

# Clean Slate Research Update

*Laura Chavez, PhD*  
*Director of Research and Data*  
*The Clean Slate Initiative*

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# Mission

The Clean Slate Initiative passes and implements laws that automatically to clear eligible records for people who have completed their sentence and remained crime -free, and expand who is eligible for clearance.

# Vision

People will no longer be defined by their records and will have the opportunity to contribute to their community, have a fair opportunity to work, get an education, and achieve their full potential.

# Approach

Centering Impacted People

Engaging Bipartisanship

Supporting Robust Coalitions

Employing Long -Term View

Building Racial Equity

Advancing Redemption Narrative

# RFP Issued June 2020

Solicited proposals under  
two categories

1. Campaign Process, Implementation, and Outcomes Assessment
  - a. Research on the campaign process of state campaigns
  - b. Implementation outcomes where legislation has been passed
2. Impact Studies
  - a. Individual, community, and societal impacts of records and automatic clearance

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# Projects Completed in 2023

[SEARCH](#) examined design, scope, implementation and costs of automated record clearing in 11 states at varying stages:

- Pre-legislation: NY, MO, TX, WA
- Pre-implementation: CO, CT, DE, MI, OK
- Post-implementation: PA and UT

Identified issues with states' data systems (siloes), data quality, and data accessibility that can impede implementation and made policy recommendations for the front-end of the Clean Slate process.

[Colleen Chien](#) (formerly at Santa Clara University, now at UC Berkeley) published a [national analysis of the “second chance gap,”](#) using Checkr data and found that less than 10% of those eligible for petition-based record clearance receive it. She also created state “second chance gap” reports using both Checkr and administrative data and solicited some qualitative data for the “paper prisons diary.” See: [Paper Prisons](#)

		Quantitative	Qualitative	Causal Inference	Methods Overview	Outcomes
2024	<b>Santa Clara University</b> Co-PIs: Elsa Chen, Ericka Adams, Sarah Lageson	✗	✓	✗	Interviews with 108 impacted people and 68 professionals in UT, PA, CA, and NJ (total n=176)	Employment (licensing, job attainment, retention, wages), housing, healthcare, childcare, family relationships, drug use, criminal activity
2023	<b>West Chester University</b> Co-PIs: Matt Saboe, Mia Ocean, Simon Condliffe	✓	✓	✗	Interviews (n=75) and survey (n=122) of impacted people professionals in PA. CBPAR model	Employment, education access, housing, awareness of clean slate
2023	<b>Rutgers University</b> PI: Amanda Agan	✓	✗	✓	Match IRS data to Admin. Office of PA Courts data, DiD analysis	For individuals with non-convictions only in PA - W-2 earnings and tax filings
2025	<b>Urban Institute</b> PI: KiDeuk Kim	✓	✗	✓	Quasi-experimental analysis of UT Clean Slate using court data	Employment, wages, recidivism
2025	<b>RTI International</b> PI: Pamela Lattimore	✓	✓	✓	Policy analysis, interviews with legislators in CO, OK, and VA, impact evaluation TBD	CS campaigns and implementation, employment, housing, recidivism, etc.
2026	<b>CPL @ UC Berkeley</b> Co-PIs: Johanna Laco and Steven Raphael	✓	✓	✓	Eligibility impacts on racial equity, online survey, quasi-experimental causal analysis of outcomes	Recidivism, public assistance, tax paying, employment, wages
2026	<b>University of Michigan</b> Co-PIs: JJ Prescott and Sonja Starr	✓	✓	✓	Quasi-experimental impact analysis; RCT for notification interventions	Recidivism, employment, housing, education, public assistance, and quality of life

# Preliminary Findings (not yet published)

## Santa Clara University:

- Conducted pre - and post - Clean Slate relief interviews with impacted individuals and other professionals who work with system - impacted populations (n=176) in UT, NJ, CA, PA
- Clean Slate was beneficial due to cost/ease/efficiency, improved access to licenses, better jobs, housing, stigma mitigation, family reunification, and identity transformation.
- However, people were often unaware of their eligibility under Clean Slate, partial record clearance didn't have the same benefits, long waiting periods were discouraging, implementation was delayed, and eligibility criteria were complex.



