



Clinic in a Box:

An Advocate's Guide to Expanding Criminal Record Clearance



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Table of Contents

I. Introduction

II. Why Have a Criminal Record Clearing Practice?

III. Record Clearing Clinics: An Effective Service Model

IV. Technology Tools to Facilitate Clinics

V. Starting a Clinic Program: Tips from the Field

- a. Community Partners
- b. Pro-Bono Assistance
- c. Scheduling & Logistics
- d. Flow of the Day
- e. Follow-up

VI. Clinics to Advance Policy Goals

VII. Conclusion

VIII. Appendix

- a. Sample Forms
- b. Sample Resource Packet

I. Introduction

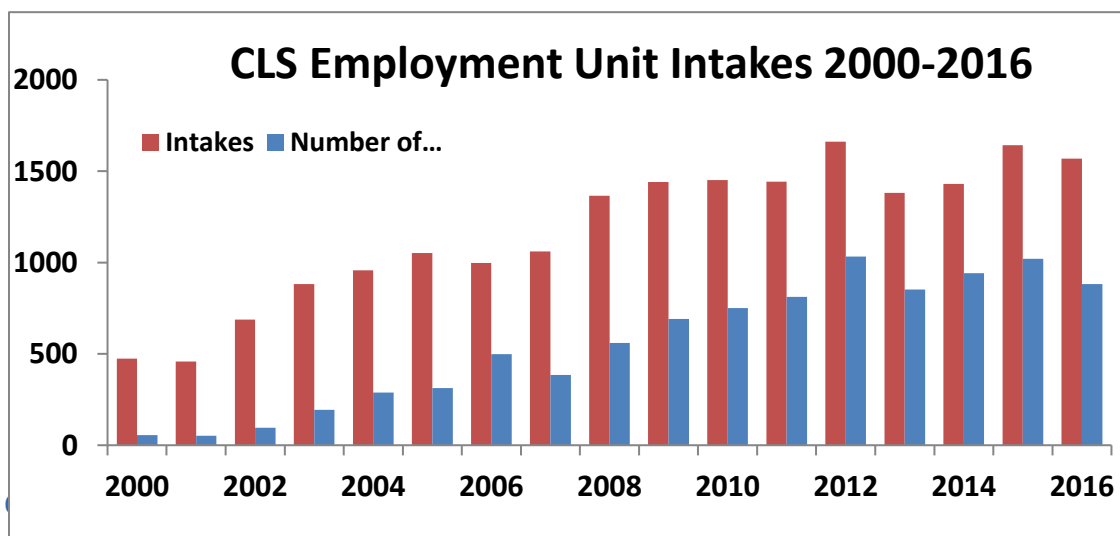
For nearly two decades, Community Legal Services (CLS) has been at the forefront of removing barriers to opportunity for people with criminal records. A major focus of that work has been to help as many people as possible expunge their arrest records.

Over time, CLS has evolved in its approach to ensure that the clients and communities who most need their arrest records expunged are able to access legal help. Developing a community-based expungement clinic model has been instrumental in increasing access to expungement services in the communities in Philadelphia that are most heavily policed. **Over two years, CLS has held more than 20 clinics and served over 400 additional clients in 12 neighborhoods.**

While expungement¹ eligibility and process vary widely from state to state, we share our experience growing our community-based clinics model with the hope that it is helpful to the practices of legal aid programs around the country.

II. Why Have a Criminal Record Clearing Practice?

At CLS, about two thirds of clients who come in through our employment unit intake every year are seeking help clearing their criminal records. We often hear from clients after their expungements are completed that they have been able to attain employment or advance their careers, and it is not uncommon for clients to cry out of happiness and relief when they learn their expungements have been granted.



Yet questions linger about the efficacy of record clearing, especially in the digital age. With remedies varying widely from state to state, and with so many different databases and websites containing criminal records information, it is worth thinking critically about the value of record clearing to clients and communities.

Several research studies have taken a close look at this issue:

- One study in California found that participants who had their records expunged reported an average increase in yearly income of \$6,190. In addition, 93% of participants reported confidence in their future job prospects.²
- A recent study out of Michigan has preliminary findings showing that in the first year after record clearing, the probability of employment rose by 6.5% and wages rose by about 22%.³ In addition, fewer than 4% of participants were rearrested within five years of having their records cleared.

To make record clearing as effective as possible, the process must be carefully monitored to ensure that records are cleared from the main points of access for employers, landlords, and others. This means making sure courts, law enforcement agencies, and commercial background check companies are all removing expunged cases from their records. When this happens properly, **record clearing becomes an enormously valuable service for clients because it eliminates the elements of human judgement and bias** implicit in relying on employers and others to properly evaluate records under local, state, and federal laws.

Moreover, record clearing is just one of the tools advocates can use to help clients with criminal records access opportunity. Record clearing work can be an important gateway into other issues such as advocacy around housing, employment, and educational access. Record clearing can also help galvanize community support to continue to push for reform to laws that over-criminalize people – in particular people of color and people living in poverty.

² To read more about this study, visit: <https://publicpolicy.stanford.edu/publications/cost-benefit-analysis-criminal-record-expungement-santa-clara-county>.

³ Description of study can be found at: <http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/research/project-detail/34902>

CLS supports continued efforts around the country to launch, grow, and expand record clearing practices that can be life-changing for individuals and communities, while also pushing for better laws and policies to increase access to employment, housing, education, and more for people with records.

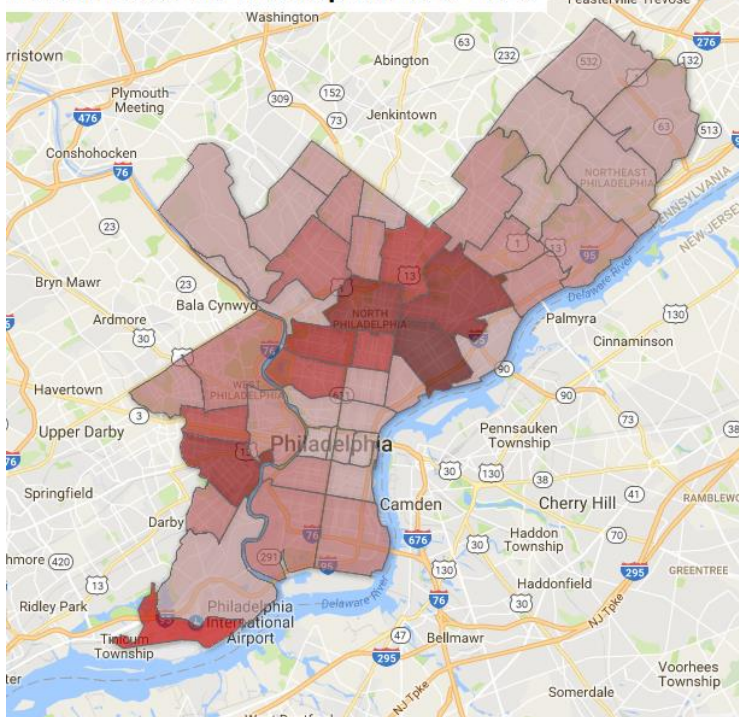
III. Record Clearing Clinics: An Effective Service Model

For several decades, CLS has assisted clients who have come to our office seeking help clearing up their arrest records. As technology made it easier to access record information and employers increased their reliance on background checking, the number of clients seeking help with expunging records of arrest that did not result in conviction grew exponentially.

