

After being put in jail for months or years, the ex-criminals will get criminal records restricting their jobs, volunteering opportunities and international travel. Some people think that the ex-offenders can ask for a clearance of their criminal records permanently from the court files after three years of not committing crimes. However, I do not support this and believe that the offenders' criminal history should never be deleted as it plays important roles in different aspects.

The first reason for opposing deleting criminal records is that they act as a deterrent for the potential criminals and prevent recidivism. With the criminal record, the ex-offenders cannot integrate into society well. They cannot get a professional job and cannot travel freely to specific countries. Such harsh punishments discourage people from breaking the laws. Additionally, as the criminals receive stricter punishment, such as getting heavier fines and longer prison sentences, when they commit crimes the second time or more, criminal records are important to reduce recidivism. The ex-criminals may fear the consequences of recidivism and stop committing crimes. Criminal records are needed to reduce crimes and make our society safe.

Another reason for keeping the criminal records is that they are important information showing the potential danger of a person. Research shows that 67.8% of ex-offenders were rearrested within three years of release, and within five years, 76.6%. Since some former offenders may offend again, they may pose continuous threat to our safety. It is better for the employers to know their employees' criminal history so that they can take into account whether they should employ former inmates by the seriousness of the crime committed or take necessary precautions if they decide to include them at workplace.

Some say that the ex-offenders should be given a chance to rehabilitate, thus should be allowed to delete their criminal records. Admittedly, we all make mistakes and everybody, including the offenders, should equally have a chance to turn over a new leaf. Nevertheless, deleting the criminal records, which function as a deterrent of offence and a safeguard of the safety system, is not a good way. Instead, we can give a chance to the former lawbreakers by increasing the social acceptance of them, such as providing funds to companies which hire ex-criminals to encourage employment of them. In fact, the government has launched several job programs for the ex-offenders, giving them opportunities to acquire different techniques and making them capable of working. Social enterprises, like Bling and the Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, provide the ex-offenders with job training and job opportunities. Therefore, they are given chances to rehabilitate.

In a nutshell, deleting criminal records is not a good idea because criminal records can effectively discourage misdeeds, show the potential danger of some ex-criminals and we can always give opportunities to ex-offenders to live a new life in other ways. It is never an easy task for ex-criminals to fit into the community, and I hope that more assistance will be offered to them.