

Proposed Int. No. 1314-A

By the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams) and Council Members Adams, Lander, Dromm, Rosenthal, Kallos, Menchaca, Reynoso, Ayala, Van Bramer and Rivera (by request of the Mayor)

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to prohibiting discrimination based on one's arrest record, pending criminal accusations or criminal convictions

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

1 Section 1. The definition of "employer" in section 8-102 of title 8 of the administrative
2 code of the city of New York, as amended by local law number 172 for the year 2019, is
3 amended, and new definitions of "conditional offer of employment," "public agency" and
4 "relevant fair chance factors" are added to appear in alphabetical order, to read as follows:

5 Conditional offer of employment. The term "conditional offer of employment" means an
6 offer of employment, promotion or transfer which may only be revoked based on one of the
7 following:

8 1. The results of a criminal background check, conducted in accordance with the
9 provisions of this chapter;

10 2. The results of a medical exam as permitted by the americans with disabilities act of
11 1990, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §12112; or

12 3. Other information the employer could not have reasonably known before making the
13 conditional offer if the employer can show as an affirmative defense that, based on the
14 information, it would not have made the offer regardless of the results of the criminal
15 background check.

16 Employer. For purposes of subdivisions 1, 2, 3, 10, 11-a, and 22, subparagraph 1 of
17 paragraph a of subdivision 21, paragraph e of subdivision 21 and subdivision 23 of section 8-
18 107, the term "employer" does not include any employer that has fewer than four persons in the

19 employ of such employer at all times during the period beginning twelve months before the start
20 of an unlawful discriminatory practice and continuing through the end of such unlawful
21 discriminatory practice, provided however, that in an action for unlawful discriminatory practice
22 based on a claim of gender-based harassment pursuant to subdivision one of section 8-107, the
23 term "employer" shall include any employer, including those with fewer than four persons in
24 their employ. For purposes of this definition, (i) natural persons working as independent
25 contractors in furtherance of an employer's business enterprise shall be counted as persons in the
26 employ of such employer and (ii) the employer's parent, spouse, domestic partner or child if
27 employed by the employer are included as in the employ of such employer.

28 Public agency. The term "public agency" means the state or any local subdivision
29 thereof, or any state or local department, agency, board or commission.

30 Relevant fair chance factors. The term "relevant fair chance factors" means:

31 (i) With respect to arrests or convictions preceding employment, other than arrests or
32 criminal accusations pending at the time of application for employment, the factors set forth in
33 section 753 of the correction law.

34 (ii) With respect to arrests or criminal accusations pending at the time of an application
35 for employment and arrests or convictions that have occurred during employment:

36 (a) the policy of the city, as expressed in this chapter, to overcome stigma toward and
37 unnecessary exclusion of persons with criminal justice involvement in the areas of licensure and
38 employment;

39 (b) the specific duties and responsibilities necessarily related to the employment held by
40 the person;

41 (c) the bearing, if any, of the criminal offense or offenses for which the applicant or
42 employee was convicted, or that are alleged in the case of pending arrests or criminal
43 accusations, on the applicant or employee's fitness or ability to perform one or more such duties
44 or responsibilities;

45 (d) whether the person was 25 years of age or younger at the time of occurrence of the
46 criminal offense or offenses for which the person was convicted, or that are alleged in the case of
47 pending arrests or criminal accusations;

48 (e) the seriousness of such offense or offenses; and

49 (f) the legitimate interest of the public agency or private employer in protecting property,
50 and the safety and welfare of specific individuals or the general public; and

51 (g) any additional information produced by the applicant or employee, or produced on
52 their behalf, in regards to their rehabilitation or good conduct, including history of positive
53 performance and conduct on the job or in the community, or any other evidence of good conduct.

54 § 2. Subparagraph (4) of paragraph (a) of subdivision 9 of section 8-107 of the
55 administrative code of the city of New York, as amended by local law number 63 for the year
56 2018, is amended to read as follows:

57 (4) For any person to make any inquiry in writing or otherwise about, or deny any
58 license, registration or permit to any applicant for, or act adversely upon any holder of a license,
59 registration or permit, by reason of such applicant or holder having been arrested or accused of
60 committing a crime, when such inquiry, denial or adverse action is in violation of subdivision 16
61 of section 296 of article 15 of the executive law.