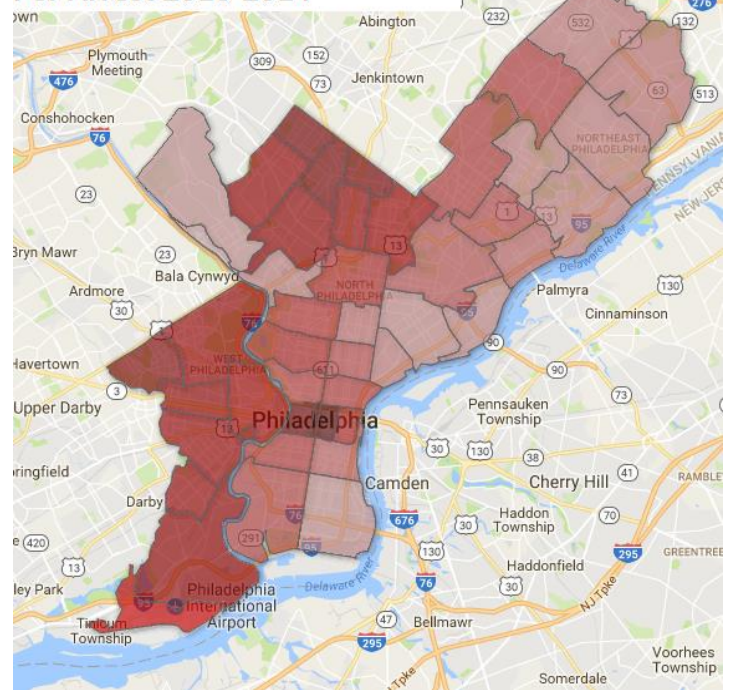
Yet despite this increase, CLS was still just barely scratching the surface of the need that exists in Philadelphia. **For example, in 2011 there were 61,032 arrests with 354,951 charges and only 52,193 charges (15%) ended in conviction.** Thus, every year there are hundreds of thousands of charges that did not result in conviction that are therefore eligible for expungement under Pennsylvania law.

By mapping our expungement work and comparing it to arrest data, CLS was able to look at which neighborhoods were accessing our expungement services as compared to the need in those areas. CLS began by identifying neighborhoods that had the most arrests and thus the greatest need for expungement help, which can be identified by their dark red color on the map below. CLS then compared this data to our intake information to see whether people from neighborhoods with the most need were making it to our office.

Total Arrests in Philadelphia 2010-2015



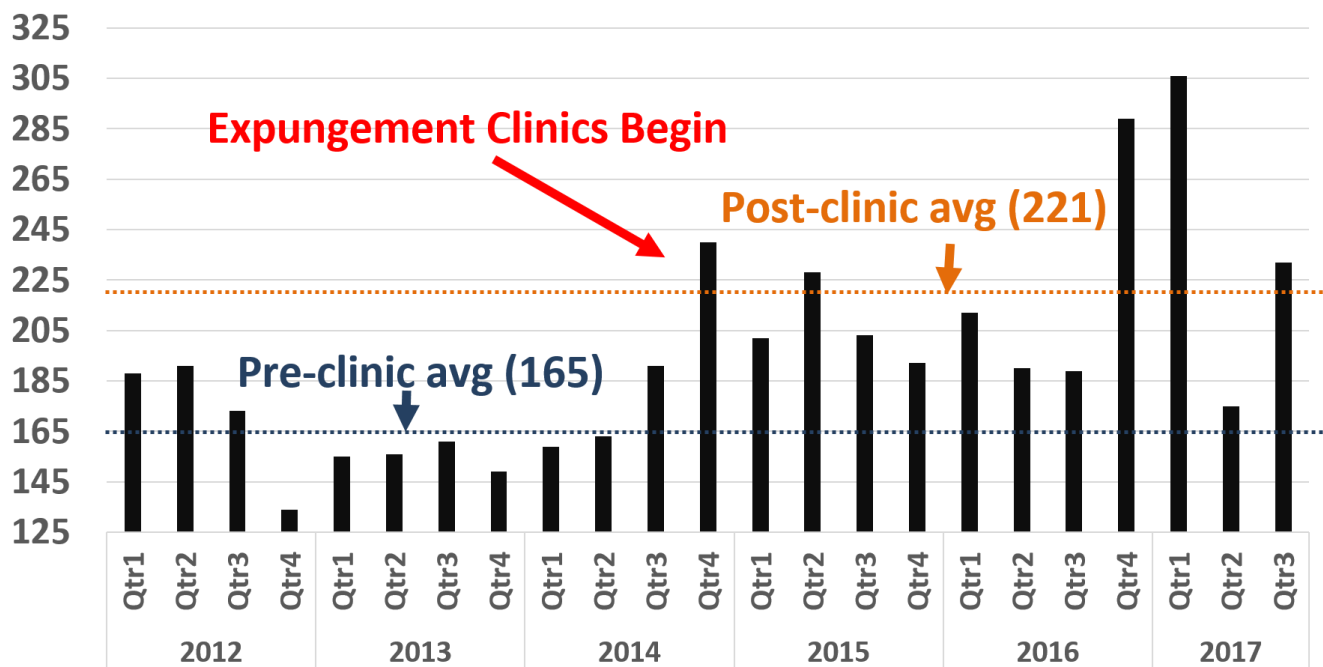
CLS Avg Annual Expungements Per Arrest 2010-2014



CLS found that it was reaching clients well in some parts of West Philadelphia and North Philadelphia, but not reaching clients in other neighborhoods of North Philadelphia.

Based on this data and a desire to increase volume and access to expungement across Philadelphia, CLS launched its Expungement Clinics Program at the end of 2014. Through the efficient use of volunteers and technology, CLS was able to greatly increase the number of clients served and records expunged through this model.

