



Dear Los Angeles Employer:

On behalf of the City of Los Angeles, I am writing to thank you for your interest in the first-ever ***California Employers' Fair Chance Hiring Toolkit***. When the City of Los Angeles embarked upon this effort with our partners — the Los Angeles Metro Employer Advisory Council, Root & Rebound and others — our mission was to develop a document that would provide employers with policy recommendations and information on best practices to would help empower them to employ individuals with criminal records.

The numbers are telling. Over 70 million Americans have criminal records. An estimated one in four adult Californians has an arrest or conviction record on file with the state. And in the Los Angeles region, over 45,000 individuals are paroled to Los Angeles County annually from state prison, and approximately 120,000 pass through our County Jail system each year. Faced with these realities, it is imperative that we foster an environment that is welcoming to people who need second chances and create conditions in which they can thrive.

We know from years of research that employment is one of the most important factors in reducing recidivism. Indeed, while the state recidivism rate is over 65%, it plummets to between 3 and 8% when formerly incarcerated individuals are paired with jobs soon after release.

In addition to public safety concerns, engaging and employing individuals with past criminal justice involvement makes good business sense. First, by conservative estimates, barriers to employment faced by individuals with criminal records costs our country over \$70 billion annually. In California alone, the cost is nearly \$9 billion. In addition, the data confirms that the United States has an aging workforce and will soon have more vacant positions than employees to fill them.

In the City of Los Angeles we are very much aware of this reality, and are making a concerted effort to hire individuals from historically underrepresented or underemployed populations — including the formerly incarcerated — into our City's workforce.

Thank you for your interest in our toolkit. It is my sincere hope that after reading it, you feel educated and empowered to implement fair hiring practices for formerly incarcerated workers, and to develop best practices for recruiting, hiring, and training people who need second chances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the initials 'E.G.' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Mayor Eric Garcetti