



SECOND CHANCE OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING REFORM IN IDAHO

February 2024

In Idaho, state law often prevents ex-offenders from working in occupations that require a license, even if they have served their time and the crime was nonviolent.

Idaho has an incarceration rate of



761 per 100,000¹ people.



OVER

4,000

people in Idaho are released from prison each year and reenter society.²



35% of ex-offenders in Idaho are arrested again

in three years following their release, often because of a **failure to reintegrate into society and find a job.**³

Recidivism costs Idaho more than

\$94

million annually.⁴



Former inmates who **stay employed for one year** post-release are

35% LESS LIKELY

to commit another crime compared to those who don't have a job.



NEARLY **1 in 5** jobs in Idaho requires a license.⁵



9%

States with **more barriers** to occupational licensing experienced a **9% increase** in recidivism rates.⁶

States with **fewer barriers** experienced a **2.5% decrease** in recidivism rates.⁷

2.5%

Idaho policymakers should support occupational licensing reforms that create a path for ex-offenders without a history of violent felonies or sexual offenses to earn a license, such as:

- ★ Require licensing boards to consider whether an ex-offender has been rehabilitated, personal character references, and other materials during the application process.
- ★ Provide denied applicants with a path to appeal a licensing board's decision.
- ★ Require licensing boards to notify applicants of the board's decision in writing.
- ★ Prevent licensing boards from denying a license to an ex-offender due to a crime committed many years ago for which the threat of recidivism is low.
- ★ Block licensing boards from denying a license to an ex-offender based on their criminal records unless the crime is directly related to the occupation.
- ★ Prevent licensing boards from denying a license to an applicant based on an arrest that did not lead to a conviction of a crime.