

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 expungement 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. 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

Allegany/Garrett*

138 Baltimore Street
Suite 204
Cumberland, MD 21502
1 (888) 465-2468

Anne Arundel/Howard

2024 West Street
Suite 204
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 972-2700
(800) 666-8330
3451 Court House Drive
2nd Floor
Ellicott City, MD 21043
(410) 480-1057

Baltimore City*

500 E. Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
Telephone Intake:
1 (888) 465-2468

Baltimore County

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

Cecil/Harford

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

Lower Eastern Shore

Dorchester, Somerset,
Wicomico, Worcester
201 E. Main Street
Salisbury, MD 21801
(410) 546-5511
(800) 444-4099

Midwestern Maryland*

Carroll, Frederick,
Washington
22 S. Market Street
Suite 11
Frederick, MD 21701
1 (888) 465-2468

Montgomery County*

600 Jefferson Plaza
Suite 430
Rockville, MD 20852
1 (888) 465-2468

Prince George's County*

8401 Corporate Drive
Suite 200
Landover, MD 20785
1 (888) 465-2468

Southern Maryland*

Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's
15045 Burnt Store Road
3rd Floor
Hughesville, MD 20637
1 (888) 465-2468

Upper Eastern Shore

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

* Centralized Intake
is now serving
these jurisdictions.

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1 (888) 465-2468

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.

Expungement

Maryland Criminal Record Expungement

Advancing Human Rights and Justice for All in Maryland since 1911



What cases can be expunged from Maryland state records?

Not all cases can be expunged, however, the following list includes examples of items that CAN be expunged from Maryland state records, with some exceptions:

- Favorable dispositions (Nolle Prosequi, Not Guilty, Dismissal, Acquittal, Release Without Charge);
- Stet (after three years);
- Probation Before Judgment (after three years generally, with some exceptions);
- Juvenile Transfer (you were charged as an adult, but then transferred to juvenile court);
- Some civil citations;
- Convictions for nuisance crimes:
- Marijuana possession and associated paraphernalia;
- Some convictions are eligible after a 5, 7, 10 or 15 year waiting period;
- Maryland Legal Aid attorneys can only file expungements in Maryland State cases;
- possession with intent to distribute marijuana (after three years).

IMPORTANT:

If you have a current charge, active warrant, or pending criminal case, you cannot file a petition to expunge any records until these matters are resolved.

Please contact your local Office of the Public Defender for information on how to resolve an open matter.

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

You can perform an online case search of your Maryland criminal record back to 1990: <http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/casesearch>

- This will NOT show any cases that resulted in dispositions of nolle prosequi, acquittal, or dismissal.
- Even if a case does not show on the Maryland Judiciary Case Search, that does NOT necessarily mean that it has been expunged.

For a more thorough criminal background check of all cases for which you were fingerprinted, you can request a Criminal Justice Information System/CJIS report.

- 6776 Reisterstown Road, Suite 102, Baltimore, MD 21215
- Call 410-764-4501 or 1-888-795-0011 (toll free) to make an appointment
- Appointments can be made at the Reisterstown Road office or at MVA locations in Bel Air, Frederick, Glen Burnie, Salisbury, and Waldorf.
- The cost is \$38.00 payable by Visa, MasterCard, or cashier's check at the Reisterstown Road office. The fee can only be paid with Visa or MasterCard at MVA locations. Cash and money orders are not accepted.

Are any records automatically expunged?

Any case where all the charges arising out of the same incident and arrest have a disposition of Nolle Pross, Not Guilty, Acquittal, or Dismissal after October 1, 2021 will be automatically expunged after three years.

Some marijuana possession charges qualify for automatic, partial expungement.

However, you may be able to have a case expunged earlier if you sign a waiver of your right to file a lawsuit against the associated law enforcement agency.

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

- **Shore Legal Access**
Phone: 410-690-8128
Website: www.shorelegal.org
- **Maryland Volunteer Legal Services**
Phone: 410-547-6537
Website: www.mvlslaw.org
- **Community Legal Services**
Phone: 240-391-6370
Website: www.clspgc.org

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's Office 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 you confirm that your record was expunged by ordering a 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) may still be able to see these items on your record. In these instances, it is generally better to disclose your record.

