



# How to engage employers and other support agencies



**There are many opportunities for employers to engage with the prospect of hiring individuals with criminal convictions. Understandably, employers may not be aware of their options or where they could go to get further information.**

## **Events with local prisons**

Some employers, particularly those part of bigger organisations may be interested in hosting an event with a local prison where they could speak with the prisoners about their options upon release and discuss necessary skillsets. Not only will this boost morale and public opinion of the employer, but it would provide invaluable hope and encouragement for people currently in incarceration. It may even give them a goal to work towards.

Offploy can help with such an initiative. A guided prison tour where employers get to meet with potential prison candidates could be very helpful. There could be a conversation around what educational and professional training could be provided in the prison to better prepare them for the workforce.

## **Local vs national employers**

Generally, it will be easier to establish whether a large national employer is open to employing someone with a criminal conviction. It is great to have these big names like Greggs and Boots ready to look for vacancies, but often small local employers can be attracted to the idea as well. 'Support Local' has become a big trend during the pandemic and many employers will be open to supporting people within their own community.

There can also be assistance for local employers in creating their GDPR policies.

## **Advising employers/pointing them in the right direction**

Employment Advisors have a fantastic opportunity to advocate for ex-offenders with employers. We can emphasise to employers how they can be seen as being inclusive, diverse and socially responsible.



[Nacro](#) have some great information on companies that want to get involved in working with charities and supporting those with criminal convictions.

Employment Advisors can also advocate to employers encouraging them to investigate the various skill sets that can be provided through people that have been in prison as many prisons have great educational programmes which make ex-offenders very qualified. Also, when given the opportunity it is likely the participant will be extremely grateful and loyal to the employer for providing them with this opportunity.

[Gov.uk has a great page on 'reasons to work with prisoners and ex-offenders'.](#)

Advising employers of the different risks and going through some of the myths about offenders is a great first step. Success with an employer is most likely going to be achieved if the steps are outlined clearly and efficiently to them.

[This is a great piece of work compiling feedback from employers who have already taken the step to work with people with criminal convictions.](#)

## Overcoming adversity and managing risk

Many employers may be concerned about managing the risks of taking on someone who has a history of criminal behaviour. It is important employers will understand what DBS checks they should do and what will and will not show on the DBS check. [Unlock](#) have some great information about criminal records.

[Nacro](#) have a helpful section on their website about risk training for employers.

## Offploy hosts a free quarterly webinar where Employers get an introduction to recruiting people with criminal convictions.