

Maryland Legal Aid: Who We Are

Maryland Legal Aid is a non-profit law firm dedicated to providing high-quality legal advocacy to protect and advance human rights for Maryland's most vulnerable low-income individuals, families and communities.

Established in 1911, Maryland Legal Aid provides free civil legal services to low-income individuals and families statewide and serves Baltimore City and Maryland's 23 counties from 12 full-service offices. Maryland Legal Aid receives funding from federal, state and local governments, foundations, the United Way and other private sources. Because of certain funding limitations, most clients have incomes at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines. Further, Maryland Legal Aid focuses its practice on civil issues (e.g., housing, consumer, family, and public benefits) and does not accept criminal, personal injury, or traffic court matters, even if a person is financially eligible. Maryland Legal Aid does, however, provide assistance with criminal record expungements.

Maryland Criminal Record Expungement

Your criminal record may keep you from securing employment, housing, a loan, credit, or custody of a child. Here are a few things you should know about Criminal Record Expungements in Maryland.

What is a Criminal Record Expungement?

A Criminal Record Expungement means that any arrests or criminal records are destroyed or sealed. An expunged record cannot be seen by the public, employers or background check agencies. However, the record may still be seen by government agencies, police, military, and other agencies that require a security clearance for a particular job.

Maryland Legal Aid Offices

Anne Arundel County

229 Hanover Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 972-2700
(800) 666-8330

Baltimore City

500 E. Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Telephone Intake Lines:

(410) 951-7750
(866) MD LAW 4U
(or 866-635-2948)

Business Line:

(410) 951-7777
(800) 999-8904

Baltimore County

215 Washington Avenue
Suite 305
Towson, MD 21204
(410) 427-1800
(877) 878-5920

Lower Eastern Shore

Dorchester, Somerset,
Wicomico, Worcester
111 High Street
Salisbury, MD 21801
(410) 546-5511
(800) 444-4099

Metropolitan Maryland

Howard, Prince George's
8401 Corporate Drive
Suite 200
Landover, MD 20785
(301) 560-2100
(888) 215-5316

Howard County

3451 Court House Drive
2nd Floor
Ellicott City, MD 21043
(410) 480-1057

Midwestern Maryland

Carroll, Frederick, Washington
22 S. Market Street
Suite 11
Frederick, MD 21701
(301) 694-7414
(800) 679-8813

Montgomery County

600 Jefferson Plaza
Suite 430
Rockville, MD 20852
(240) 314-0373
(855) 880-9487

Northeastern Maryland

Cecil, Harford
103 S. Hickory Avenue
Bel Air, MD 21014
(410) 836-8202
(800) 444-9529

Southern Maryland

Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's
15045 Burnt Store Road
P.O. Box 249
Hughesville, MD 20637
(301) 932-6661
(877) 310-1810

Upper Eastern Shore

Caroline, Kent,
Queen Anne's, Talbot
106 N. Washington Street
Suite 101
Easton, MD 21601
(410) 763-9676
(800) 477-2543

Western Maryland

Allegany, Garrett
110 Greene Street
Cumberland, MD 21502
(301) 777-7474
(866) 389-5243

Statewide

Farmworker Program
(800) 444-4099

Foreclosure Legal Assistance Project
(888) 213-3320

Long-Term Care Assistance Project
(866) 635-2948

Maryland Senior Legal Helpline
(866) 635-2948

Veterans' Hotline
(443) 863-4040

TTY Users: Call Maryland Relay, Dial 7-1-1

Visit www.peoples-law.org for self-help legal information and community resources.

For more information visit www.mdlab.org.

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Expungement

Maryland Criminal Record Expungement

Advancing Human Rights and Justice for All in Maryland since 1911



MARYLAND
LEGAL AID

What charges CAN be expunged from Maryland state records?

The following list includes examples of items that CAN be expunged from Maryland state records, with some exceptions:

- Nolle Prosequi (Plaintiff or Prosecutor dropped the charges);
- Stet (when a case becomes inactive; applies if no action was taken on your case for more than 3 years);
- Probation Before Judgment/PBJ (except for driving under the influence charges: you were placed on probation before a judgment has been entered; applies if no action was taken on your case for more than 3 years);
- Release Without Charge (RWOC);
- Not Guilty verdict;
- Case Dismissal;
- Case Acquittal;
- Juvenile Transfer (you were charged as an adult, but then transferred to juvenile court);
- Civil Citations (e.g., violating the Open Container law);
- Convictions for nuisance crimes (e.g., drinking alcohol or sleeping in public, panhandling, loitering, or using transit without payment);
- Marijuana possession and marijuana paraphernalia conviction after 4 years;
- Some misdemeanor convictions are eligible after a 10- or 15-year waiting period;
- Traffic violations if the possible penalty involved incarceration;
- Maryland Legal Aid can only expunge charges that were issued in the state of Maryland.

IMPORTANT: If you have a current charge or case pending, you cannot expunge any records until the pending charge is resolved.

What charges CANNOT be expunged from Maryland state records?

The following list includes examples of items that CANNOT be expunged from Maryland state records with some exceptions:

- Most Convictions—cases that ended in a guilty finding;
- Pending criminal matters;
- “Unit Rule”: If there are multiple charges or cases from the same incident, and any of those charges are not expungable, then the entire list of charges and cases from the initial incident is not expungable, regardless of the disposition (i.e., guilty or not guilty).

Resources to help you find and review your Criminal Record to see what items are expungeable

- You can do an online case search of your Maryland criminal record back to 1990: <http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/casesearch/>
- Criminal Justice Information System/CJIS (if you were fingerprinted during your arrest)
6776 Reisterstown Road, Suite 102,
Baltimore, MD 21215
8:30am – 6:00pm, Monday – Friday
8:00am – 4:30pm, 1st and 3rd
Saturday of the month

The cost is \$38.00 payable by money order, certified or personal check to CJIS-Central Repository. Cash is not accepted.

Organizations that may be able to help you with your criminal record expungement

- Maryland Legal Aid
See office locations and telephone numbers on reverse side.
- Homeless Persons Representation Project
Phone: (410) 685-6589
Website: www.hprplaw.org
- Maryland Center for Legal Assistance
Phone: (410) 260-1392
Website: www.mdcla.org
- Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service
Phone: (800) 510-0050
Website: www.mvlslaw.org
- Office of the Public Defender (OPD)
(if you are already represented by the OPD in a criminal matter)

You can Expunge your own Criminal Record

Visit <http://mdexpungement.com/> to expunge your criminal record on your own. It costs \$30 to file each expungement petition in many circuit courts. It is free to file expungement petitions in district courts. Enter each case number and the website will offer guidance as to whether your record might qualify for expungement. The best way, however, to determine eligibility for expungement is to seek legal advice from an attorney.

What happens after my Expungement has been filed?

After you or your attorney submits your petition for expungement to the court, the State’s Attorney has 30 days to object. If that happens, a hearing will be scheduled. If the court orders your record expunged, the process can take up to one year. Agencies such as the police department have 60 days from the date of the court order to remove your record.

Make sure to confirm that your record was expunged by doing an online case search or getting another CJIS report. Always keep a copy of your court records and expungement court order.

Do I still have to disclose my Criminal Record on employment applications after Expungement?

You do not have to disclose arrests and convictions on employment applications if they have been expunged from your record. However, some employers (e.g., military employers or employers who require a security clearance), are still going to be able to see these items on your record. In these instances, it is generally better to disclose your record.