62 § 3. Subparagraph (5) of paragraph (a) of subdivision 9 of section 8-107 of the
63 administrative code of the city of New York is REPEALED and a new subparagraph 5 is added
64 to read as follows:

65 (5) Unless specifically required by law, for any person to make any inquiry in writing or
66 otherwise about, or deny any license, registration or permit to any applicant, or act adversely
67 upon any applicant for or holder of a license, registration or permit by reason of:

68 (i) such applicant or holder having a conviction for a violation as defined in section
69 10.00 of the penal law;

70 (ii) such applicant or holder having been convicted of a non-criminal offense, as defined
71 by a law of another state; or

72 (iii) an arrest or criminal accusation which was followed by a conviction described in this
73 subparagraph.

74 (iv) This subparagraph does not apply to any license, registration, or permit issued by the
75 business integrity commission.

76 § 4. Subdivision 10 of section 8-107 of the administrative code of the city of New York,
77 as amended by local law number 63 for the year 2015, paragraphs (a) and (c) as amended by
78 local law number 63 for the year 2018, is amended to read as follows:

79 10. [Criminal conviction; employment] Employment actions based on pending arrests
80 and criminal accusations, and criminal convictions preceding and during employment. (a)

81 Actions prohibited by state law concerning criminal convictions preceding employment. It shall
82 be an unlawful discriminatory practice for any employer, employment agency or agent thereof to
83 deny employment to any person or take adverse action against any employee by reason of such
84 person or employee having been convicted of one or more criminal offenses, or by reason of [a]

85 finding the person [of a] lacks [of] "good moral character" [which is] based on such person or
86 employee having been convicted of one or more criminal offenses, when such denial or adverse
87 action is in violation of the provisions of article [23-a] 23-A of the correction law.

88 (b) Criminal convictions during employment. It shall be an unlawful discriminatory
89 practice for any employer, employment agency or agent thereof to take adverse action against
90 any employee by reason of such person having been convicted during their employment of one
91 or more criminal offenses, or by reason of finding the person lacks "good moral character" based
92 on such person having been convicted during their employment of one or more criminal
93 offenses, unless, after considering the relevant fair chance factors, the employer determines that
94 either (i) there is a direct relationship between the criminal conviction and the employment held
95 by the person; or (ii) the continuation of the employment would involve an unreasonable risk to
96 property, or to the safety or welfare of specific individuals or the general public.

97 (c) Pending arrests and criminal accusations preceding and during employment. It shall
98 be an unlawful discriminatory practice for any employer, employment agency or agent thereof to
99 take adverse action against any applicant or employee based on an arrest or criminal accusation
100 that is pending, or by reason of finding the person lacks "good moral character" based on such a
101 pending arrest or criminal accusation, unless, after considering the relevant fair chance factors,
102 the employer determines that either (i) there is a direct relationship between the alleged
103 wrongdoing that is the subject of the pending arrest or criminal accusation and the employment
104 sought or held by the person; or (ii) the granting or continuation of the employment would
105 involve an unreasonable risk to property or to the safety or welfare of specific individuals or the
106 general public.

107 (d) For purposes of paragraphs (b) and (c), placing an employee on unpaid leave for a
108 reasonable time while the employer takes the steps described in such paragraphs and subdivision
109 11-a of this section shall not be deemed to be an adverse action.

110 (e) For purposes of this subdivision, an action that has been adjourned in contemplation
111 of dismissal shall not be considered a pending action unless the order to adjourn in
112 contemplation of dismissal is revoked and the case is restored to the calendar for further
113 prosecution.

114 [(b)f] [For purposes of this subdivision, "employment" shall not include membership in
115 any law enforcement agency.] Paragraphs (b) and (c) of this subdivision shall not apply to an
116 applicant for employment or a current employee employed (i) as a police officer or peace officer,
117 as those terms are defined in subdivisions 33 and 34 of section 1.20 of the criminal procedure
118 law, respectively, or (ii) at a law enforcement agency as that term is used in article 23-A of the
119 correction law.

