

Ohio Justice and Policy Center

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://ohiojpc.org/2018/04/02/happy-second-chance-month/>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

by [Marais Jacon-Duffy](#) | Apr 2, 2018 | [Blog](#), [Second Chance](#)

As in years past, April is nationally recognized as Second Chance Month.

[A White House press release](#) said the monthlong observance will encourage Americans to provide opportunities for people with criminal records to earn an honest second chance, as affording those who have been held accountable for their crimes an opportunity to become contributing members of society is a critical element of criminal justice.

We couldn't agree more.

Providing second chances is a cornerstone in OJPC's philosophy. People shouldn't be forever defined by their worst mistake and redemption should be an end goal for those entering and working within our criminal justice system.

OJPC's [Second Chance Community Legal Clinics](#) led by [Dorianne Mason](#) are meant to help people navigate the many nuances of the criminal justice system, particularly returning citizens who want to work and contribute to society.

The [CIVICC database project](#) is a tool and an eye-opening look at the restrictions placed on people with criminal records. For example, did you know that the state licensing board for cosmetology can refuse to grant a license to someone due to a conviction of a felony or misdemeanor performed in a licensed or permitted facility [OAC 4713-1-07(A)(12)]?

OJPC also advocates for legislation that would [promote second chances](#) for people with criminal records. Ohio successfully [banned the box](#) in 2015, which prohibited employers from asking about a person's criminal background in a job application.

Women who survived domestic abuse and human trafficking [can also seek second chances](#) with possibilities for expungement, sealed records and clemency for crimes committed while under the control of an abuser or trafficker.

This month, we'll focus primarily on second chance employment for people with criminal records.

We spoke to our second chance clients about their experience after release from prison and jail. We asked, What is the most frustrating thing you've endured? What do you want everyone to know about people with criminal records?

We also asked our second chance clients to describe their lives in six words. These brief-yet-insightful descriptions will be shared throughout the month on social media, using #MyLifeIn6Words. Be sure to like [OJPC's Facebook page](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to see these stories all month long.

Below: Some #MyLifeIn6Words responses from OJPC clients

Register for one of OJPC's virtual legal clinics [here](#).

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