What it is

Employability is about having the skills, knowledge, experience and support needed to prepare for, find and stay in work.

Within community justice, employability is recognised as a key factor in helping people move away from offending behaviour and build positive, meaningful lives.

The National Strategy for Community Justice asks partners to "Enhance individual's life skills and readiness for employment by ensuring increased access to employability support."

Why it matters

Having access to employment can provide stability, purpose, financial security and opportunities to develop positive social connections. Many people involved in the justice system face barriers to employment including limited qualifications, gaps in work history, health issues, low confidence and stigma associated with convictions.

These barriers can make it more difficult to access and sustain employment, increasing the risk of poverty, social exclusion and further involvement in the justice system.

The right support can help people overcome these barriers and access sustainable employment.

Links to further resources

Employability - Community Justice Ayrshire

Advice on finding work and applying for jobs with a conviction.

Skills Development Scotland provides Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

Community Justice Scotland Learning Hub - Employability



Key facts

- Having a conviction does NOT mean you cannot get a job in the future. 1 in 5 adults in Scotland have a conviction.
- The three Ayrshire Local Authorities are 'Recruit With Conviction' Ambassadors
- A high proportion of people serving a community-based sentence or subject to an alternative to prosecution are unemployed.

Key messages

- Employment can provide stability, independence and purpose, and can support rehabilitation and reduce reoffending.
- Employability is not just about getting a job. Education, training, volunteering and other support can help people build skills, confidence and readiness for work, and overcome barriers.
- Understanding disclosure requirements can help people with convictions make informed choices and approach employment opportunities with confidence.
- Employers and communities have a role in supporting rehabilitation. Fair recruitment can help people with convictions access opportunities and contribute positively to society.

Your role

Be Aware

Recognise that people may face different barriers to employment and may need support at different stages of their journey.

Collaborate

Work with employability, education, training and other support services to help people access the right opportunities.

Encourage

Promote learning, training, volunteering and employment opportunities and encourage people to build on their skills, strengths and aspirations.

Challenge Stigma

Promote fair attitudes towards people with convictions and recognise the contribution they can make in the workplace and community.

How it works

Employability support should reflect the individual's needs and where they are on their journey. Support may include:

- Education, training and qualifications
- Careers advice and job-search support
- Volunteering and work experience
- CV and interview preparation
- Confidence and skills development
- Financial inclusion and benefits advice
- In-work support

Disclosure of convictions

People with convictions may be unsure about if, when or how they need to disclose a conviction to an employer. The rules can depend on the conviction and the type of job being applied for. Getting the right advice can help people understand their responsibilities and approach disclosure with confidence.

CommunityJustice Ayrshire Partnership