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**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL PROPOSES ORDINANCE TO EXPAND JOB OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR EX-OFFENDERS**

*Ex-offenders gain work experience and assist the City in reducing outstanding debt.*

Mayor Emanuel introduced a measure today to increase job opportunities for former criminals by expanding an ordinance to allow the City to contract with more organizations who employ ex-offenders.

“One of the most effective ways to prevent criminals from being repeat offenders is to provide them with the necessary tools to re-enter society,” said Mayor Emanuel. “By carefully screening, training, and employing these individuals we are aiding our local economy and taking steps to reduce crime. Decreasing the instances of recidivism allows ex-offenders to get their lives and families back and makes Chicago a safer place.”

In 2006, as part of a City of Chicago Ex-Offender Reentry initiative, Council passed an ordinance allowing to the City to refer some outstanding debt to the Collectors Training Institute (CTI), a licensed, bonded, minority-owned, collection agency located on the city's west side. CTI hires formally incarcerated individuals who have been screened and trained by a not-for-profit agency founded to assist ex-offenders in the transition from incarceration to society by providing employment training, screening and opportunities. CTI has collected over \$10 million in outstanding debt on behalf of the City of Chicago.

The amended ordinance allows the Department of Finance the opportunity to expand this program to other licensed and qualified collection agencies providing employment opportunities to ex-offenders who have been properly trained and screened by a not-for-profit employment service. The goal of this program is to allow ex-offenders to gain marketable work experience and assist the City of Chicago in reducing outstanding debt and lower collection costs.

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