



Certificates of Qualification for Employment

“CQE”

What is a CQE?

- CQEs provide relief from mandatory restrictions that persons with criminal records face when seeking employment or licensure in certain fields. CQEs also provide immunity to employers from negligent-hiring lawsuits.
- A CQE is NOT expungement, but it is an additional or alternative option to overcoming legal job barriers. It gives employers the opportunity to evaluate each individual in terms of their ability to do the job, rather than their criminal record.
- A CQE is granted by the Court of Common Pleas where the applicant resides.
 - The applicant must submit a 15 page petition, which is thoroughly reviewed by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and the Court of Common Pleas.
- Read more about CQEs at www.drc.ohio.gov/cqe

Why should an employer hire someone with a CQE?

At least 1.92 million people in Ohio, or one in six, have a misdemeanor or felony conviction. Criminal convictions are not uncommon, and the lifelong penalties are devastating. Criminal background checks are necessary requirements for many professions and licensures. Because of this, many skilled and knowledgeable applicants are unable to obtain high quality employment, and employers are limited in who they can hire. CQEs ensure that employers have control over hiring the applicant they want by providing relief from mandatory bars and by providing employers legal immunity from negligent hiring suits.

Other benefits to an employer

- Ohio Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Federal Bonding Program

CQEs do not apply in certain circumstances:

- Sex offense requirements.
- License suspension, cancellation or revocation which occurred due to 12+ points, vehicular homicide or vehicular manslaughter, DUI or failure to consent to blood, breath or urine test, if relief is available by law to grant limited driving privileges.
- Restrictions on employment as a prosecutor or law enforcement officer.
- A health care professional license if convicted of, or eligible for intervention in lieu of conviction, for aggravated murder, murder, voluntary manslaughter, felonious assault, kidnapping, rape, sexual battery, gross sexual imposition, aggravated arson, aggravated robbery, aggravated burglary, or unlawful distribution of an abortion inducing drug.
- Immediate suspension of health care professional license for addiction or improperly distributing a controlled substance.
- Denial of employment at a pain clinic (a category III distributor of dangerous drugs).
- Suspension of license of health care professional for failure to pay child support.

You can verify an applicant's CQE at
<http://www.drc.ohio.gov/web/cqe.htm>

Note: A CQE will be revoked if the applicant is convicted of a felony after receiving a CQE.

Ohio Poverty Law Center

The Ohio Poverty Law Center's mission is to reduce poverty and increase justice by protecting and expanding the legal rights of all Ohioans living, working, and raising their families in poverty.

This publication was financially assisted by the Ohio State Bar Foundation. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the Ohio State Bar Foundation.