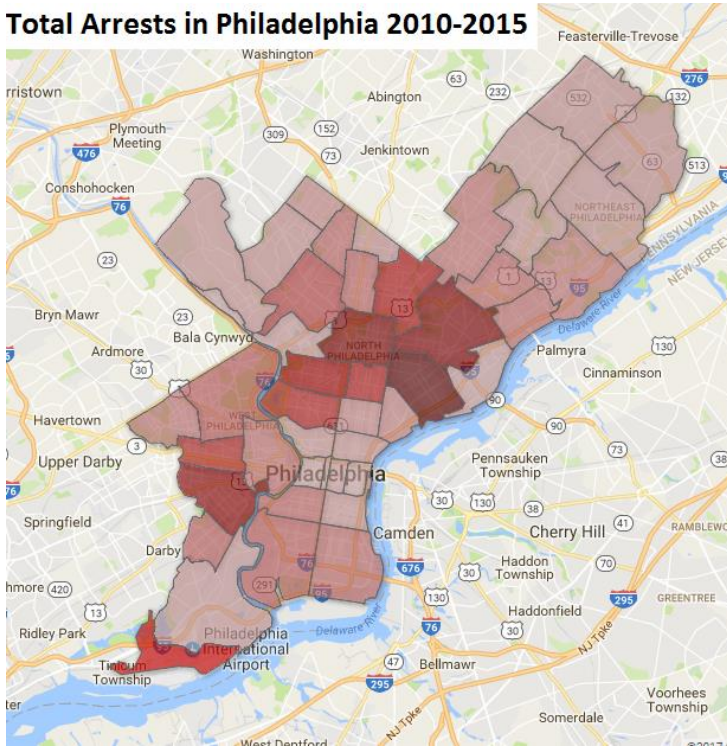
CLS Expungement Intakes 2012-2017



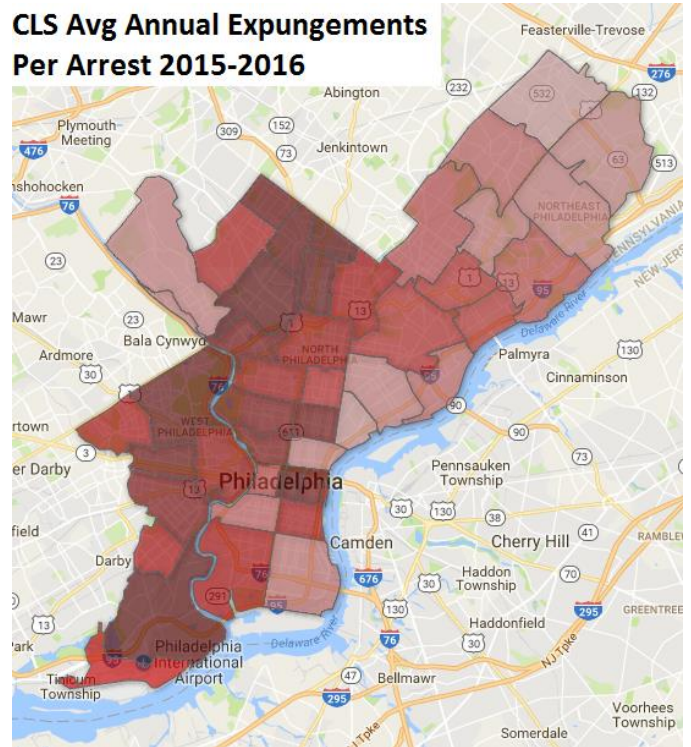
In addition to increasing the numbers of clients served, CLS's expungement clinics have also increased access to services in the neighborhoods that are most in need through targeted outreach. As the maps below show, in 2015-2016 CLS was able to increase access to services in many neighborhoods in North Philadelphia. For a few remaining neighborhoods where CLS was still struggling to meet client needs, CLS

hired a fellow who has worked on site at a social service agency to increase access, especially among Latinx clients. So far, 2017 projections show a much higher number of clients being served in those communities.

Total Arrests in Philadelphia 2010-2015



CLS Avg Annual Expungements Per Arrest 2015-2016



Community-based clinics have many advantages in addition to increasing access to services in high-need areas. Clinics help legal aid organizations forge close-knit partnerships with community organizations, state and local legislators, law students, and law firm pro bono resources, among others.

In particular, expungement clinics are a very popular form of constituent services for legislators, which can enhance support for legal aid programs and set the stage for policy reform (see Part VI).

Clinics help legal aid agencies become more integrated into the communities they serve and ensure that clients who may not be able to make it to another part of town during business hours can still get the help they need.

Finally, clinics can be a highly efficient model, especially if most of the work can be done on-site, facilitated by volunteers and technology. Clinics can thus greatly increase access to services, while not greatly increasing the strain on already strapped legal services agencies.

IV. Technology Tools to Facilitate Clinics

To get to a point where CLS can represent over 700 clients with more than 3,500 expungement petitions each year, it was essential to automate as much of the expungement process as possible.

While record sealing processes differ in every state, common ground for most states is the filing of a petition asking for a record to be expunged or sealed. Given the right conditions, an automated tool that assembles public data into form petitions can tackle this step of the process and reduce it to virtually nothing.

CLS's expungement tool is called the Expungement Generator and it has been extraordinarily successful: **the tool has been used to draft over 25,000 expungement petitions since we started keeping track in September 2012.**

There are a number of benefits to such an expungement tool:

- **Allows speedy preparation of petitions.** CLS has reduced petition drafting time from 20-30 minutes per petition to 2-3 minutes for *all* of a person's petitions.
- **Allows people with little training to prepare petitions.** CLS has been able to use dozens of law students to staff expungement clinics and draft expungement petitions. Other states have made their tools available to pro se petitioners.
- **Ensures that the petitions generated are prepared accurately.** The local court in Philadelphia accepts CLS's petitions without scrutiny because they know the petitions are of a very high quality.
- **Data collection.** CLS can store information such as the types of charges, whether charges can be expunged, and petitions drafted for each of the petitioners run through the Expungement Generator. This can be invaluable for later education and advocacy efforts, client identification when expungement is expanded legislatively, and for fundraising to show the value of the program.

What are the right conditions for creating an automated expungement tool?

Aside from needing to find a programmer, the following are recommended preconditions to building an expungement tool:

- **An online criminal record database.** The tool needs to be able to read a person's criminal record from an electronic source. This is generally a website run by a state agency, the courts, or another public source, and has every criminal record in it that is searchable by the general public (or by your organization). Some states may have just a few counties on a database (or each county on its own database). It may be worth making a tool and connecting it to a county-level database if the demand is high enough.
- **A standardized petition.** In Pennsylvania, the rules committee of the Supreme Court has promulgated a standardized expungement petition that all courts must accept. This has allowed CLS's expungement tool to be shared throughout the state. This is by no means necessary, but it saves a lot of work on the programmer to not have to create a different petition for each court. If you have a few counties that are going to be the source of a lot of the expungement workload, it may be worth making an expungement tool just for those counties.
- **A petition that requires little additional information aside from that found on a person's criminal docket.** Some states require a significant amount of extrinsic information to be included in an expungement petition such as work history and good work performed in the community. If this is the case, it may not save as much time to have part of the petition generated. In many other states, the expungement petition requires little more than the petitioner's name, date of birth, address, social security number, and the particulars of the criminal case that is being expunged. If the majority of information needed for the petition can be read from the docket sheets, that helps the expungement process to be automated.

There are many other considerations to account for when making an expungement tool. For further reading, check out: [“A Good Name is Hard to Clear: A National Report of Digital Expungement Applications”](#), by Jason Tashea. It looks at 6 different expungement tools, categorizes the work that they do, discusses their strengths and weaknesses, and gives suggestions for those thinking of building their own.

CLS is available to consult with anyone who is thinking of building their own expungement tool, which is a vital resource to streamline community-based clinics and take on the larger caseloads they can entail.

V. Starting a Clinic Program: Tips from the Field

If you are thinking about starting a clinics program or expanding a program that already exists, there are a number of different issues you may want to consider as you plan. While the needs of every community are different, the following suggestions may be helpful in deciding what works best in your community.

A. Community Partners

One of the largest benefits to having a record clearing clinic model is the development of deeper ties to community organizations. Some clinic models rely on one main partner and have a regular schedule of clinics with that partner. One benefit to this approach is that word-of-mouth builds in the community and people know there is a consistent and reliable time and place where they can get help.

