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Second Chance Research Summary

Overview: The Second Chance Employment field has a small but growing body of research beginning to demonstrate the value of more inclusive hiring practices through data and evidence. The studies range from quantifying candidate pools to assessing promotion and advancement outcomes and can be an important resource to employers in making the internal case for Second Chance practices and helping create and define internal policies. Examples include:

1. Rand Corporation, Bushway, et al (2022): [Barred from Employment: More than half of unemployed men in their 30s had a criminal history of arrest](). Researchers found that a significant part of the available talent pool, especially among working-age men, has a criminal history, and employers who disqualify candidates with criminal records are substantially narrowing their candidate pipeline.

2. Rand Corporation, Bushway, et al (2022): [Providing Another Chance: Resetting Recidivism Risk in Criminal Background Checks](). The study finds that risk of reoffending dramatically decreases over time and recommends that employers recalibrate their risk assessment of a given conviction based on the time passed since that conviction occurred.

3. McKinsey & Company, Bhaskaran, et al (2022): [Bridging the advancement gap: What frontline employees want—and what employers think they want](). The study found that employees with criminal histories have higher rates of promotion and voluntarily participate in training at higher rates than their peers.

4. Harvard Business School, Cullen, et al (2022): [Increasing the Demand for Workers with a Criminal Record](). In this study, researchers ask employers to identify practices and incentives that may increase their likelihood of hiring a candidate with a past criminal history.

5. Northwestern University, Minor, et al (2017): [Criminal Background and Job Performance](). Researchers found that candidates with criminal histories were no more likely to be terminated and less likely to quit than their peers. The study suggested employing candidates with past convictions could save significant turnover costs given the high rates of retention for this group.

6. Harvard / University of Massachusetts, Lundquist, et al (2018): [Does a Criminal Past Predict Worker Performance? Evidence from One of America's Largest Employers](). A study of military employees showed that termination rates were no higher for employees with criminal histories, and that employees with felony convictions were promoted faster and more often than their peers.