

Ohio Justice & Policy Center: Second Chance Project

Healthy Neighborhoods Committee
Cincinnati City Council
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Second Chance Project

In 2004, OJPC began its Second Chance Project to help people overcome criminal-records-based barriers to employment, housing, education, and licensing.

Through free Second Chance Legal Clinics, OJPC helps people apply for record sealing, expungement, Certificates of Qualification for Employment (CQEs), pardons, and more.

The project has grown from individual client representation to include extensive statewide public education, legislative advocacy, and collaboration with community partners.



Hamilton County
**Office of
Reentry**



FOOD • CONNECTION • HOPE



Second Chance Services Offered

Second Chance Legal Services Offered:

1. Record Sealing and Traditional Expungement
2. “Safe Harbor” Expungement (for survivors of human trafficking only)
3. Certificate of Qualification for Employment (CQE)
4. Governor’s Expedited Pardon and Traditional Pardon
5. Housing-Related Legal Needs

OJPC Difference: We assist justice-impacted people with limited scope AND full representation *regardless of income*.

✓ Court representation for trickier cases – which includes additional advocacy like responding to objections.

✓ OJPC is the only organization with the expertise and experience to assist survivors of human trafficking with safe harbor expungement.

✓ OJPC is the only service provider in Cincinnati for the Governor’s Expedited Pardon Project.

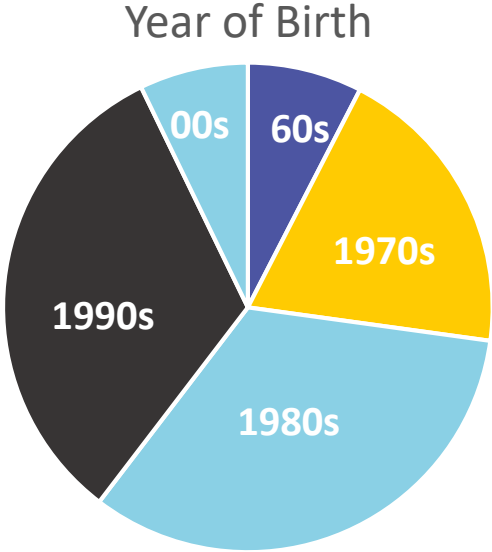


The Second Chance Legal Clinic operates in two important ways:

1. In-House Second Chance Legal Clinic: Operates year-round on a rolling basis.
 - We meet with clients in-person or virtually (depending on client's accessibility needs).
 - All prospective clients register through an online form at www.ohiojpc.org.
2. Pop-Up Second Chance Legal Clinic: Collaborative clinics in the community.
 - We meet with clients on-site at our community partner's campus or space.
 - All prospective clients pre-register through a special online form for that pop-up.
 - Pop-up clinic is scheduled on a designated date by appointment only.
 - Allows for clients to meet with attorneys in accessible, safe spaces.

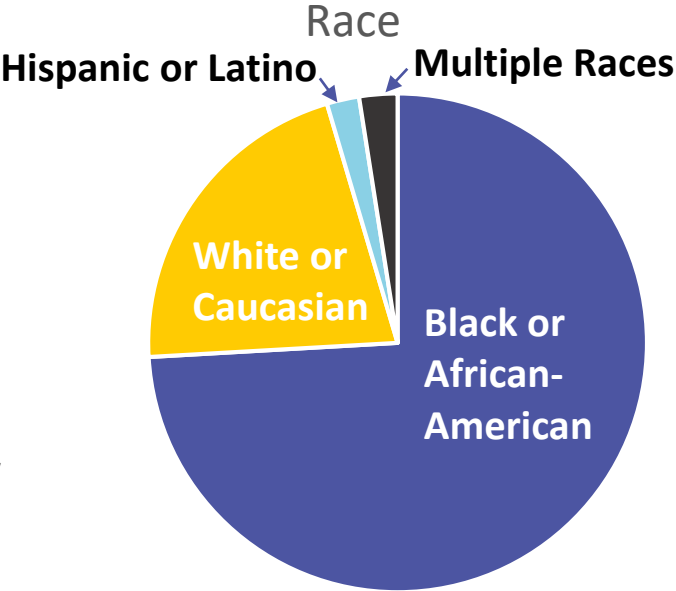
We offer limited scope “pro se” assistance through both clinical experiences with the possibility of full representation on a case-by-case basis (depending on complexities and client's comfort level with criminal justice system).

Client Demographics in 2024



20% answered: "Experiencing Homelessness"

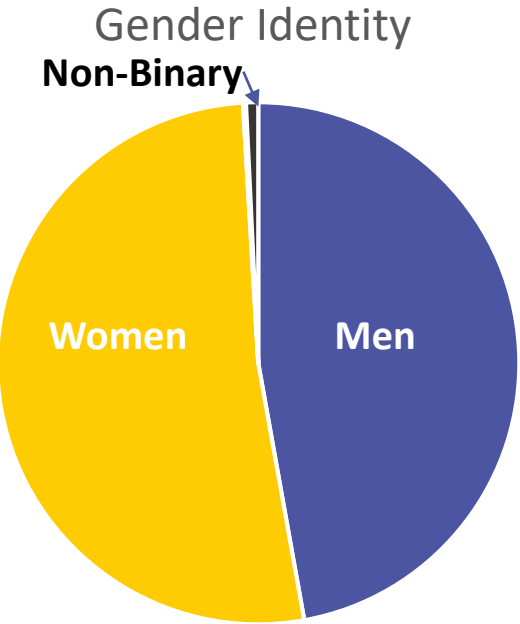
20% answered: "Have a Disability"



35% answered: "Experienced Domestic Violence"

38% answered: "Receives SNAP/Food Stamps"

61% answered: "Receives Medicaid"



Non-Binary

Background Checks can show...

- Traffic
- Non-convictions (not guilty, dismissed, ignored)
- Convictions for:
 - minor misdemeanors / tickets
 - misdemeanors
 - felonies
- Sealed offenses

It depends on the type of background check!

Collateral Consequences = Civil Impacts of Criminal Convictions

Laws and regulations that restrict people with criminal records

Includes **mandatory** and **discretionary** consequences affecting employment, housing, education, family, and civic-participation

► **For example, a conviction for misdemeanor Petty Theft (R.C. 2913.02(B)(2))**

Currently, there are more than **312 civil impacts** associated with this conviction, including mandatory restrictions such as:

- Ineligibility to teach in a community school;
- Ineligibility for employment in child-care center;
- Ineligibility for certification to be an in-home aide.

THANK YOU