Other clinic models rotate partners and locations for clinics. While that can create additional logistical challenges and require more advertising to get the word out in the community, it can also have the benefit of allowing programs to work with a variety of organizations, stakeholders, and communities in need.

Some programs combine approaches, having one or two regular partners with predictable clinics, and then also adding in additional clinics as capacity allows. Advertising a clinic schedule via sharing flyers in the community, on the web, and via social media are effective means of getting the word out.



CLS staff, law student interns, and community partner Ardella's House at a clinic at the Strawberry Mansion Neighborhood Association in the summer of 2016.

Potential community partners for clinics include: community colleges, religious organizations such as churches or mosques, libraries, community development corporations (CDCs), and community-based service providers. It can also be helpful to seek co-sponsors for clinics, which may include state or local representatives, community organizers, or large local employers. Such co-sponsors can be especially effective in spreading the word. CLS had clinics attended by anywhere from 20 to 100 prospective clients.

As a community clinic program grows, there may be many community groups requesting to partner on clinics. Since there may be more interest than capacity, setting up a brief online survey for potential partners to complete can help streamline requests. Such a survey can also help a program evaluate whether a particular organization shares a similar vision and will have the capacity to host a successful clinic, taking into account issues like space, wi fi, staffing, location, and ability to successfully advertise in the community. Here is a link to CLS's survey: <https://clsphila.org/hosting-criminal-record-expungement-clinic>.

In addition to record clearing services, it can be useful to have other groups or information available on a range of topics including employment and housing rights for people with records and how to apply for pardons. These resources are particularly helpful for people who will not qualify to have their records completely cleared. Having community groups do organizing or policy work at clinics can also provide an empowering opportunity for clients to get more involved.



The People's Paper Co-op (PPC) is an initiative of the Village of Arts & Humanities that hosts expungement clinics in which participants can transform their criminal records into art and get involved in advocacy through their re-entry think tank.

B. Pro Bono Assistance

In addition to community-based partners, having volunteers is key to a successful clinic. Volunteers can assist on the day of the clinic to conduct intake. They can also help draft paperwork to file in court, and even track whether records have been successfully cleared.

CLS has developed several successful volunteer partnerships. CLS works with Temple Law students through a National Lawyer's Guild project and has been able to train as many as 70 students in a semester to volunteer at clinics and use the Expungement Generator to draft expungement petitions. Through this collaboration, CLS also became a host site for an extern every semester who helps to coordinate law student volunteers, supervise at clinics, and e-file and process petitions.



Temple Law students and pro-bono volunteers join CLS staff at an expungement clinic at the Called to Serve CDC in North Philadelphia.

In addition to Temple Law, CLS also works with paralegal student volunteers through Community College of Philadelphia. The paralegal students are able to help meet with and interview clients and conduct intake at the clinics as well.

CLS also partners with pro bono attorney volunteers. When applicants at clinics are slightly over-income for CLS's services, pro bono partners may be able to take those cases. Outside of CLS's clinic program, CLS also worked with the Philadelphia Bar Association to train hundreds of volunteers for a Bar-led expungement clinic.

These pro bono initiatives not only expand resources but deepen connections to legal services programs and understanding of barriers faced by people with records. Because of how uniquely happy expungement clients are among legal aid clients, these volunteer opportunities are a deeply satisfying form of pro bono.

C. Scheduling & Logistics

While the logistics for clinics will vary depending on the community partners and volunteers, there are some standard practices that may be helpful to consider.

- **Timing:** If partnering with law student volunteers, clinics will need to be scheduled around law student availability.
 - CLS plans about 3-4 clinics each semester. The fall clinics take place in October and November, with an initial training as close to possible before the first clinic. The spring clinics take place in February and March with another training taking place beforehand. CLS also holds 1-2 clinics during June and July staffed by summer interns.
 - CLS tries to not hold clinics too early in the semester or too close to finals to ensure that we will have good student turnout.
 - When scheduling clinics, it is generally best to do so during hours when your office is not typically open for intake. This helps people who work or have other commitments to have a chance to access services. Weekend clinics can be particularly effective at bringing in larger crowds, though weekday evenings can work well too.
- **Materials:** Before beginning clinics, you will want to create materials and forms that you will use at every clinic (see attached samples). CLS provides forms in English and Spanish. If you plan to access records or conduct intake online, be sure to have a plan for wi fi. Purchasing a portable hotspot is a good investment.
 - Important materials may include: intake forms to collect basic information; limited retainers; limited engagement letters; rejection letters; general information about criminal records and other relevant legal issues; flyers for upcoming clinics or other relevant services; a sign-in sheet; and checklists for intake volunteers so that they conduct proper intakes (consider putting the checklist right on the intake form).
 - Other logistical issues to think through include where to conduct private intake interviews, where attendees will sit while awaiting intake, where other community partners can present or table, the need for power strips or other access to plugs if laptops are used.
- **Flow:** Have a clearly outlined flow of the day that is communicated to volunteers.
 - Volunteers should arrive at least half an hour before the clinic starts to get set up their computers and log on to websites they will need. At CLS,

this means having volunteers logged on to the Expungement Generator and LegalServer, our case management system.

- As people arrive, it is useful to have a staff member of the organization or a volunteer greet them and have them sign-in. It is advisable to have a clear order of arrival so that you know who is next when intake spots become open. Having a volunteer act as runner to get new clients and bring them to open stations is also helpful.
- Intake should be kept as brief as possible (especially if there is a large crowd waiting), while still getting the information needed and explaining the process to clients. This includes ensuring that individuals are income-eligible for legal aid and that there are no conflicts of interest that would bar representation.

All required paperwork, including intake forms and retainer agreements, should be signed on the spot if possible to streamline the process and remove the need to track down clients later.

- Clients who are accepted for representation should be given an engagement letter that explains the scope of services and how to get in touch if their contact information changes, which is a common challenge. Clients who are not accepted for service should also get a letter explaining that, as well as a resource packet to help them address other needs they may have.
- If you have any forms that need to be signed for funding compliance, have that done at the clinic (e.g. the LSC citizenship attestation form).
- Throughout or at the end of the clinic, volunteers should be instructed to upload any petitions drafted or records downloaded to either a case management system like LegalServer or even google drive. All forms should be collected and then client information deleted, especially from public computers.

D. Follow-up

CLS advises clients that we will be in touch within one month to confirm that we have been able to file petitions and a hearing date has been set for their expungements. In Philadelphia, many cases are not contested, so we advise clients they likely do not need to come to court for the first listing. For cases that are ultimately contested, we get a short continuance and notify clients.

In Pennsylvania, once expungement is granted, the process is not over. The court generates signed orders that are provided to CLS and also sends these orders on to

the state and local police departments. The police send CLS confirmation letters when their process is complete.

CLS collects the orders and confirmations and marks their arrival in a master spreadsheet of all of our cases from a given clinic. We prepare and send letters in bulk using a mail merge, to further improve our efficient case handling, and ensure clients receive copies of all important paperwork.

While the record clearing process varies widely from state to state, it helps to think through how to streamline and automate procedures as much as possible to allow for a heavy client volume without a significant increase in staffing.

