

**REMINDER: A1999 "OPPORTUNITY TO COMPETE ACT"
OR COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS "BAN THE BOX"**

Goes into effect March 1, 2015. The law applies to New Jersey employers with 15 or more employees over 20 calendar weeks.

The Act prohibits employers from making oral or written inquiries about applicants' criminal records during the period between the applicant's first query about employment and the conclusion of the first interview. After that period, an employer is free to inquire about and refuse to hire an applicant because of his criminal record unless the relevant crime has been expunged. The hiring decision must be consistent with other applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

The Act's prohibitions don't apply to domestic service employees at someone's home; independent contractors; directors or trustees; employees in law enforcement, corrections, the judiciary, homeland security, or emergency management; or positions for which a criminal background check is required by law, rule, or regulation.