120 (g) Nothing in this section shall prevent an employer from taking adverse action against
121 an applicant or employee who is found to have made intentional misrepresentations regarding
122 their arrest or conviction history, provided that such adverse action is not based on a failure to
123 divulge information that a person may not be required to divulge, as provided in subdivision 16
124 of section 296 of article 15 of the executive law and in subdivision 11 of this section, and
125 provided further that the employer provides the applicant or employee with a copy of the
126 documents that formed the basis of the determination that an intentional misrepresentation was
127 made and gives the person a reasonable time to respond.

128 (h) Paragraphs (b) and (c) shall not apply to public agencies taking adverse action against
129 an employee based upon a pending arrest or criminal accusation that preceded or arose during

130 employment, or convictions that occurred during employment, where the employee is entitled to
131 a disciplinary process as set forth in section 75 of the civil service law, or where the public
132 agency follows a disciplinary process set forth in agency rules or as required by law.

133 (i) The provisions of this subdivision shall not apply where a mandatory forfeiture,
134 disability or bar to employment is imposed by law and has not been removed by an executive
135 pardon, certificate of relief from disabilities or certificate of good conduct.

136 ([c]j) [Pursuant to section 755 of the correction law, the] The provisions of this
137 subdivision shall be enforceable against public agencies by a proceeding brought pursuant to
138 article 78 of the civil practice law and rules, and the provisions of this subdivision shall be
139 enforceable against [private] other employers by the commission through the administrative
140 procedure provided for in this chapter or as provided in chapter 5 of this title. [For purposes of
141 this paragraph only, the terms "public agency" and "private employer" have the meaning given
142 such terms in section 750 of the correction law.]

143 § 5. Subdivision 11 of section 8-107 of the administrative code of the city of New York,
144 as amended by local law number 63 for the year 2018, is amended to read as follows:

145 11. [Arrest record; employment] Non-pending arrests and criminal accusations, and
146 dispositions of charges that an employer may not consider. (a) Non-pending arrests and criminal
147 accusations; adjournments in contemplation of dismissal; youthful offender adjudications;
148 convictions sealed pursuant to certain sections of the criminal procedure law. It shall be an
149 unlawful discriminatory practice, unless specifically required or permitted by any other law, for
150 any person to[: (a) Deny] make any inquiry in writing or otherwise about, or deny employment
151 to, any applicant or act adversely upon any employee by reason of an arrest of or criminal

152 accusation [of] against such applicant or employee when such inquiry, denial or adverse action is
153 in violation of subdivision 16 of section 296 of article 15 of the executive law[; or].

154 (b) [Make any inquiry in writing or otherwise, regarding any arrest or criminal accusation
155 of an applicant or employee when such inquiry is in violation of subdivision 16 of section 296 of
156 article 15 of the executive law.] Violations and non-criminal offenses that have not been sealed.

157 (1) It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for any employer, employment agency or
158 agent thereof to make any inquiry in writing or otherwise about, or deny employment to any
159 person or take adverse action against any employee, based on the applicant or employee having:

160 (i) been convicted of a violation as defined in section 10.00 of the penal law; or

161 (ii) been convicted of a non-criminal offense, as defined by a law of another state.

162 (2) It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for any employer, employment agency
163 or agent thereof to make any inquiry in writing or otherwise about, or deny employment to any
164 person or take adverse action against any employee based on an arrest or criminal accusation that
165 was followed by an order or conviction described in subparagraph (1) of this paragraph.

166 (3) The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to an applicant for employment or a
167 current employee employed (i) as a police officer or peace officer, as those terms are defined in
168 subdivisions 33 and 34 of section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law, respectively, or (ii) at a law
169 enforcement agency as that term is used in article 23-A of the correction law.

170 (4) The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply where a mandatory forfeiture,
171 disability or bar to employment is imposed by law and has not been removed by an executive
172 pardon, certificate of relief from disabilities or certificate of good conduct.