E. Planning for Common Challenges

Running a large-scale expungement clinic program comes with challenges as well as benefits. Some of the most frequent challenges CLS encounters are:

- **Losing track of clients** – while this is a common challenge for legal aid programs in general, clinic clients who have never come in through traditional intake processes and may be less connected to the program can be even more likely to fall out of touch. In many cases, this may not matter as client involvement may not be necessary after the first meeting. However, if clients need to come to court, tracking them down can be an issue.
 - One way to mitigate this is to collect as much contact information as possible during intake and ask clients how they prefer to communicate. For example, some clients may be more responsive via text message or email.
- **Filing fees & court debt** – depending on the state or county, there can be exorbitant fees to file expungement petitions. Legal aid programs should be able to file for clients *in forma pauperis (IFP)*, but not all courts easily accommodate this. In addition, clients may owe court fines and costs on the cases they are seeking to expunge. This can prevent expungements from being properly processed. The ACLU and other groups are interested in these issues and may be able to partner on them.
- **Community partners & intake** – while not every person who comes to a clinic may be a good candidate for expungement, community partners may feel strongly that anyone who is at all eligible be served. Having transparent conversations at the outset about intake standards and other services that can be provided at clinics can help address this issue up front.

VI. Clinics to Advance Policy Goals

In many states, record clearing remedies are still fairly limited, leaving millions of people who are in desperate need of relief without a path forward. Community-based clinic models can be an important way to build local support for expanding access to record clearing. For example, clinics can help advocates connect to people who would like to share their stories and get more involved in advocacy to expand record clearing laws. It can also help to build partnerships with grassroots community groups.

When local and state representatives get involved in co-hosting expungement clinics, they are able to see first-hand the demand for these services and the impact they have on their constituents' lives. This can help build support in legislatures to change laws, as it increases empathy among law-makers and dispels myths about people with records.

In Philadelphia, the Mayor's office and the Bar Association hosted an expungement clinic day at six sites around the city in November 2016. The event generated a large amount of media attention, had buy-in from state and local representatives, and was a source of connecting with people who needed the law to change to help them overcome the barriers caused by their records.



The event also showed the overwhelming need for streamlined record clearing policies: over 1,800 people signed up online through the website getexpunged.org for the clinics before registration was closed. This has helped advocates in Pennsylvania make the case for a bill currently being considered in the legislature called Clean Slate. Clean Slate would automatically, via technology, seal from public view all non-conviction arrest records, as well as some misdemeanor convictions after ten years have passed.

Community clinics help to bring stakeholders together in a powerful and positive way to provide needed services, while also highlighting and galvanizing support for the work still left to do.

VII. Conclusion

Record clearing is one of the most powerful services that legal aid programs can provide to clients and communities, as it has the rare ability to change the trajectory of people's lives. Strategically growing and targeting a record clearing program can ensure maximum impact, while not greatly increasing the burden on already strapped programs. In fact, community-based clinics are one of the best ways to increase resources and support for legal aid, and to push forward essential policy reform to ensure greater access to opportunities for low-income people and communities.

Appendix

EXPUNGEMENT CLINIC INFORMATION FORM

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Other names you have used (e.g. maiden name, AKAs): _____

Date of Birth: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Address: _____

Apt #: _____ Zip Code: _____

Estimate of Income for the past 30 days (if any): _____

Household size: _____

Income Source (check all that apply):

TANF ☐

Social Security ☐

Employment Only ☐

Employment + Other ☐

SSI ☐

Pension ☐

Unemployment Insurance ☐

Other _____

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the eligibility information contained above is correct and complete. I understand that Community Legal Services often works with volunteer partners to assist expungement clinic clients, and that CLS and its partners will keep the information I have provided confidential, except if it is needed to assist me. I agree to be assisted by CLS and its volunteer partners.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

DATE

STAFF SIGNATURE

DATE

For intake staff use only.

☐ Investigate

☐ Engagement letter (give)

☐ Resource packet (give)

☐ Signed information sheet (keep)

☐ Signed retainer (keep)

☐ Reject

☐ Rejection letter (give)

☐ Resource packet (give)

☐ Signed information sheet (keep)



Date: _____

Dear Clinic Attendee:

Thank you for coming to an expungement clinic hosted by Community Legal Services.

We have agreed to investigate your expungement case for possible representation. We cannot promise at this time that we will be able to represent you. If we decide we are unlikely to win your case or if we do not have enough lawyers, we may have to turn down your case.

If we are able to accept your case, our representation is limited to filing petitions and representing you at an expungement hearing in the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. It will not include handling of any other legal matter that you may have. Generally, we will only be able to file for expungement of charges that did not result in convictions.

If you would like help with other legal issues outside of an expungement, see the attached flyer for more information about how to get help.

Either CLS or one of our partner organizations will be in touch with you within one month of today's clinic date to confirm whether you will be represented.

If you do not hear from someone in one month, or if your contact information changes, please call Johanna Greenberg, a paralegal at Community Legal Services, at 215-981-3749.

Sincerely,

Intake Volunteer

**COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES, INC.
RETAINER AGREEMENT**

I, _____ have asked that Community Legal Services, Inc. ("CLS") handle my case.

CLS has agreed to provide the following services:

CLS will investigate my criminal record expungement case. If my case has merit and CLS or its partners have enough resources, I will be assigned a lawyer or paralegal. That lawyer or paralegal will file petition(s) on my behalf and represent me in the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas for an expungement hearing.

1. CLS will represent me only as described above.
2. CLS will inform me of all of the important things that happen in my case so that I can make decisions about my case based on that information.
3. I will cooperate fully with CLS as it works on my case. For example, I will quickly respond to telephone calls and letters from CLS; I will answer questions truthfully and completely; I will provide all information and papers requested by my representative; and I will attend appointments and hearings on time. If I cannot attend an appointment or hearing, I will call my representative. If I change my address or phone number, I will quickly tell CLS.
4. I understand that talking to the opposing party about my case may be harmful. I will follow my representative's advice about talking to the opposing party or signing any papers.
5. CLS will keep my information confidential, except as needed to handle my case or with my permission to disclose it. Seven years after my case has been closed, CLS will destroy my file.
6. Neither CLS nor its representative will charge any fees for its services. However, I understand that CLS may have some expenses related to my case. CLS can choose to pay those expenses for me if I am unable to do so. However, if I get money as the result of success in my case, I will use the money to pay CLS for expenses that it paid in my case. CLS may ask me to pay for a copy of my file if I request it.
7. CLS can choose to stop being my legal representative for reasons that could include the following:
 - a. CLS has completed the services described above.
 - b. My income, the income of other members of the household, or family size have changed so that I am no longer eligible for free legal services; or
 - c. I failed to cooperate with my representative.
8. At any time, I can ask CLS to stop being my legal representative and withdraw from my case. If I make this request, CLS will stop representing me in a way described in the professional legal rules of ethics.
9. As a client of CLS, I understand that I can file a complaint about any services CLS provided to me. I also understand that it is my responsibility to tell CLS if my income or the number of people living in my household change because that might affect my eligibility for legal assistance.
10. CLS answered any questions that I had about this agreement.

Client's Signature

Date

CLS Representative's Signature

Date



Date: _____

Dear Clinic Attendee:

Thank you for coming to an expungement clinic hosted by Community Legal Services.

