

Brenda J. Smeeton, Esq., Legal Director, Georgia Justice Project

Brenda Smeeton is Georgia Justice Project's Legal Director, leading the legal representation and policy teams. She has worked on criminal justice reform for over 20 years. Brenda is a graduate of Bucknell University and Georgia State University College of Law. She started at GJP over 20 years ago as a volunteer and played several different roles with the organization before moving to California where she worked on anti-death penalty advocacy and drug policy reform. She returned to GJP following her graduation from law school in 2010. As an attorney at GJP Brenda has represented hundreds of clients who have been denied employment, housing, or benefits as a result of their criminal history. She has provided training around Georgia to people with a criminal history, service providers, attorneys, and judges about barriers to reentry and criminal records; she has worked with stakeholders to plan and manage expungement summits all over Georgia; she is the co-author of A Guide to Understanding and Correcting Criminal Records in Georgia; and was the primary drafter of the 2020 amendments to Georgia's record clearing law. Brenda has filed numerous appeals related to criminal records issues and successfully argued a case challenging the constitutionality of Georgia's expungement law in front of the Georgia Supreme Court.