



# Fair Chance Hiring: A Canadian Perspective

National Polling Results



# Canadians Believe in Fair Chances

In March 2020, the John Howard Society of Ontario (JHSO) partnered with Navigator to conduct a survey on Canadians' opinions surrounding hiring practices and employment eligibility for individuals with a criminal record. The online survey polled over 1,500 Canadians, age 18 and over, sampling a representative of the national average in terms of age, region, and education. This report summarizes some of the key findings.

## Can individuals with a record do the job? Do they deserve a second chance?

The answer to these two questions was a resounding yes. Survey findings showed that Canadians want to see others be given a second chance and believe that individuals can thrive when given the opportunity. By and large, Canadians agreed that employers should have inclusive hiring practices and policies that emphasize equal opportunity.

### Key Findings:

- **82%** agreed that individuals with a record should be given the chance to work again.
- **76%** agreed that those with a criminal record can do their job just as well as someone without a record.
- **75%** agreed that having a police record is not an indicator of a candidate's job performance.

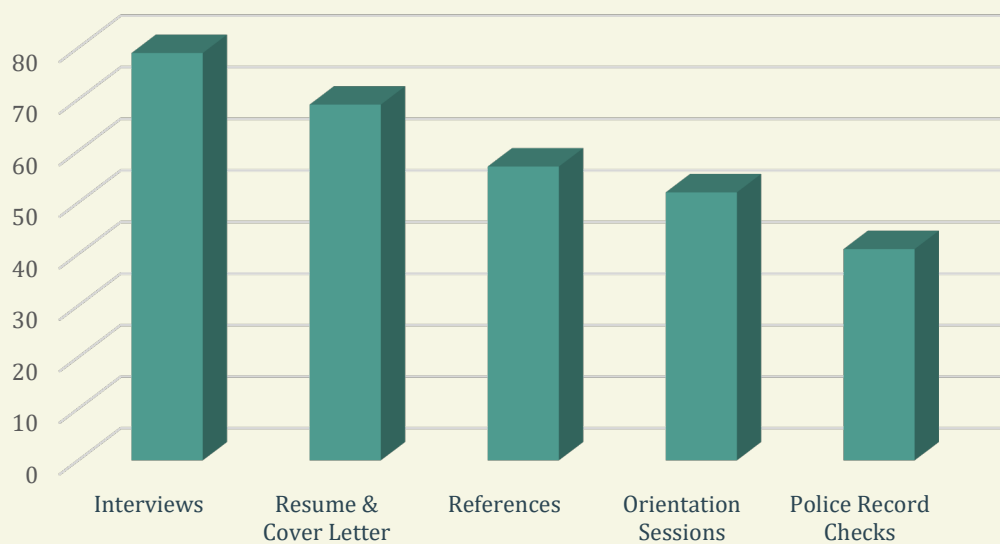
When asked about concerns around skillset or character, the perceptions of job candidates with criminal records were largely positive. In fact, the popular sentiment was a "root for" mentality with 82% of Canadians wanting to see individuals back in society.

## Are Record Checks Always Useful?

Canadians believe interviews, resumes, cover letters and reference checks are the most important routine employment screening requirements.

Only 41% of Canadians believed that police record checks should always be required when applying for a job, and this varied largely by industry.

What should always be required as essential vetting tools for hiring?



**Police records were seen as more important for select roles, industries, and positions.**

Police record checks were seen as less important for positions involving:

- General labour or construction
- Trades, maintenance, utilities, and manufacturing
- Lower responsibility or entry level positions

# Are Candidates Given Equal Opportunity?

85% of Canadians believed that companies do not have inclusive hiring practices or policies for individuals with a criminal record.

Unfortunately, they are largely correct. The reality is that there is a lack of understanding around criminal records and hiring practices that enables discrimination.

- **90%** of Canadians believed employers should always seek additional information or follow up with an interview when a candidate is flagged with a positive record check.
- **Over half** agreed that helping record holders to become employed citizens would make an employer stand out positively.
- **58%** said they would be more likely to buy or use products or services from a company if they offered employment opportunities to those with a criminal record.
- **Millennials are even more supportive.** 68% of respondents aged 18-34 said they would be more likely to purchase products from a company if they offered employment opportunities to those with a criminal record, a score 10% higher than the national average.



[www.fairchances.ca](http://www.fairchances.ca)