

First ex-offender receives professional license under streamlined Inmate Licensure Program

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Aims to Reduce Employment Barriers, Ease Re-Entry

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) and the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) are pleased to announce that Landus Jackson, 40 of Mound City, was released from Vienna Correctional Center this morning with a State of Illinois Cosmetology license, having successfully

completed his cosmetology classes and IDFPR application process while incarcerated. It is the first professional license given to an ex-offender immediately upon being released from prison.

Jackson received his license thanks to a Rauner Administration initiative that allows offenders who've completed the required coursework for Barbering and Cosmetology to apply for their professional license up to six months before their release or parole date. Prior to the policy change, offenders were prohibited from starting the application process until they were released from incarceration.

"Today is a milestone as we look to build upon this regulatory revision aimed at reducing recidivism and providing career opportunities," said Bryan A. Schneider, IDFPR Secretary. "We commend Landus for his hard work and dedication, wishing him the best of luck as he joins the ranks of our Illinois licensed cosmetologists."

In keeping with Governor Rauner's vision for reducing the prison population and driving down the recidivism rate, the Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform recommended Illinois remove unnecessary barriers to those convicted of crimes from obtaining professional licenses. The IDFPR and IDOC began collaborating in January of 2016 to determine how the Inmate Licensure Program could be improved to reduce impediments to licensure. Among the changes, offenders may now apply for their professional license and meet with the licensing board via video conference before their release or parole date.

"I am extremely proud that Illinois is taking steps to improve outcomes for men and women who have been incarcerated," said IDOC Acting Director John Baldwin. "Everyone deserves a second chance and that is exactly what Landus is getting today - a fair shot at finding employment that will increase his odds of not returning to IDOC custody."

Pictures of Landus Jackson's release from Vienna Correctional Center will be available on the [IDOC Facebook page](#) and [IDFPR Facebook Page](#).