



## **How to get a job with a criminal record spent or unspent**

Whether you have just spent a lengthy amount of time in prison, or if you were convicted of a minor offence many years ago, it is not unusual to feel anxious about applying for a job with any kind of criminal record, spent or un-spent. We hope the information contained on these pages will help you to overcome some of your concerns and increased your confidence about looking for employment.

### **Are there any jobs I should definitely avoid with a criminal record?**

There are a few jobs that your record will automatically disqualify you from applying for. These are listed below. If you were convicted of something linked to your previous job it is recommended that you do not try and go back into this area of work. Other than these, you should not restrict your sights and aspirations, focus on real opportunities, this way you are less likely to get discouraged.

- Working with children and vulnerable adults, such as elderly and disabled people
- Roles in banking and the financial services industry
- Certain posts connected to law enforcement, including the judiciary and the police
- Work involving national security
- The navy, military and air force
- Certain posts in the prison service
- Certain professions in areas such as health, pharmacy and the law
- Private security work

### **Spent Criminal Convictions**

It is important to understand the different ways criminal convictions and criminal records are dealt with. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 criminal convictions can become 'spent' or 'ignored' after a rehabilitation period. If a conviction is 'spent' you do not have to disclose the conviction when applying for most jobs. It is important to remember that the criminal record remains, it will not be deleted once convictions become spent. Therefore criminal records, including records of cautions may be disclosed if police checks are conducted by your employer or prospective employer.

Below you will find a list of tips and thoughts to encourage you but also to give you new ideas and confidence when embarking on the journey of looking for employment.

- If you are reading this whilst spending time in prison, consider making some preparations now. You might have the opportunity to complete some training courses, this is highly recommended.
- Prepare yourself for starting in a job that might be lower paid than you expect, or one that has less responsibility than you had previous to your conviction. One obstacle that you may encounter is the gap in your employment through being in prison, so be prepared to take that step down to gain more training and experience.
- It might be tempting to lie on an application form or in an interview but avoid the temptation. Be honest about your history. If you are hired and the lie is later discovered you could lose the job you worked hard for.
- When you complete an application form you might like to write “will discuss in interview if required”. This might prevent you from being filtered out of the process early on.

**Tips for an interview:**

- Please refer to our leaflet on interview. The information on these will help to boost your confidence in interview situations.
- As previously mentioned, honesty is always the best policy, a criminal matter honestly explained during an interview may have much less negative impact that hiding it and having an employer discover it later.
- Give a clear and straightforward account of the conviction, with brief details of the offence, sentence and date. It is important to move forward in the conversation by explaining why you think the conviction is no longer relevant. Take the opportunity to explain your achievements since the conviction, your change in attitude and any problems you have overcome. Take time to emphasise the positive things you can do.

Try not to get discouraged during your search, remember you only need one job. The key is the right attitude. Once you get that first job do it to the best of your ability and persevere to ensure you keep it. As time goes by you will develop a successful job history that outweighs past problems, just remember that it will take time.

How useful was this information sheet tot you? Let us know your feedback. Please contact [Jobsplus@hyde-housing.co.uk](mailto:Jobsplus@hyde-housing.co.uk)

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