



CQE

CERTIFICATE OF QUALIFICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

A CQE is a certificate which aids in removing barriers to employment or licensing in the State of Ohio for individuals who are subject to a civil impact (prior criminal conviction), granted from the Common Pleas Court.

Who is Eligible to Apply?*

- MUST BE CONVICTED IN OHIO
- MUST BE AN OHIO RESIDENT
- RELIEF FROM FELONY CONVICTION:
PETITION MAY BE FILED ONE YEAR AFTER
RELEASE AND ALL PERIODS OF SUPERVISION
- RELIEF FROM MISDEMEANOR CONVICTION:
PETITION MAY BE FILED SIX MONTHS AFTER
RELEASE AND ALL PERIODS OF SUPERVISION
 - If **not** incarcerated, petition may be filed **six months** from the date of final release from all court sanctions imposed.
 - If incarcerated, at any time **after six months** of release of the individual from incarceration and all periods of supervision imposed after release from the period of incarceration.

*There are exceptions to the waiting period based on academic and vocational achievement during incarceration.

How to Apply



REGISTER ONLINE

Complete the online registration process at www.drccqe.com and create an account. Save username and password.



APPLY & SUBMIT APPLICATION

Under "View Petition Now", use the "Apply Now" button to fill out all elements of the application. You may submit online when finished for the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) to review.



MONITOR YOUR INBOX

Routinely check your email for updates regarding your application. This process takes an average of 3-6 months.



FILE IN COURT (IF APPROVED)

Print the completed, approved application and file with the Clerk of Courts in your residing county. There is a \$50 filing fee or you may inquire with the court for a filing fee waiver. The final step prior to approval is an investigation.





CQE CERTIFICATES OF QUALIFICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Relief from criminal-record based job barriers

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE ABOUT CQE'S?

According to the Ohio Justice & Policy Center (OJPC), **1 in 6** Ohioans (over 16%) have a felony or misdemeanor conviction. Research suggests that Ohio is losing \$2 billion GDP annually because these people are excluded by over-restrictive criminal record-based barriers.* In prior years, the only legal tool for overcoming these obstacles was "expungement" or sealing a record. In 2012, state legislation created Certificates of Qualification for Employment (CQEs) to reintegrate these forgotten workers back into our economy.

RESEARCH LEGAL BARRIERS & HOW THEY AFFECT YOU

OJPC has developed an easy-to-use tool for identifying the state-law barriers triggered by a particular criminal offense.

For more information visit: <https://ohiojpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CQE-Workbook-May-2020.pdf>

This program is not a substitute for a licensed attorney, but it is a starting point for research and can be used by anyone.

CQE'S ERASE TWO TYPES OF JOB BARRIERS

ERASING MANDATORY LEGAL BARRIERS

Many Ohio laws prevent people with criminal records from obtaining certain licenses or from working in certain jobs. **CQEs create relief from mandatory restrictions**-- laws that prevent the person with a specific criminal record from working or being licensed in Ohio. Rather than relying on the restrictions, employers individually assess someone with a CQE--it creates flexibility.

A CQE does not guarantee the job- it allows the employer to let you into the field of employment.

A CQE creates a "rebuttable presumption" when you apply for professional licensing, certification or employment--that a person's criminal convictions are insufficient evidence that the person is unfit for the license, employment opportunity or certification in question.

ERASING EMPLOYER FEAR

The #1 reason employers request criminal-record checks and do not hire people with a criminal record is they are afraid that, if a new employee does something bad in the future, the employer will get sued. When a job applicant has a CQE, the employer can be confident they won't get sued in that way. The CQE creates immunity from negligent-hiring lawsuits.

*Source: Ohio Justice & Policy Center (nd) https://ohiojpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CQEs-and-Employers_Mutual-Benefit.pdf