173 (5) The provisions of paragraph (b) shall be enforceable against public agencies by a
174 proceeding brought pursuant to article 78 of the civil practice law and rules, and the provisions

175 of this subdivision shall be enforceable against other employers by the commission through the
176 administrative procedure provided for in this chapter or as provided in chapter 5 of this title.

177 § 6. Subdivision 11-a of section 8-107 of the administrative code of the city of New
178 York, as amended by local law number 63 for the year 2018, is amended to read as follows:

179 11-a. Arrest and conviction records preceding and during employment; employer
180 inquiries and fair chance process. (a) In addition to the restrictions in [subdivision] subdivisions
181 10 and 11 of this section, it shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for any employer,
182 employment agency or agent thereof to:

183 (1) Declare, print or circulate or cause to be declared, printed or circulated any
184 solicitation, advertisement or publication, which expresses, directly or indirectly, any limitation,
185 or specification in employment based on a person's arrest or criminal conviction;

186 (2) Because of any person's arrest or criminal conviction, represent that any employment
187 or position is not available, when in fact it is available to such person; or

188 (3) Make any inquiry or statement related to the pending arrest or criminal accusation, or
189 criminal conviction record of any person who is in the process of applying for a position
190 [employment] with such employer or agent thereof until after such employer or agent thereof has
191 extended a conditional offer of employment to the applicant. For purposes of this subdivision,
192 with respect to an applicant for temporary employment at a temporary help firm as such term is
193 defined by subdivision 5 of section 916 of article 31 of the labor law, an offer to be placed in the
194 temporary help firm's general candidate pool shall constitute a conditional offer of employment.

195 For purposes of this subdivision, "any inquiry" means any question communicated to an
196 applicant in writing or otherwise, or any searches of publicly available records or consumer
197 reports that are conducted for the purpose of obtaining an applicant's criminal background

198 information, and "any statement" means a statement communicated in writing or otherwise to the
199 applicant for purposes of obtaining an applicant's criminal background information regarding: (i)
200 an arrest record; (ii) a conviction record; or (iii) a criminal background check.

201 (b) After extending an applicant a conditional offer of employment, an employer,
202 employment agency or agent thereof may inquire about the applicant's arrest or conviction record
203 if before taking any adverse employment action based on such inquiry, the employer,
204 employment agency or agent thereof:

205 (i) Provides a written copy of the inquiry to the applicant in a manner to be determined
206 by the commission;

207 (2) Requests from the applicant information relating to the relevant fair chance factors;

208 (ii) Performs an analysis [of the applicant under article 23-a of the correction law] as
209 required by paragraphs (a) and (c) of subdivision 10 of this section;

210 (4) [and provides] Provides a written copy of such analysis to the applicant in a manner to
211 be determined by the commission, which shall include but not be limited to supporting
212 documents that formed the basis for an adverse action based on such analysis and the employer's
213 or employment agency's reasons for taking any adverse action against such applicant; and

214 (iii) After giving the applicant the inquiry and analysis in writing [pursuant to
215 subparagraphs (1) and (2) of this paragraph], allows the applicant a reasonable time to respond,
216 which shall be no less than [three] five business days and during this time, holds the position
217 open for the applicant.

218 (c) Before taking any adverse employment action against a current employee based on a
219 criminal conviction, or pending arrest or criminal accusation, the employer, employment agency
220 or agent thereof shall:

221 (1) Request from the employee information relating to the relevant fair chance factors;
222 (2) Perform an analysis as required by paragraphs (b) and (c) of subdivision 10 of this
223 section;
224 (3) Provide a written copy of such analysis to the employee in a manner to be determined
225 by the commission, which shall include but not be limited to supporting documents that formed
226 the basis for an adverse action based on such analysis and the employer's or employment
227 agency's reasons for taking any adverse action against such employee; and
228 (4) After giving the employee the inquiry and analysis in writing, allow the employee a
229 reasonable time to respond before taking adverse action.
230 (d) Paragraph (c) of this subdivision shall not apply:
231 (1) If a public agency takes adverse action against an employee based upon a pending
232 arrest or criminal accusation that preceded or arose during employment or a conviction that
233 occurred during employment, where the employee is entitled to a disciplinary process as set forth
234 in section 75 of the civil service law, or where the public agency follows a disciplinary process
235 set forth in agency rules or as required by law; or
236 (2) If a mandatory forfeiture, disability or bar to employment is imposed by law and has
237 not been removed by an executive pardon, certificate of relief from disabilities or certificate of
238 good conduct.
239 ([c]e) Nothing in this subdivision shall prevent an employer, employment agency or
240 agent thereof from taking adverse action against any employee or denying employment to any
241 applicant for reasons other than such employee or applicant's arrest or criminal conviction
242 record.

