

# Expunging Criminal Records

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Your adult *and* juvenile criminal record can cause many problems in obtaining employment, housing, professional licensing, credit or student loans. Depending on the type of case, you may be eligible to have your case expunged or sealed after a period of time (usually two to five years) if you are placed on supervision, probation or convicted of a misdemeanor. Getting your record expunged may help to remove some of these obstacles. Effective January 1, 2004, people with qualifying *arrests*, misdemeanor supervisions and misdemeanor convictions may petition the court for expungement or to seal your record. *When a record is "expunged", it is as if the crime never occurred. When a record is "sealed", the file remains intact but it is labeled as "sealed" and can only be released to other law enforcement agencies. Employers will not have access to the records.* The availability and time frame differs for both.

## **Consult an Attorney**

Seeking the advice of a lawyer is a very good idea if you want to get your record expunged or sealed. There are very specific procedural requirements to file a petition for expungement. Failing to be knowledgeable or to follow the procedure will delay or derail the proceedings. Please visit my website or contact my office to discuss whether or not you or your child is eligible for expungement and to assist you in the process.

**\*Legal advice varies depending on the facts; for that reason, the information in this article should not be acted on without consulting an attorney.**