



Broward County

Legislation Text

File #: 20-1648, Version: 1

Broward County Commission Regular Meeting

Director's Name: Dale V.C. Holness

Department: County Commission

Information

Requested Action

MOTION TO DIRECT Office of the County Attorney to draft an Ordinance to require that County contractors and vendors "ban the box" on job applications and delay inquiry of a job applicant's criminal history. (Mayor Holness)

Why Action is Necessary

Board direction is required to direct the Office of the County Attorney to draft an Ordinance amending the Broward County Code of Ordinances.

What Action Accomplishes

Directs the Office of the County Attorney to draft an Ordinance for Board consideration.

Is this Action Goal Related

No

Previous Action Taken

Summary Explanation/Background

In 2016, Broward County adopted a "Ban the Box" Ordinance pursuant to which Broward County job applicants are not asked on their job application if they have been arrested or have a criminal background. To date, 35 states and over 150 cities and counties have enacted "Ban the Box" laws and many private employers have adopted "Ban the Box" policies so that employers consider a job candidate's qualifications first - without the stigma of a conviction or arrest record. The policies provide applicants a fair chance at employment by removing the conviction history question from job applications and delaying background checks until later in the hiring process.

These fair-chance policies benefit everyone, not just people with criminal records, because they are good for families, local communities, and the overall economy. There are an estimated 70 million U.S. adults with arrests or convictions, many of whom are turned away from jobs despite their skills and qualifications. The "box" on a job application is a barrier because it has a chilling effect that discourages people from applying. It also artificially narrows the applicant pool of qualified workers when employers toss out applications with the checked box, regardless of the applicant's merits or the relevancy of the conviction to the job. Both the employer and applicant lose out. Research affirms that a conviction record reduces the likelihood of a job callback or offer by nearly 50%.

This motion directs the Office of the County Attorney to draft an Ordinance that would require County contractors and vendors to “Ban the Box” in job applications and delay consideration of a job applicant’s arrest or criminal history until later in the hiring process.

Source of Additional Information

Heidi Richards, Chief of Staff, District 9, 954-357-7009

Fiscal Impact

Fiscal Impact/Cost Summary

None.