After reviewing your case, we unfortunately will not be able to help you file for expungement. Expungement is only possible for certain types of cases and charges, and we only have a few lawyers to help people with expungements. Therefore, we cannot take every case.

We are giving you a packet which has a lot of useful information, including:

- How to get a copy of your criminal record
- How to address any court fines and costs you might owe
- How to apply for a pardon from the Governor
- What employments rights people with criminal records may have
- Where to go for help with other legal problems
- How to sign up for free medical insurance

We regret we could not help you more today. We wish you the best of luck in the future.

Sincerely,

Intake Volunteer

EXPUNGEMENT CLINIC: INTAKE GUIDE USING THE EXPUNGEMENT GENERATOR

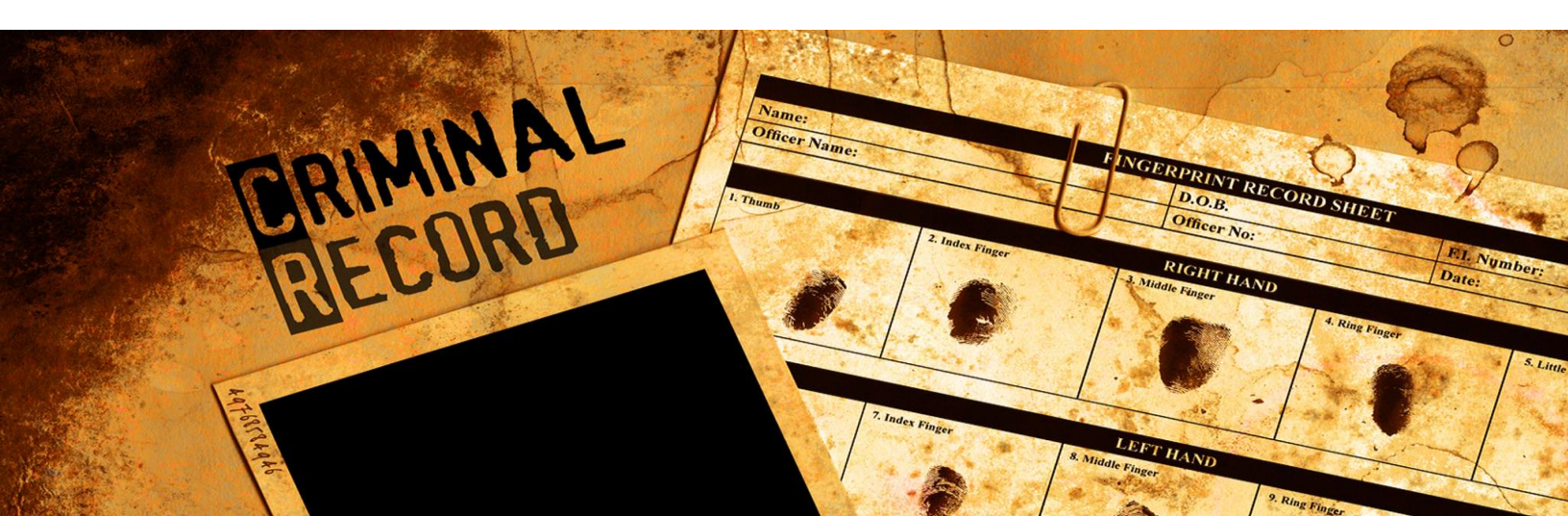
1. **Collect information sheet from applicant. Confirm record is in Pennsylvania.**
2. **Search for client's record using the expungement generator**
 - a. www.expungementgenerator.org
 - i. Log in using username and password (we will provide)
 - ii. Type in name, DOB, **full address**, and SSN
 - iii. Select "Start Expunging"
 1. If record does not come up, **see instructions on reverse and alert a supervisor.**
 - iv. Select "Summary Docket" to view court summary
 - v. If sealing is possible, now or in the future, review the docket sheet to see if Fines and Costs are owed. Click on the case number to view the docket.
 - vi. If the applicant has a record that is OUTSIDE of Philadelphia, **call supervisor over.**
3. **Determine if applicant will benefit from expungement or sealing. Clear with supervisor.**
 - a. If not a candidate, explain, give rejection letter and resource packet
4. **If a candidate, select "Expunge" on the expungement generator**
 - a. Next to "Download Petitions and Overview" there is a zip file. Click on this link to download.
5. **Pull up legal server: <https://clsphila.legalserver.org/>**
 - a. Log-in using expungement clinic username and password.
 - b. Select "Begin Expungement Clinic Intake."
 - i. **Screen 1:** Enter applicant's basic contact information, including phone number address and e-mail.
 - ii. **Screen 2:** Check for conflicts- look for "adverse party" under the "type" heading.
 1. If an adverse party's name and information match the applicant's, **stop intake and call a supervisor over.**
 2. Otherwise, select "no conflict" from the drop-down menu and continue intake.
 - iii. **Screen 3:** Select "There is no adverse party" and continue.
 - iv. **Screen 4:** Enter information about household members and income.
 1. If a case gets flagged as over-income (The Percentage of Poverty turns red), **stop intake and call supervisor over.**
 - a. If the income is between **125% - 187.5% of the poverty line**, **call a supervisor over.**
 2. Otherwise, continue intake.
 - v. **Screen 5:** Enter demographic information about applicant, as you can best approximate.
 1. Immigration Status affects how we handle an expungement case. If someone is not a citizen, please make a note in Legal Server.
 - vi. **Screen 6:** Set disposition to "Pending." The rest of the fields will automatically default correctly. Add intake notes only if there is something unusual or important to flag. Press "continue" to complete legal server intake.
6. **Upload Dockets to Legal Server**
 - a. Scroll to the bottom of the page where it says "Documents".
 - b. Drag the zip file you downloaded from the Expungement Generator over the clients name until it is highlighted yellow. Everything should upload automatically.
 - c. Please delete the zip file from your computer when you're done.
 - d. If you have a Mac, see additional instructions or ask a supervisor.
7. **Paperwork**
 - a. Give engagement letter and explain we are agreeing to *investigate* case and that someone will be in touch **within one month of the clinic.**
 - b. Review retainer and get it signed. Make sure the information sheet is signed. Indicate on info sheet if the case was accepted or rejected.
 - c. Paper-clip information sheet and retainer together.
 - d. Give resource packet.

If you cannot find a record on the Expungement Generator

1. Go to the UJS Portal: <https://ujportal.pacourts.us/DocketSheets/CP.aspx>
2. Select “Participant Name” in the drop-down menu.
 - i. You may have to play with different spellings of the client’s name.
3. Use the date field- put in 01/01/1900 – today’s date
 - i. If many records come up, try narrowing by DOB
 - ii. If record does not come up, alert a supervisor
4. Once you identify a matching record, pull up the court summary.
 - i. Roll the mouse over the icon on the left of the results and select “Court Summary”
5. Go back to the Expungement Generator and use the name and DOB on the court summary to draft the expungement petitions.

Tips on Uploading Dockets to Legal Server if you have a Mac

- Make sure you are uploading the file that has the “.zip” extension.
- The “.zip” file should appear in your Downloads folder
- DO NOT upload the folder that is created when you open the .zip file.



