



# CQE CERTIFICATES OF QUALIFICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Relief from criminal-record based job barriers

## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE ABOUT CQE'S?

According to the Ohio Justice & Policy Center (OJPC), **1 in 6** Ohioans (over 16%) have a felony or misdemeanor conviction. Research suggests that Ohio is losing \$2 billion GDP annually because these people are excluded by over-restrictive criminal record-based barriers.\* In prior years, the only legal tool for overcoming these obstacles was "expungement" or sealing a record. In 2012, state legislation created Certificates of Qualification for Employment (CQEs) to reintegrate these forgotten workers back into our economy.

## RESEARCH LEGAL BARRIERS & HOW THEY AFFECT YOU

OJPC has developed an easy-to-use tool for identifying the state-law barriers triggered by a particular criminal offense.

For more information visit: <https://ohiojpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CQE-Workbook-May-2020.pdf>

This program is not a substitute for a licensed attorney, but it is a starting point for research and can be used by anyone.

\*Source: Ohio Justice & Policy Center (nd) [https://ohiojpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CQEs-and-Employers\\_Mutual-Benefit.pdf](https://ohiojpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CQEs-and-Employers_Mutual-Benefit.pdf) }

## CQE'S ERASE TWO TYPES OF JOB BARRIERS

### ERASING MANDATORY LEGAL BARRIERS

Many Ohio laws prevent people with criminal records from obtaining certain licenses or from working in certain jobs. **CQEs create relief from mandatory restrictions**-- laws that prevent the person with a specific criminal record from working or being licensed in Ohio. Rather than relying on the restrictions, employers individually assess someone with a CQE--it creates flexibility.

**A CQE does not guarantee the job**- it allows the employer to let you into the field of employment.

**A CQE creates a "rebuttable presumption" when you apply for professional licensing, certification or employment**--that a person's criminal convictions are insufficient evidence that the person is unfit for the license, employment opportunity or certification in question.

### ERASING EMPLOYER FEAR

**The #1 reason** employers request criminal-record checks and do not hire people with a criminal record is they are afraid that, if a new employee does something bad in the future, the employer will get sued. When a job applicant has a CQE, the employer can be confident they won't get sued in that way. The CQE creates immunity from negligent-hiring lawsuits.

