



Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation

JB PRITZKER
Governor

DEBORAH HAGAN
Acting Secretary

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

IDFPR Releases a Report Highlighting that Less than 1 Percent of Eligible License Applicants are Denied Because of Past Convictions

CHICAGO, Illinois – May 1, 2019 – The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation published a report today highlighting that prior convictions are rarely a bar to obtaining a license. Of the hundreds of eligible applicants, less than one percent were denied a license, in whole or in part, because of their prior record.

The Department is committed to minimizing barriers to licensure and making the application process easier for formerly incarcerated applicants. The Department has begun to redesign its communications to make it easier for potential licensees with a criminal conviction to understand the steps they should take to complete their application. The Department has also licensed and supported training programs in the Illinois Department of Corrections that provide important bridges to occupational licensure and reintegration into the workforce.

“Becoming a licensed professional is a gateway to economic opportunity,” said Acting IDFPR Secretary Deborah Hagan, “the Department is dedicated to removing all unnecessary obstacles to obtaining a professional license for applicants who have served their time and I encourage all qualified applicants to apply.”

Reporting data related to criminal convictions and license applications was put in place in 2018 by legislation aimed at minimizing barriers to occupation licensure for individuals who have served time in the criminal justice system. The Department supported that initiative and is making further improvements to its processes that support that goal. Studies have repeatedly found that employment helps formerly incarcerated people gain economic stability after release and reduces recidivism.