

Just as courtrooms are open to the public, the public has a right to find out information about court cases. However, in some situations, you can request that the public not see information about you in a case.

If you're a party in a peace or protective order case, see the brochure *Can I Keep the Public from Seeing Information about Me in a Peace or Protective Order Case?* If you're a criminal defendant, see the brochure *Expungement of Criminal Records*. If you want to expunge a juvenile record, see the brochure *Expungement of Juvenile Records*.

If:

you are a **victim** or **witness** in a criminal case and want to limit public access to information such as your **name**, **address**, or **telephone number**, you can file a **request**.



1. Complete a **request** to limit the public's access to information in a criminal case (form CC-DC 52). Explain exactly what information you do not want the public to see and why.
2. **File your request** with the clerk's office of the District or Circuit Court in which the case was heard.



If the court **grants** your request, the public will not be able to see that information about you.
That's it!

However, if the court **denies** your request, you can file a **motion** to limit the public's access to the information (see other side).

If:

you are a **party** (the plaintiff or defendant) in a civil case;

OR

you are the **subject of a civil case**;

OR

you are **specifically identified** in a civil case;

and want to limit public access information in the case, you can file a **motion** (see other side).

Can I keep the public from seeing information about me in a court case?

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What's the difference between a request and a motion?

Usually . . .

A request:

1. can be granted by a clerk or commissioner; and
2. requires no hearing.

In a peace or protective order case, you may not use this simpler process. You must always give notice to all affected parties and persons, and attend a hearing before a judge. See the brochure *Can I Keep the Public from Seeing Information about Me in a Peace or Protective Order Case?*

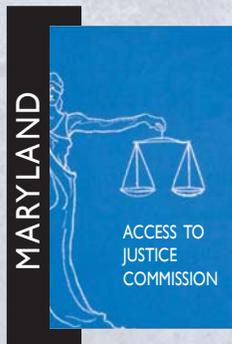
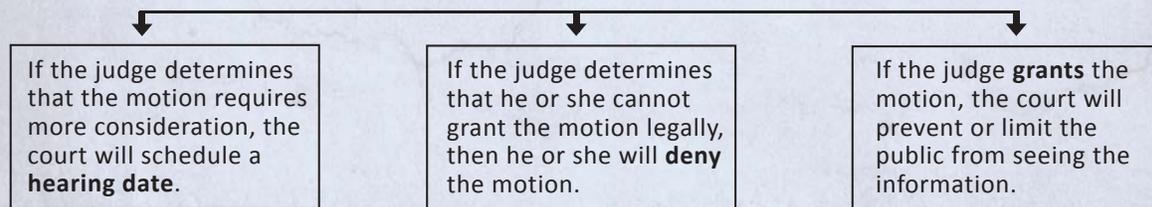
A motion:

1. is always decided by a judge;
2. requires notice to all affected parties; and
3. requires a hearing.

Filing a motion to limit the public's access to a case record

If a judge grants your motion, he or she will order that the clerk's office remove the case record from public view. The clerk's office places the entire record or document in an envelope. The public cannot open the envelope without a judge's signature. To file a motion to limit the public's access to a case record:

1. Complete a motion to limit inspection of a case record (form CC-DC 53). You must prove that a special or compelling reason exists to prevent or limit the public from seeing the information.
2. File the motion by mail or in person with the District or Circuit Court that heard the case.
3. Notify all parties and others named in the case by sending them all the documents you filed with the court. This gives the other parties a chance to respond to your motion.
4. A judge will review the motion and any responses. The public will not be able to see the information while the judge is reviewing your motion. One of three things will then happen:



www.mdcourts.gov/mdatjc
410.260.1258

For more information

To find out more, see MD. RULE 16-1009.

For information about how to request the public have limited access to information in a peace or protective order case, see MD. CODE, COURTS AND JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS § 3-1510; MD. CODE, FAMILY LAW § 4-512.

Court forms are available online at the Maryland Judiciary's website at www.mdcourts.gov/courtforms.

Read Maryland's laws at www.mdcourts.gov/lawlib/researchtools/sourcesmdlaw.html.

Visit the People's Law Library of Maryland, an online legal resource, at www.peoples-law.org.

Visit any public law library in person. Call 410.260.1430 or find out more online at www.mdcourts.gov/lawlib.

Visit or call the Clerk's Office of the court that heard your case.