

## **Community Legal Aid**

A non-profit law firm serving the legal needs of low-income individuals and families in central northeast Ohio

[www.communitylegalaid.org](http://www.communitylegalaid.org)

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What is a Certificate

## **What is a Certificate for Qualification of Employment?**

A Certificate of Qualification for Employment (CQE) is a document that is given by the court to someone who has been convicted of a crime. It is a good option for someone who doesn't qualify to have their record sealed or expunged, but who wants to get a job or occupational license, if your criminal record is standing in the way.

A CQE could also help someone who has their record sealed, but wants to become a nurse or teacher, or enter another field with direct contact with vulnerable populations.

A CQE takes liability away from the employer when they hire a former offender. This means they can't be sued for hiring you, no matter what happens. It also is proof for your employer that you have finished your sentence, paid all your fines and fees, and haven't committed any other crime since finishing your sentence.

There are a few requirements to qualify for a CQE:

- You have to show that your conviction is preventing you from work
- You have to prove that you need the CQE to get a job and help you live a law abiding life
- You have to show that granting you the CQE won't cause "unreasonable risk to public safety"
- You have to have been convicted of or pled guilty to a misdemeanor or felony in Ohio
- You have to have completed all the terms of your sentence, including jail time, probation, paying any fines/fees you owe, and completing your waiting period

While this certificate cannot force an employer to hire a former offender, it can help offer peace of

mind to an employer and help you prove your case as to why you should be considered for a job. You can learn more about CQEs and how to apply [here](#).

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