately excludes and discriminates against qualified job applicants.
3. Promote the accurate use and interpretation of a criminal record.
4. Provide qualified applicants with the opportunity to discuss any inaccuracies, contest the content and relevance of a criminal record, and provide information that demonstrates rehabilitation.
5. Shall not affect applications for sensitive governmental positions in which a criminal history would be an immediate disqualification and initial disclosure on such applications shall still be required.

This the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of February, 2015.

  
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GOVERNOR