Expungement Clinic Resource Packet

- ❖ How to Get a Copy of Your Criminal Record
- ❖ Criminal Court Fines & Costs in Philadelphia
 - ❖ How to Get a Pardon in Pennsylvania
- ❖ Employment Rights of People with Criminal Records
- ❖ Information on the “Fair Hiring Law” in Philadelphia
- ❖ Where to Go for Help with Other Legal Problems
 - ❖ How to Get Health Insurance



Fall 2017



HOW TO GET A COPY OF YOUR JUVENILE OR CRIMINAL RECORD

Adult Records:

- **Unofficial copy for free online:**
<http://ujportal.pacourts.us/docketsheets/cp.aspx>
- **Criminal Justice Center (1301 Filbert Street, 3rd Floor):**
 - You can get a copy of your court summary for \$3, or you can ask to see your “quarter session files” and copy any documents contained for 25 cents per page.
- **State Police:** <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>
 - Paper request: (see handout)
- **FBI:** <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cjisd/fprequest.htm>
 - FBI rap sheets are more expensive (\$36) and more employers are using them, which can cause problems, as they are often inaccurate.

Juvenile Records:

- **Family Court (1501 Arch St. 11th Floor):**
 - Only you can get a copy of your juvenile record, so make sure to bring photo ID.

Paying Philadelphia Court Fines and Costs to Prepare to Clean Up Your Record

PAYMENT PLANS

Only agree to a monthly payment plan you can afford.

You can get into a low payment plan if you are on public benefits or have little income.

TO GET INTO A PAYMENT PLAN

Walk-in any weekday from 10:30AM-4:00PM for a Payment Plan Conference at the Criminal Justice Center, Basement Room 004. No appointment needed.

Bring criminal history form if you need it signed for welfare.

Bring proof of benefits (SSI, SSDI, food stamps, TANF, medical) if you can.

Keep copies of all forms!

In order to **apply for a pardon** or ask a court to **seal old and minor misdemeanor convictions**, it is important to pay court fines and costs.

TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU OWE

Go to the basement of the Criminal Justice Center at **1301 Filbert St.** and ask for your "Participant Accounting Report" or PAR.

TO PAY YOUR COURT FINES AND COSTS

Go to the Payment Center in the basement of the Criminal Justice Center. For some cases, you may also be able to pay online at: <https://ujportal.pacourts.us/ePay/Default.aspx>

SUPERVISION FEES MAY BE WAIVED

If you were charged fees while on probation, you may be able to get them waived or reduced. **You may be eligible if you are:**

- Unemployed
- 62 or older with no income
- Unable to work due to a disability
- Getting public assistance
- Supporting children or others
- In school or a training program
- Participating in an inpatient treatment program
- Or have other good reasons for not being able to pay.

FILE SUPERVISION FEE WAIVER

- To file a motion to reduce or waive supervision fees, fill out the petition below, and submit it at the Criminal Motions Unit on the second floor **(Room 206) of the Criminal Justice Center at 1301 Filbert Street.**
- The Motions Unit will charge you **\$12.50** for each petition. You can ask to have this fee waived by requesting to file **"In Forma Pauperis."**
- After you file the petition, you will have a hearing in front of a judge. You should explain why you need the fees waived and bring documentation you have to show the judge why you cannot pay.

Center City Office:

1424 Chestnut St. | Philadelphia, PA 19102-2505 | Telephone: 215-981-3700 clsphila.org

North Philadelphia Law Center:

1410 West Erie Ave. | Philadelphia, PA 19140-4136 | Telephone: 215-227-2400



FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Motion to Defer, Reduce, or Waive Supervision Fees

Must Be Filed With: Criminal Motions Unit Room 206 Criminal Justice Center 1301 Filbert Street Philadelphia, PA 19107					
	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">PID/SID</td> <td style="width: 60%; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">PHONE NUMBER</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>	PID/SID	PHONE NUMBER		
PID/SID	PHONE NUMBER				

CRIMINAL CASE CAPTION Commonwealth v.	CPCMS CASE NUMBER <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; padding: 2px 10px;"> -51-CR- </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 60px; height: 15px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 40px; height: 15px;"></div>
---	--

DEFENDANT'S CURRENT ADDRESS

MOTION

- 1) On _____ the defendant was placed on probation in the above-case, to be supervised for a maximum term of _____ months, beginning on _____. A supervision fee in the sum of \$25 per month was ordered.
- 2) The Defendant is/was also supervised in the following cases during the same period identified above:
_____.
- 3) The Defendant has paid \$_____ in supervision fees, and as of _____ owes \$_____.
- 4) The Defendant has paid \$_____ in fees, fines, costs and restitution and as of _____ owes \$_____.
- 5) Defendant requests the Court to defer, reduce, or waive supervision fees for the following reason(s),
(Check the basis for your request and attach relevant information)
- ☐ a. the Defendant is 62 years of age or older with no income.
- ☐ b. The Defendant is receiving public assistance in the sum of \$_____. The *Award Letter* is attached;
- ☐ c. The Defendant is enrolled as a full-time student for 12 semester hours in an educational institution approved by the United States Department of Education Proof of enrollment attached;
- ☐ d. The Defendant is currently incarcerated or was incarcerated at _____ from _____ to _____;
- ☐ e. The Defendant is not employable as a result of a disability, as determined by an examination which must be acceptable to the court. *A copy of the medical examination is attached;*
- ☐ f. The Defendant is responsible for the support of dependants, and the payment of a supervision fee constitutes an undue hardship upon the offender. List in detail the name, age, relationship, and income of each dependant;
- ☐ g. The Defendant is participating in an in-patient treatment program. *Attach proof of admission and duration;* and
- ☐ h. Due to the following extenuating circumstances *(describe in detail)*;

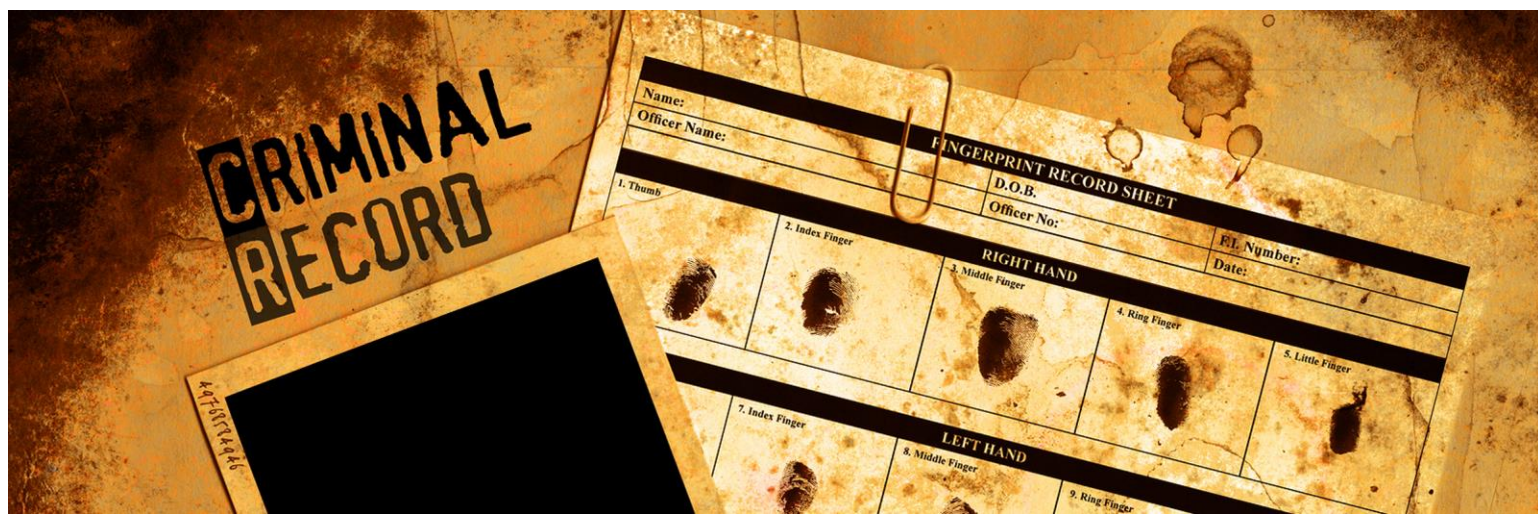
(Attach Additional Pages As Necessary)

