



*City of Austin Fair Chance Hiring Draft Ordinance (v 2/19/16)*

*Austin Chamber of Commerce Position Statement (2/25/16)*

The Austin Chamber of Commerce is directionally supportive of the concept of Fair Chance Hiring under certain conditions. Such policies have the capacity to help individuals with criminal histories get a “second chance,” access to job opportunities, and contribute positively to the economy through the increase in human capital. If more individuals are able to obtain employment, there are increased opportunities to reduce poverty rates, a goal of Opportunity Austin.

There are clearly employers who are choosing Fair Chance Hiring without government mandates. However, as currently written, the proposed city-wide government mandate on Austin employers will result in additional liability, litigation, time and cost built in to the hiring process; and may have the unintended effect of reducing opportunities for individuals with criminal histories.

The Austin Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests that the Austin City Council not consider actions on the proposed Fair Chance Hiring ordinance until May 2016, as the draft was first discussed at the Austin City Council’s Work Session on Tuesday, February 23.