



Board of Supervisors Memorandum

November 10, 2015

Proposed Resolution Authorizing Removal of the Criminal History Check Box from the Standard Pima County Job Application Form

Background

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness nationally that individuals with criminal records deserve a fair chance to be considered for employment based on their qualifications rather than being rejected solely because of the stigma of a past conviction. Such awareness has resulted in a national initiative called "Ban the Box," which seeks the removal of the checkbox that typically has appeared prominently on most job applications to indicate whether the applicant has a criminal record. To date, 18 states, the District of Columbia, and more than 100 cities and counties (including the City of Tucson) have adopted "Ban the Box" policies. In addition, major national employers such as Target, Walmart, Home Depot, Starbucks and Koch Industries have "banned the box."

The policy objectives of the "Ban the Box" initiative are clearly aligned with our Economic Development Plan for 2015 through 2017, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on August 11, 2015. Chapter 13 of the Plan addresses the role of economic development in ending poverty and discusses the cost impacts associated with incarceration and recidivism on Pima County and the community. The inability of individuals with a criminal history to obtain employment after they have "paid their debt to society" clearly contributes to poverty, recidivism and increased crime. Such a policy also is consistent with the County's MacArthur Foundation planning grant work, which seeks to identify ways to safely reduce incarceration and improve the transition of inmates on their release back into the community.

Attached is Resolution 2015-____, which authorizes the removal of the criminal history check box from the standard Pima County job application. The Resolution directs the Human Resources Department to determine which positions would still require background checks because of their work with vulnerable populations or their safety-sensitive nature and to develop such policies and procedures as are necessary to implement this policy and conduct appropriate background checks as needed. This Resolution was reviewed by the Pima County Justice Coordinating Council at its September 10, 2015 meeting, and no concerns or objections to its adoption were expressed.

Recommendation

I recommend the Board of Supervisors approve the attached Resolution 2015-____ authorizing the removal of the criminal history questions from Pima County's Job Application.

The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

Re: **Proposed Resolution Authorizing Removal of the Criminal History Check Box from the
Standard Pima County Job Application Form**

October 28, 2015

Page 2

Respectfully submitted,



C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/mjk – October 28, 2015

Attachment

c: The Honorable Barbara LaWall, County Attorney
Amelia Cramer, Chief Deputy County Attorney
Tom Burke, Deputy County Administrator for Administration
Ellen Wheeler, Assistant County Administrator
Allyn Bulzomi, Director, Human Resources

RESOLUTION 2015-

**PIMA COUNTY RESOLUTION
TO AUTHORIZE THE REMOVAL OF CRIMINAL HISTORY
QUESTIONS FROM PIMA COUNTY JOB APPLICATIONS**

WHEREAS "Ban the Box" is a national movement with the goal of increasing employment opportunities for people with past criminal convictions by removing questions from the employment application regarding criminal history; and

WHEREAS many counties and cities throughout the United States have adopted "Ban the Box" policies to ease barriers to employment for those with past criminal convictions; and

WHEREAS the inability to obtain employment contributes to poverty, recidivism and increased crime; and

WHEREAS Pima County desires to assist otherwise qualified individuals with criminal histories by affording them an opportunity to compete equally for public employment and thereby assist them in successfully reintegrating into the community, and

WHEREAS positions that involve work with vulnerable populations, including children and the elderly, and safety-sensitive positions will continue to require full criminal background investigations for applicants;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Pima County Board of Supervisors that the County will no longer require disclosure of past criminal history on the standard job application form. The County's Department of Human Resources is directed to determine which positions will continue to require background checks, due to their work with vulnerable populations or the safety-sensitive nature of the positions, and to develop recommendations for such policies and procedures as may be necessary to implement this policy.

Passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors of Pima County, Arizona, this ____ day of _____, 2015.

Chair, Pima County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Deputy County Attorney

TOM WEAVER