

## **Resolution : “Ban The Box”**

**Whereas**, a criminal record is frequently a barrier to employment for a person with a prior criminal conviction; and

**Whereas**, one in three South Carolinians has a criminal record and, as a result, face pervasive and open-ended employment discrimination; and

**Whereas**, banning the box laws do not eliminate background checks but delays job applicants from having to disclose their criminal record early in the application process which increases discrimination and decreases employment; and

**Whereas**, “Banning the box” gives applicants an opportunity to be evaluated on qualifications and skill set; and

**Whereas**, the lack of employment for a person with a prior criminal conviction is a significant barrier to successful return to the community and has a major influence on the person’s likelihood to offend; and

**Whereas**, Richland County Council is committed both to public safety and economic opportunity; and

**Whereas**, Richland County Council believes that people who have successfully completed their sentences deserve a second chance and a possibility for successful community reintegration; and

**Whereas**, Richland County Council believes treatment and rehabilitation can be effective, and that a past offense should not solely determine future employment opportunity; and

**Whereas**, removing barriers to employment results in improved economic opportunity, increased civic engagement, less reliance on public benefits, and a workforce with more diverse experiences and perspectives; and

**Whereas**, Richland County Council wishes to help otherwise qualified citizens with a prior criminal history by providing an opportunity to compete equally for Richland County employment.

**Be It Therefore Resolved** by the Richland County Council that Richland County will demonstrate its commitment to equal employment opportunity for otherwise qualified individuals with a prior criminal conviction by:

- Eliminating the requirement to disclose past criminal history on the County’s initial employment application, except for positions that require a full background check due to the nature of the work.
- Requiring that a job applicant be selected for an interview before being asked about a criminal record, or before performing a background check, due to the nature of the work, on the applicant.
- Providing for individualized consideration of criminal history circumstances, where applicable.
- Encouraging the selection of applicants based on job skills and qualifications, without consideration of past convictions, whenever possible.