


DATE: December 1, 2014
TO: Michael Smith, Human Resources Director
FROM: Dennis Beach, City Manager 
SUBJECT: Ban the Box Initiative

This will provide confirmation to you that I am directing the Human Resources Department to discontinue inquiries on City applications concerning candidate's criminal history. This will allow qualified candidates the opportunity to present their credentials instead of being screened out based on potentially outdated and unrelated convictions.

I do appreciate that even when the application did contain a question about criminal history that it was HR's policy and practice not to have a blanket ban on applicants with criminal histories. I believe this new policy will assure that persons who have completed their sentences will have a heightened potential for a second chance. And, with this change, applicants will be considered for employment based on their skills and abilities applicable to the employment opportunity.

The implementation of this "Ban the Box" policy will not change the current practice of conducting post interview background checks which include inquiries about the candidate's past work record, driving history and criminal history. If a criminal conviction is discovered, consideration will be given to the nature of the offense, how long ago the offense occurred and the relationship to the position being sought, the applicant's employment history and efforts at rehabilitation.

I have noted that the new online application system that went live in September does not make inquiries about past criminal history. I thank you for taking this initiative based on our informal discussions.

For obvious reasons, certain offenses are going to cause possible rejection of candidates. Examples would include drug trafficking, charges which would indicate the candidate is prone to violent behavior, sexual predator convictions and other such crimes that could subject citizens and other city employees to potential harm. I also strongly believe that it is an employer's duty to ensure a safe business environment for their employees and customers. It remains City policy that our objective is to always hire the best candidate to serve the community.

cc: Phyllis Korab, Assistant City Manager
Greg Harrison, Assistant City Manager