

## Who can see my criminal record?

Most adult criminal cases are public records. This means anyone can view them in person at the courthouse where the case was heard. Some case records can also be viewed online through Maryland Judiciary Case Search (Case Search), and the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC).

## What is expungement?

Expungement removes information about a criminal offense from court and law enforcement records. If the court orders expungement, the case records are also removed from Case Search and MDEC.

Expungement may not remove all records. For example:

- Police files may contain information about arrests that did not lead to criminal charges being filed.
- Motor Vehicle Administration files may contain traffic-related criminal records.
- Private background check companies may have copies of some court records.

## Is my case eligible for expungement?

Not all cases can be expunged. To start, look at the outcome or the “disposition.”

### Favorable Dispositions

Most cases with favorable dispositions are eligible for expungement. Favorable dispositions can include nolle prosequi, STET, not guilty, acquittal, dismissal, and probation before judgment (PBJ). The waiting period is usually three years.

### Guilty Dispositions

If you were convicted or found guilty, your case may be eligible depending on the type of case. Some misdemeanor convictions are eligible for expungement after a waiting period. Felonies are rarely expungeable.

If you have a pending criminal action against you, you are not eligible to expunge former criminal cases.

To expunge your case, every charge in that case must be eligible for expungement. This is called the unit rule. Multiple charges resulting from one incident are a unit. If one of the charges in a unit is not eligible for expungement, you cannot expunge the case. Possession of cannabis and minor traffic offenses are exceptions to the unit rule. Talk to a lawyer about your case’s eligibility for expungement.

Talk with a lawyer for free at a  
**Maryland Court Help Center**

**Call:** 410-260-1392

**Chat:** [mdcourts.gov/helpcenter](https://mdcourts.gov/helpcenter)

Find court forms and videos



[mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/expungement](https://mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/expungement)

People’s Law Library of Maryland  
[peoples-law.org](https://peoples-law.org)

Public law libraries  
410-260-1430  
[mdcourts.gov/lawlib](https://mdcourts.gov/lawlib)

Read the law  
Md. Code, Criminal Procedure § 10-105  
Md. Code, Criminal Procedure § 10-110

Clerk’s Office  
Find the court that heard your case.  
[mdcourts.gov/courtsdirectory](https://mdcourts.gov/courtsdirectory)

[mdcourts.gov/accesstojustice](https://mdcourts.gov/accesstojustice)



**Maryland Court Help**

Free. Online. In Person. By Phone.

# How Can I Expunge My Criminal Record?



## How do I find my case record?

The case record is kept at the courthouse where the case was heard. You can view it in person at the courthouse. There is a fee for copies. For older cases, call the courthouse first to make sure the record is available.

Information about some criminal records can also be found online at [mdcourts.gov/casesearch](https://mdcourts.gov/casesearch). Cases with favorable outcomes or involving cannabis possession may no longer be available on Case Search.

The record contains important information that you will need to complete expungement forms. This includes names, dates, and identifying numbers.

## Will the court automatically expunge my case?

The court will automatically expunge your case if:

1. all charges in the case have a disposition of acquittal, dismissal, not guilty, or nolle prosequi;
2. the disposition was entered on October 1, 2021, or later; and
3. three years have passed from the disposition date.

Additionally, your record qualifies for a limited automatic expungement by July 1, 2024 if possession of cannabis was the only charge and the charge was issued before July 1, 2023. The Criminal Justice Information System will expunge your record, but the court will not.

## What forms do I need to request expungement?

### Favorable Dispositions



Petition for Expungement of Records (Acquittal, Dismissal, Probation Before Judgment, Nolle Prosequi, Stet, Not Criminally Responsible, or Transfer to Juvenile Disposition), Form CC-DC-CR-072A.

### Favorable Dispositions Under 3 Years



Petition for Expungement of Records Acquittal, Dismissal, Not Guilty, or Nolle Prosequi (Less than 3 Years has Passed Since Disposition), Form CC-DC-CR-072C.

### Guilty Dispositions



Petition for Expungement of Records (Non-Marijuana/Cannabis Related Offenses) - Guilty Disposition, Form CC-DC-CR-072B.



Petition for Expungement of Records (Marijuana/Cannabis Related Offenses), Form CC-DC-CR-072D.

## What happens after I file the forms?

The court will notify the State's Attorney's Office that you requested expungement. If the State's Attorney **does not object**, a judge will review your request privately and may then order expungement. If the State's Attorney **objects**, the court will set a hearing date. At the hearing, a judge will decide if expungement should be granted.

## How do I remove other court files from the public record?

### Juvenile Records

See the brochure, *How Can I Expunge My Juvenile Record?*

### Peace or Protective Order Cases

Peace and protective orders are civil cases. There can be both a criminal case and a peace or protective order from the same incident. Peace and protective orders may be removed from public view, but there are special steps you must take. See the brochure: *Can I Keep the Public from Seeing Information about Me in a Peace or Protective Order Case?*

### Shielding

You may be able to ask the court to remove some misdemeanor criminal cases from public view. To learn more about shielding a criminal case, see the brochure: *Can I Limit Access to Information about Certain Criminal Convictions?*

### Civil Cases

If you want to limit public access to records in a civil case (or if you are a victim or witness in a criminal case) see the brochure: *Can I Keep the Public from Seeing Information about Me in a Court Case?*

View and order brochures at:  
[mdcourts.gov/accesstojustice/publications](https://mdcourts.gov/accesstojustice/publications)

## Must I tell anyone about information the court expunged?

A Maryland employer or educational institution may not require you to disclose expunged information about yourself, as a condition of employment or admission.

The state of Maryland may not require you to disclose expunged information when you apply for a state license, permit, or other registration.

You may be required to provide information about expunged cases in certain other circumstances not governed by Maryland law.

## How can I expunge my criminal record?

File a written request for expungement in each case you wish to have expunged. Determine if your case is eligible for expungement before you begin. Then, gather your case record and complete the forms. Some cases may be automatically expunged by the court without written request.

