

## **Overview**

Placer County's Clean Slate Clinic assists job seekers in reducing or removing past criminal convictions, decreasing probation time, and applying for certificates of rehabilitation.

## **Challenge**

Job Seekers with criminal convictions can be held back in their attempt to obtain gainful employment by mistakes that happened many years before. At times, these individuals have full qualifications for given positions, but are not considered for positions beyond minimum wage due to their criminal record, creating a cycle of discouragement and ultimately criminal recidivism. This problem is not unique to Placer County. According to statistics obtained from Legal Services of Northern California, one out of four adults in California has an arrest or conviction record and the overall recidivism rate is 65 percent. However, only 8 percent of formerly incarcerated persons return to prison if they are employed a year or longer.

## **Innovative Solution**

In Placer County no service existed to assist in the expungement process and those that were available in the region were not being conducted regularly. Recognizing that this lack of regular, local assistance presented a barrier to Placer County job seekers, Placer County's Business Advantage Network (BAN) (part of Human Services), in collaboration with Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC), began the Clean Slate Clinic. Held the first Wednesday of each month, and alternating between Placer County's Employment Services offices in Auburn and Rocklin, the clinics are announced well in advance through printed and electronic media, including Twitter and Constant Contact emails. Directions are provided outlining Clean Slate criteria, and information on how to obtain a criminal history record (RAP sheet). The first hour of the Clean Slate Clinic consists of information regarding remedy provisions. Attendees are welcomed to ask general questions of the attorneys at that time. After, participants meet individually with an attorney to go over their record in detail, determine what remedies may be available for them, and formally sign up for assistance with LSNC.

## **Originality**

The Clean Slate Clinic is the first and only monthly clinic held in Placer County, and the first to target CalWORKs and Human Services recipients. The clinic has since been made available to those served by other agencies and the general public. Participants that are CalWORKs recipients have access to supportive services to assist in their efforts, and the location is convenient, housed in the Employment Services office, with access to resources and counselors to further assist in the process.

## **Cost Effectiveness**

This program is provided at no cost to participants and limited costs to Placer County. The only costs accrued in 2015 include staff time of approximately \$2,340 and Constant Contact costs of \$297. The estimated cost to LSNAC for the year is \$2,040, making the combined total cost for 2015 \$4,677.

## **Results**

Since the Clean Slate Clinic was initiated in February 2015, 86 individuals have been assisted. We anticipate that the program will continue indefinitely, and will continue to provide Placer County residents with remedies to address felony convictions, which hinder their ability to provide their families and themselves a better life.

The following testimonials were received from Clean Slate Clinic participants:

*"Huge relief. In more ways than one. Thank You."*

*"I just came out of court. It's all good. Thank you for everything."*

*"Your clinic done the trick perfectly. Thank you all."*

*"Excellent & informative presentation, extremely helpful!! I will definitely be moving forward with confidence, after today."*

## **Project contact**

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