

## Why Clean Slate is Needed

Formerly incarcerated persons face a myriad of barriers as they attempt to reenter society. Lack of access to housing, education, training, job opportunities, and public benefits have created conditions that make successful reentry into community nearly impossible for millions of our neighbors who have served time in prison. These obstacles essentially deny them the opportunity to become the kind of engaged, responsible citizens we claim to desire.

Society's failure to remove or reduce these barriers means that approximately two-thirds of all who are released from prison are rearrested within three years, and approximately 75 percent are rearrested within five years. (<https://www.nij.gov/topics/corrections/recidivism/Pages/welcome.aspx>)

Pennsylvania is no exception, but newly proposed legislation aims to help. "Clean Slate" (PA [Senate Bill 529/House Bill 1419](#)) is bipartisan legislation that would automatically seal from public uses the records of persons with minor, non-violent misdemeanor convictions if they have remained conviction free for at least 10 years, as well as records on arrests that do not lead to convictions.

People of faith from all points on the theological spectrum are supporting this legislation that will permit returning citizens to return as full citizens—as those who have shown rehabilitation by remaining conviction free will be able to find better employment, housing, and educational services.

## Tentative Schedule

### Sunday, April 15

1:30-1:45 pm	Welcome/Setting the stage
1:45-2:15 pm	Why this seminar/Why we do advocacy—scriptural/theological basis with specific emphasis on the Anabaptist perspective
2:15-3:45 pm	What do we need to know about the US prison system and restorative justice? What do we need to know about Clean Slate legislation?
3:45-4:00 pm	Break
4:00-5:15 pm	PA governing structure/"nuts and bolts" of advocacy: How do we make our case for Clean Slate with elected officials?
5:15-5:30 pm	Wrap-up and instructions for advocacy meetings.

### Monday, April 16

Actual meeting times are subject to legislator/staff availability, but planners will strive to schedule meetings on Friday morning.

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## **Faithful Advocacy for Criminal Justice Reform: Principles and Practice**

**April 15/April 16, 2018**

Lancaster Theological Seminary  
Hafer Center (above the library)  
555 West James Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603

### **Why You Should Attend**

Come to this program to learn why, as people of faith, we engage in advocacy—in broad terms, but with emphasis on why from an Anabaptist perspective. Come to learn more about “Clean Slate” legislation passed by the PA Senate and why it is so important that people of faith support a bill that opens doors for our brothers and sisters who have served time. Come to learn how Pennsylvania governing structures work, and how to engage with your legislators and policy makers to support “Clean Slate.” Then join with your neighbors to visit your Representatives to make the case for its passage.

**For more information:** Contact the Pennsylvania Council of Churches at (717) 545-4761 or send e-mail to [s.strauss@pachurches.org](mailto:s.strauss@pachurches.org).

**Registration:** \$20; to register, click on link under “Events” at [www.pachurches.org](http://www.pachurches.org). You may register online and pay by credit card or download a registration brochure and send a check to address provided.

This program is jointly sponsored by the Pennsylvania Council of Churches and the Mennonite Central Committee.



**Mennonite  
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