# Preliminary Findings (not yet published)

## West Chester University:

- Conducted interviews (n=75) and a survey (n=122) of impacted people professionals in PA using a community -based participatory action research model with an advisory group of directly impacted individuals
- Criminal records negatively impact employment, quality of life, housing, and education.
- Overall lack of awareness of Clean Slate in PA among impacted individuals and professionals
- Record -sealing doesn't erase all harms of system impacts

# Preliminary Findings (working paper)

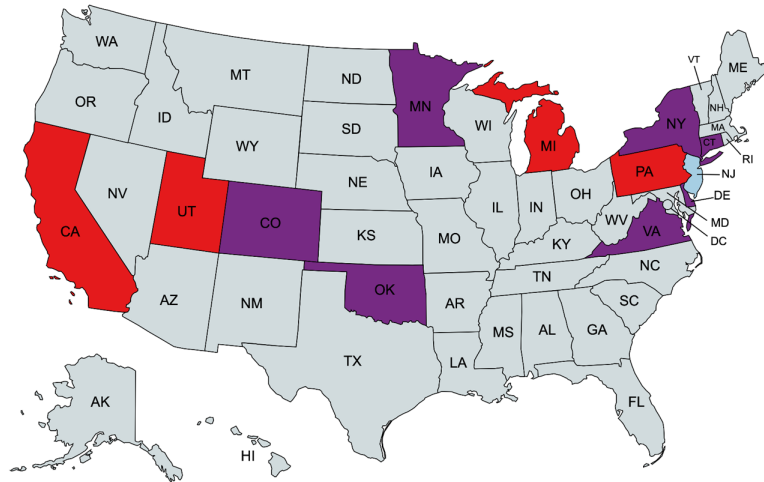
## Rutgers University:

- Matched IRS data to Administrative Office of PA Courts (AOPC) data, differences -in -differences analysis
- No increase in wages or tax filings in 2020 for 18 -25 year olds with non -convictions sealed in 2019 in PA
  - Limited the sample to 18 -25 year olds with non -conviction records to reduce the likelihood the subjects had prior convictions by the start of the dataset (2008)
- Exception of increase in gig work reported on 1099 returns

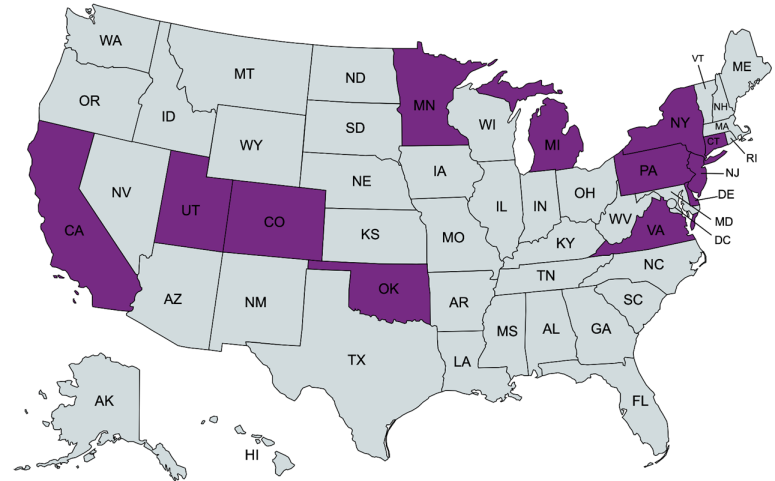
# Some key knowledge gaps:

- ❑ Validation that eligible records were actually cleared, and fidelity to policy design
- ❑ Awareness/notification - what strategies are most effective for whom? What barriers to individuals face after they find out about clearance?
- ❑ Health/mental health outcomes
- ❑ How do outcomes vary by understudied demographic groups (e.g., LGBTQ+ individuals, immigrant populations)
- ❑ Unintended consequences of Clean Slate policies
- ❑ Long -term outcomes (e.g., longitudinal study designs)
- ❑ How do employers perceive and respond to Clean Slate? What are the impacts of Clean Slate for employers?

# Clean Slate States with Research Coverage



- No Coverage
- Qualitative and Quantitative
- Qualitative



- Clean Slate States

# Narrative Change Research (Goodwin Simon Strategic Research)



# Survey Research in PA, UT, and MI

- Data collection December 2023 - January 2024
- To what extent are individuals with eligible records aware of whether their record(s) are eligible for clearance and whether they have been cleared automatically in PA, UT, or MI?
- How do key outcomes and perception differ between those who have had records cleared and those who have not? How are the differences impacted by demographics, geographic location, and the records' number, type, and age of most recent records?
  - Financial health, social supports for poverty, quality of life, education, housing, etc.

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# New RFP Coming in 2024

Soliciting proposals under  
three categories

1. Assessing the Impacts of Clean Slate Legislation
  - a. Individual, family, community outcomes
  - b. Mediating and moderating factors
2. Notification of Eligible Individuals
  - a. What are the best, most impactful ways of notifying those eligible for Clean Slate?
3. Clean Slate Implementation Fidelity
  - a. Are the correct records cleared from government databases and third -party companies? How timely?
  - b. Do those impacted know how to answer the question, “Do you have a criminal record?”

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