

Participant Information Form

Background Information

You are invited to be in a research study exploring the role about the experiences exonerated individuals have as they search for employment and the role that your organization serves in that process. You were selected as a possible participant because you are 18 years of age or older, and have been working with an innocence organization for at least 1 year. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in the study. Please note, your participation throughout the study is entirely voluntary.

This study is being conducted by: Michelle Estes, Department of Sociology at Oklahoma State University

Actions:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

- Participate in one interview lasting about 1-2 hours (face-to-face, telephone call, or video call)
- Be audio recorded during the interview.

Participation in the study involves about 1-2 hours' time commitment from you to complete the interview.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The study has limited risks for participants. You may be asked to recall or discuss experiences that may cause mild mental and/or emotional distress regarding your experiences related to working with wrongfully convicted and exonerated individuals. During the interview, I will ask you questions about your experiences in working with the innocence organization, the exoneration and compensation process, navigating the job market among exonerated individuals, and the importance of work within exonerees lives. You can skip any of these questions if you do not want to answer them.

In attempts to offset these risks, protections will be provided. Everything you tell me will be private. I will be the only person with access to your answers. Your name will not be used in any written reports. As the primary investigator for this project, I will be the only one with access to your audio recordings. Also, all information collected will be stored on password protected devices that only I will access.

The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study are that participants will be given the opportunity to contribute to the knowledge and understanding related to wrongfully convicted individuals and exonerees. Participants also have the opportunity to inform policy aimed to help those who were wrongfully convicted and exonerated. Additionally, participants have the opportunity to connect exonerees with the project so that exonerees' direct experience

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can be better understood. I cannot guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from this study.

Privacy

The information that you give in the study will be handled privately. You will be assigned a fake name in all written reports. I will collect information through audio-recorded interviews. This audio information will be stored on my personal, password protected computer. All audio files will be deleted once they have been transcribed as text. Electronic and paper copies of the recorded text will be kept for three years after information collection is complete. After three years, electronic copies of these materials will be deleted from my personal computer and all paper copies will be destroyed. Paper copies of the interviews will be stored in a locked file in my office. Your data collected as part of this research project will not be used or distributed for future research studies. Again, please note that I am the primary investigator for this project which means I will be the only person that has access to the information you provide.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary. There is no consequence for not participating, and you are free to remove your agreement and participation in this project at any time. You can also choose to not participate. You can skip any questions that make you uncomfortable and can stop the interview at any time. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your relationship with me as the researcher or Oklahoma State University.

Contacts and Questions

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research participants at Oklahoma State University has reviewed and approved this study. If you have questions about the research study itself, please contact me at (931) 215-3997, michelle.estes@okstate.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer or would simply like to speak with someone other than the research team about concerns regarding this study, please contact the IRB at (405) 744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu. All reports or communication will be kept private. This project has also been reviewed and approved by the Innocence Network Research Review Committee.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered. I confirm that I meet the study's eligibility requirements listed above. I agree to participate in the study and show my agreement by participating in an audio recorded interview.

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