

# Employer Guide

Hiring ex-offenders — the business case, the legal framework and how we support you

**90%+**

EMPLOYERS WHO HIRE EX-OFFENDERS RATE THEM AS RELIABLE AND MOTIVATED (MOJ/VERIAN, 2023)

**£0**

UPFRONT COST TO YOU — ADVANCE 2 GO HANDLES CANDIDATE PREPARATION, LEGAL GUIDANCE AND POST-PLACEMENT SUPPORT

**300+**

MAJOR UK EMPLOYERS NOW SIGNED UP TO BAN THE BOX — INCLUDING GREGGS, BOOTS AND THE NHS

**26 wks**

WE STAY WITH YOU AND YOUR NEW EMPLOYEE FOR 26 WEEKS POST-PLACEMENT — NOT JUST TO THE POINT OF JOB OFFER

## Why This Matters

Over 11 million people in the UK have a criminal record. Many are skilled, experienced and highly motivated — but excluded from the labour market by a box on an application form that asks about convictions before a hiring decision has even started.

Employers who get past that box consistently report that ex-offenders are among their most loyal and motivated employees. People who have worked hard to rebuild their lives know what is at stake. They value opportunity because they know what it costs to earn it.

Advance 2 Go makes it simple, legally compliant and genuinely rewarding — for your business and for the people you hire.

*"Employers who hire ex-offenders consistently report higher-than-average retention, motivation and loyalty. The evidence is clear — the barrier is not capability. It is access."*

West Yorkshire returns over 2,000 people from custody each year. That is a significant, underutilised talent pool — and Advance 2 Go is the specialist organisation connecting it to employers willing to look beyond a conviction.

## The Business Case

### LOYAL, MOTIVATED STAFF

Ex-offenders who have earned their way back to work through effort and determination bring exceptional motivation. Retention rates among this group consistently exceed sector averages.

### SOCIAL VALUE CREDENTIALS

Demonstrate genuine social impact to clients, commissioners and investors. We provide full documentation for ESG reporting, social value assessments and supply chain requirements.

### GOVERNMENT INCENTIVES

Access government-backed schemes available to employers who hire prison leavers, including the New Futures Network, work placement programmes and employment incentive grants.

### FULL LEGAL SUPPORT

We handle all disclosure guidance, DBS check advice and fair recruitment compliance — so you can focus on the candidate, not the paperwork.

### WORK-READY CANDIDATES

Every candidate we put forward has been assessed, coached and fully prepared — CV, interview skills, disclosure conversation handled — before they meet you.

### 26-WEEK SUPPORT

We stay with both you and your new employee for 26 weeks post-placement. If issues arise, we are there to help resolve them — before they become departures.

# The Legal Framework — What You Need to Know

Many employers are uncertain about their legal obligations when hiring someone with a criminal record. The framework is clearer than most people think — and in many cases, the law is on the side of the candidate, not the employer.

## The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA) is the key piece of legislation. It means that many convictions become "spent" after a rehabilitation period, and once spent, candidates are legally entitled to treat them as if they never happened. They do not have to disclose spent convictions on most job applications, and you are not entitled to ask.

SENTENCE RECEIVED	REHABILITATION PERIOD (ADULT)	WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU
Prison sentence over 4 years	Never spent	Candidate must disclose if asked — but you must still assess proportionately
Prison sentence 30 months - 4 years	7 years from end of sentence	Once spent, candidate does not have to disclose and you cannot ask
Prison sentence 6 - 30 months	4 years from end of sentence	Once spent, candidate does not have to disclose and you cannot ask
Prison sentence under 6 months	2 years from end of sentence	Once spent, candidate does not have to disclose and you cannot ask
Community order / fine / caution	1 year or less	Likely already spent for most of the people you will meet

### EXCEPTIONS — ROLES REQUIRING FULL DISCLOSURE

Some roles are exempt from the ROA and require disclosure of all convictions, including spent ones. These are primarily roles working with children, vulnerable adults, in healthcare or in positions of financial trust. For most standard employment roles, the ROA applies in full. Advance 2 Go will advise you on which regime applies to your specific vacancy.

## DBS Checks

A DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check is not required for every role. The level of check you are entitled to request depends on the nature of the role. Requesting a check you are not entitled to is a criminal offence. Advance 2 Go will advise on the appropriate level for your specific role.

CHECK LEVEL	WHEN IT APPLIES
Basic	Any role — shows unspent convictions only. Available to any employer.
Standard	Roles in law, financial services, security — shows spent and unspent convictions.
Enhanced	Roles with children or vulnerable adults — shows spent and unspent plus local police intelligence.
Enhanced with barred list check	Regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults — also checks barred lists.

## The Equality Act 2010

While criminal record history is not itself a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, discrimination in hiring on the basis of race, religion, disability or other protected characteristics — which may correlate with conviction history in some populations — remains unlawful. Fair, individual assessment of each candidate is both good practice and legal protection for you.

## How Advance 2 Go Works With You

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### TELL US WHAT YOU NEED

Share your vacancy, your requirements and any concerns. We will advise on DBS requirements, disclosure obligations and the best approach for your specific role and sector.

### WE IDENTIFY THE RIGHT CANDIDATE

**02** We match your vacancy to work-ready candidates from our pipeline — people who have been assessed for suitability, skills and commitment and who are ready to meet you.

**03** **WE PREPARE THEM FULLY**  
Every candidate is CV-ready, interview-coached and legally advised on their disclosure obligations before they meet you. The disclosure conversation has already happened — there are no surprises.

**04** **WE STAY WITH YOU BOTH**  
After placement we remain available to both you and your new employee for 26 weeks — the period when reoffending risk is highest and when early employer support has the greatest impact on retention.

**05** **WE DOCUMENT YOUR SOCIAL VALUE**  
We provide full documentation of your hiring decision for ESG reporting, social value assessments, supply chain requirements and any government commissioning frameworks that include employment of ex-offenders as a criterion.

## Ban the Box — What It Means and Why It Matters

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Ban the Box is a campaign asking employers to remove the conviction disclosure box from initial job applications — giving candidates the opportunity to be assessed on their skills and experience before their conviction history is considered.

Over 300 major UK employers have signed up, including Greggs, Boots, Mitie, Halfords, the NHS and many local authorities. The principle is simple: judge the person before you judge the record.

Advance 2 Go is a Ban the Box signatory. We only work with employers who commit to fair, individual assessment of candidates with convictions. We can help you develop or update your fair recruitment policy and sign up to the campaign at no cost.

### Ready to hire differently?

Register your interest and we will be in touch within one working day to discuss your vacancy, your requirements and how we can support you. No upfront cost. No obligation.

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