



State of Washington

## STATEWIDE REENTRY COUNCIL

1011 Plum Street SE - PO Box 42525 - Olympia, Washington 98504-2525 - (360) 725-4000

The Council will hold a special meeting for the purpose of determining whether to sign on supporting the Washington Supreme Court case of Ms. Christal Fields regarding collateral consequences of a criminal record preventing her employment. The issue is summarized below.

This meeting will be held via conference call on 3/23/18 at 7:30 AM and is open to the public.

The call in number for the conference bridge is: **(360) 407-3780**

(security code) **PIN Code: 958128 #**

Christal Fields is an African-American woman who was convicted of attempted robbery nearly 30 years ago, has subsequently engaged in significant rehabilitation including graduating from the drug court program a decade ago, and has been successfully employed in the field of caregiving for elders and children for a decade. Despite having the support of her employer, the state Department of Early Learning (DEL) disqualified her from work in that field because her 1988 offense is on DEL's lifetime-ban list of disqualifying crimes. Having a conviction on that list is an automatic lifetime bar to working in childcare, and the process allows no individualized consideration of the nature of the offense, the amount of time elapsed since it, or subsequent rehabilitation and work experience reducing any risk to vulnerable persons. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court recently ruled that automatic lifetime bans such as these are unconstitutional. Ms. Fields has appealed her denial and seeks constitutional relief so she may have an individualized assessment of her rehabilitation and continue with employment in the field she is skilled and passionate about. This is a question of first impression in Washington State, and it is our hope that the Statewide Reentry Council will support this effort as removing barriers to employment for people with a conviction history. You can read the opening brief here: [http://www.courts.wa.gov/index.cfm?fa=controller.showEfiledDoc&fileName=950245\\_Motion\\_20180220163526SC754418\\_2386.pdf](http://www.courts.wa.gov/index.cfm?fa=controller.showEfiledDoc&fileName=950245_Motion_20180220163526SC754418_2386.pdf)

It is our hope to get approval from the council to join as Amici in this effort with the intention that we will discuss a more efficient way to resolve these decisions at our next full council meeting. This special meeting is not expected to last more than 30 minutes, and we appreciate your time.

For further information please contact:

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