



National H.I.R.E. Network's Article of the Month

Certificates of Rehabilitation

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States are increasingly looking for ways to increase employment opportunities for jobseekers with criminal records, while continuing to balance public safety. Short of a full pardon, or some other form of sealing, erasure or expungement, Certificates of Rehabilitation can serve as an essential resource to support labor market entry and reentry of qualified jobseekers with criminal records. In some states, certificates serve to lift statutory bars to jobs, licenses or other necessities, such as housing, resulting from a conviction history. Certificates may be used to provide a way for qualified people with criminal records to demonstrate evidence of rehabilitation or a commitment to rehabilitation.

While only [six states](#) currently have laws authorizing certificates of rehabilitation or similar means of removing legal barriers arising from a criminal record, the national HIRE Network has increasingly been called upon by local advocates and policymakers to assist with strategizing around the creation of some form of Certificate. While the National HIRE Network believes that people should have an opportunity to escape the stigma attached to a criminal history through some form of expungement, sealing or erasure, especially when the criminal history is old, minor, or an arrest that ended in a favorable disposition, we believe that certificates can effectively serve as an intermediary resource to help facilitate successful reintegration.

For a Certificate of Rehabilitation toolkit, see <http://www.lac.org/toolkits/Introduction.htm>. This kit helps those advocating for legislation to create certificates that lift automatic bars to employment, occupational licenses and public housing.

In addition, the National HIRE Network recently testified at the Connecticut General Assembly in support of H.B. Raised Bill No. 5781, "An Act Concerning Certificates of Employability and Rehabilitation." To read the testimony, please [click here](#).