243 [(d)f] An applicant shall not be required to respond to any inquiry or statement that
244 violates paragraph (a) of this subdivision and any refusal to respond to such inquiry or statement
245 shall not disqualify an applicant from the prospective [employment] position.

246 [(e) This subdivision shall not apply to any actions taken by an employer or agent thereof
247 pursuant to any state, federal or local law that requires criminal background checks for
248 employment purposes or bars employment based on criminal history. For purposes of this
249 paragraph federal law shall include rules or regulations promulgated by a self-regulatory
250 organization as defined in section 3(a)(26) of the securities exchange act of 1934, as amended.]

251 [(g) This subdivision shall not apply to any actions taken by an employer or agent thereof
252 [with regard to an applicant for employment]:

253 (1) [As] With regard to an applicant for employment or a current employee employed as a
254 police officer or peace officer, as those terms are defined in subdivisions 33 and 34 of section
255 1.20 of the criminal procedure law, respectively, or at a law enforcement agency as that term is
256 used in article [23-a] 23-A of the correction law, including but not limited to the police
257 department, the fire department, the department of correction, the department of investigation,
258 the department of probation, the division of child protection and the division of youth and family
259 [services] justice of the administration for children's services, the business integrity commission,
260 and the district attorneys' offices; or

261 (2) With regard to an applicant for employment or a current employee employed in any
262 position listed in the determinations of personnel published as a commissioner's calendar
263 item and listed on the website of the department of citywide administrative services upon a
264 determination by the commissioner of citywide administrative services that the position
265 involves law enforcement, is susceptible to bribery or other corruption, or entails the provision

266 of services to or safeguarding of persons who, because of age, disability, infirmity or other
267 condition, are vulnerable to abuse. If the [department] employer takes adverse action against
268 any applicant or employee based on the [applicant's] person's arrest or criminal conviction
269 record, it shall provide to the person a written copy, [of such analysis performed under article
270 23-a of the correction law to the applicant] in a form and manner to be determined by the
271 department, of an analysis considering the relevant fair chance factors and concluding that either
272 (i) there is a direct relationship between criminal history or alleged wrongdoing and the
273 employment sought or held by the person; or (ii) the granting or continuation of the employment
274 would involve an unreasonable risk to property or to the safety or welfare of specific individuals
275 or the general public; or

276 (3) Pursuant to any federal, state or local law requiring criminal background checks for
277 employment purposes or barring employment based on criminal history. For purposes of this
278 paragraph federal law shall include rules or regulations promulgated by a self-regulatory
279 organization as defined in section 3(a)(26) of the securities exchange act of 1934, as amended.

280 ([g]h) The provisions of this subdivision shall be enforceable against public agencies by a
281 proceeding brought pursuant to article 78 of the civil practice law and rules, and the provisions
282 of this subdivision shall be enforceable against private employers by the commission through the
283 administrative procedure provided for in this chapter or as provided in chapter 5 of this title. [For
284 purposes of this paragraph only, the terms "public agency" and "private employer" shall have the
285 meaning given such terms in section seven hundred fifty of the correction law.]

286 § 7. The commission on human rights shall engage in outreach and education efforts
287 regarding the rights of current and prospective employees, and the responsibilities of employers,

288 established by this local law. Such outreach and education shall be directed at public and private
289 employers, and the general public.

290 § 8. This local law shall take effect 200 days after its enactment, provided, however, that
291 the commissioner shall take any actions necessary prior to such effective date for the
292 implementation of this local law including, but not limited to, the adoption of any necessary
293 rules.

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