

The value of Certificates of Employability

To certificate holders

- Certificates of Employability make it easier for individuals with prior criminal convictions to find jobs or get professional licenses.
- Certificates of Employability help individuals with prior criminal convictions provide for themselves and their families.

To employers and licensing agencies

- Certificates give employers and licensing agencies an official decision that a particular individual should be eligible for a job or a professional license even though he or she has prior criminal convictions.

To the general public

- Certificates of Employability support the public policy of encouraging the rehabilitation of individuals with prior criminal convictions through employment.

More Information

Certificate Review Unit
Judicial Branch Court Support
Services Division
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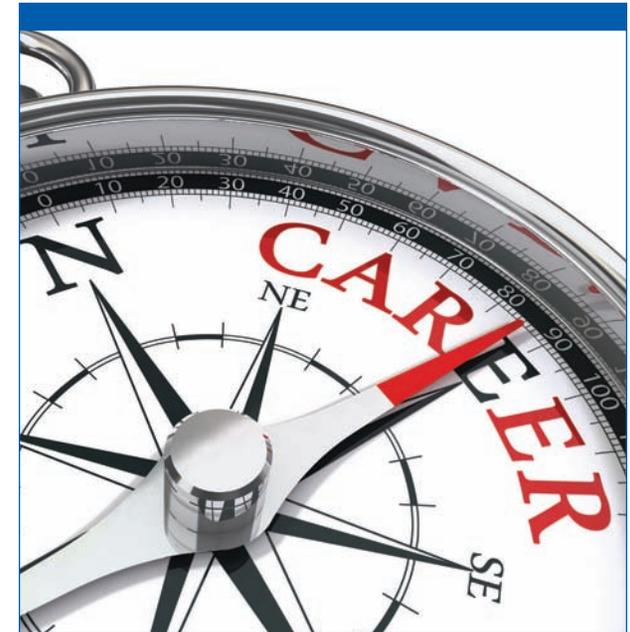
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Certificates of Employability

State of Connecticut
Judicial Branch
Court Support Services Division



1. What is a Certificate of Employability?

A Certificate of Employability is a form of relief from the barriers and forfeitures to employment or the issuance of professional licenses as a result of a criminal conviction that may be granted to an eligible offender by the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch (CSSD) or the Board of Pardons and Paroles. When CSSD or the Board of Pardons and Paroles issues a Certificate of Employability, it tells potential and current employers and/or licensing agencies that CSSD or the Board of Pardons and Paroles believes that the certificate holder's prior conviction(s) should not prevent him or her from getting a job or a professional license. Also, depending on the circumstances, CSSD and the Board of Pardons and Paroles can issue Certificates of Employability that apply only to specific barriers or forfeitures or specific convictions, or they can issue certificates that apply to all barriers and forfeitures and all of an individual's convictions.

2. Are there protections against employment discrimination based on criminal conviction?

Yes, unless federal or state law imposes a mandatory disability that prevents certain offenders from taking part in certain types of employment or applying for certain types of licenses. Otherwise, the law requires employers to consider a number of factors when reviewing employment applications, including whether the applicant has a Certificate of Employability. Generally, employers and licensing agencies are not allowed to deny an application because of a criminal record alone unless:

- There is a direct relationship between one or more of the applicant's previous criminal offenses and the specific job or license for which the applicant is applying; or
- Hiring the applicant or issuing him or her a license would create an unreasonable risk to property or to the safety or welfare of specific individuals or the general public.

In addition, employers are not allowed to ask about or consider any arrests that did not lead to a criminal conviction.

3. Who is eligible for a Certificate of Employability?

Any Connecticut resident who has been convicted of a crime or crimes in any jurisdiction and is currently being supervised by CSSD is eligible to apply for a Certificate of Employability through CSSD. This includes any resident who is being supervised by CSSD because he or she was sentenced to probation by the court as well as any resident who is being supervised by CSSD for any other reason, such as taking part in a pretrial diversionary program, who has at least one prior criminal conviction.

Residents who are not being supervised by CSSD may still be eligible to apply for a Certificate of Employability with the Board of Pardons and Paroles. Those residents can apply for a Certificate of Employability from the Board of Pardons and Paroles if they have been convicted of a crime or crimes in any jurisdiction and are under the jurisdiction of the Board of Pardons and Paroles.

4. What effect does a Certificate of Employability have on the status of someone's criminal record?

A Certificate of Employability may only remove some or all of the mandatory legal bars to employment or professional licenses that are imposed as a result of one or more criminal convictions. It does not erase or hide an individual's criminal record or allow that individual to retain or become eligible for public office or work in law enforcement.

A Certificate of Employability issued by CSSD may be revoked if the certificate holder is being supervised by CSSD and violates the terms of his or her supervision. Also, CSSD will revoke any Certificate of Employability that was issued by CSSD if the certificate holder is convicted of a crime at any point after getting a certificate, even if the certificate holder is no longer being supervised by CSSD.

5. Where can I get more information about Certificates of Employability?

Public Act 14-27 deals with Certificates of Rehabilitation/Employability, and may be found at: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2014/act/pa/pdf/2014PA-00027-R00SB-00153-PA.pdf>. You can also visit the websites of both the Judicial Branch at: http://jud.ct.gov/CSSD/cert_emp.htm and the Board of Pardons and Paroles at: <http://www.ct.gov/bopp/cwp/view.asp?a=4331&q=508294>.