VERIFICATION

I, being duly sworn according to law, depose and say that I am the defendant in the within action and that the facts set forth above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

I verify that the statements made herein are true and correct. I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. §4904 relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name of Defendant</i>	<i>Signature of Defendant</i>



Erasing Your Criminal Record: How to Get a Pardon in Pennsylvania



COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES
OF PHILADELPHIA

September 2017

WHAT IS A PARDON?

A pardon is an act by the Governor of Pennsylvania that erases a conviction from your criminal record. **In Pennsylvania, a pardon is generally the only way that felony and misdemeanor convictions can be eliminated.** These convictions cannot be expunged by a court, though certain eligible misdemeanors can be sealed from the public after enough time has passed.

Although it is difficult to get a pardon, you should consider applying for one if you are having employment or other problems because of your criminal record. The process will take several years. It will cost \$8.00 for an application, an additional \$25.00 in filing fees, \$10.00 to get a PA State Police record, \$10.00 for your Full Driving History, and the cost of passport photos, copies of documents, and postage. But if you are successful, you can have a clean criminal record again.

WHO CAN GET A PARDON?

Anyone who has a criminal record may apply for a pardon. There are no definite standards for when a pardon will be given, but the majority of people who receive pardons have a record of only one minor offense that was committed at least five years ago, or a more serious offense that was committed at least ten years ago.

The most common types of crimes to receive pardons include shoplifting and disorderly conduct. Typically, serious crimes are only pardoned if several decades have passed since the crime was committed. **The longer you have stayed out of trouble, the better your chances of getting a pardon.**

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A PARDON?

Request the application

The first step is to send a short letter to the Board of Pardons (BOP) requesting an application for a hearing (see address on back). With this letter, you must include an **\$8.00 money order, cashier's check or certified check payable to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and a self-addressed business size envelope with \$1.40 of postage on it. Personal checks will not be accepted.**

Collect the required documents

As the application's instructions will explain, you will need to gather some information and documentation for your application. For instance, you will be required to order your complete criminal history from the PA State Police. **It can take as long as six months for this record to be sent to you, so you should send away for it as soon as you begin the pardon application process.** You will also need to request your Full Driving History from the PA Department of Transportation and get one color passport-sized photo.

Gather necessary information and supporting materials

You will need to track down information about your conviction(s), such as the date of the crime, the place where you were tried, and the name of judge who presided over your trial and/or sentenced you. You must also list every time you were arrested and any citation you ever received. This information often can be gathered at your county courthouse. You will have to go to the Courthouse in the County where you were sentenced and get copies of certain documents from the original file such as the Disposition/Sentencing Order.

Although not required, you should also consider getting letters of recommendation and any documents that show positive changes in your life (such as diplomas or awards).

Fill out the application

The application is several pages long and asks you a variety of questions. **The most important questions on the application require you to discuss the specific details of the crime, your conduct since the crime was committed, and your explanation of why you should be pardoned. It is extremely important that you tell the Board that you accept responsibility for the acts which led to your conviction(s). Explain your answers to these questions in as much detail as possible.**

Send in your completed application

Be sure to read the instructions carefully. Once you finish the application, you must make **five copies** of the application and send it to the Board along with all required and supplemental documents and a \$25.00 money order. If your application is missing anything, the Board will send it back to you.

Requesting a fee waiver

You can try to get the Board to waive the \$33.00 of its fees if you feel that you cannot afford it, but the Board almost never waives fees for people who are not currently in prison. To do this, your first letter to the Board should request the form for what is called an "in forma pauperis" application. You will still have to include a self-addressed envelope with \$1.40 in postage. When you receive this form, you can fill it out and send it back to the Board of Pardons. **But you should make every effort to pay the filing fees, because the Board considers your financial situation in deciding to recommend a pardon.**

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Your application is filed

Assuming your application is complete, the Board will file your application within 2-4 months of receiving it.

Interview by state parole agent

About two years after the Board files the application, a state parole agent will interview you at your home, to collect information to determine whether you are "a responsible, contributing member of society." He or she will ask about who else lives with you and about your conduct since the crime was committed. You should be prepared to make points in your favor, such as any community service, military service or religious activities in which you have participated. The agent will also ask you personal questions, such as whether you are married and have children, where you work, and if you owe any loans. It is important that you cooperate with the agent. If the agent asks any questions that make you uncomfortable, please explain your concerns rather than refusing to cooperate. The agent will then prepare a report based on this interview.

The board reviews application

At this point, your investigation report, any opinions that might be submitted by the local trial judge and district attorney, and your application are sent to the Board to be reviewed. The Board consists of five members: the Lt. Governor (the chair); the Attorney General; a victim representative; a corrections expert; and a psychologist. To get a hearing, generally at least two members of the Board must vote to grant you one. It typically takes one year until the Board decides whether or not to grant you a public hearing. If the Board does not grant you a hearing, your application has been denied. If you are granted a hearing, it is held within the next couple of months, in Harrisburg.

Hearing in Harrisburg

If you are granted a hearing, you will need to attend the hearing and speak for yourself to the Board. Hearings are open to the public and are only 15 minutes long. You do not need an attorney, but you can choose to be represented by an attorney or anyone else. You may want to bring someone else to speak in your favor.

The Board asks questions to determine if you are sorry for committing the crime and to make sure you will not commit another crime. The Board will also ask about any other arrests on your record. Make sure to tell the Board about the problems you are having as a result of your criminal record, such as difficulty finding a job or advancing a career.

The board takes a public vote

The board takes a vote on all cases presented at the hearing at the end of the hearing session. If fewer than three of the five members of the Board recommend that you receive a pardon, your application is denied. **If at least three members vote in your favor, the Board's recommendation that you receive a pardon will be sent to the Governor.**

The role of the Governor

The Governor has the final say about whether you are granted a pardon, but he tends to follow the recommendation of the Board. Once the Board's recommendation is sent to the Governor, it can take up to a year for a final decision. If the Governor grants the pardon, you will receive a signed document from him.

Expunging the record

The final step is to go to the clerk of court in the county where you committed the offense to request an expungement. You will need to file a petition and attach the signed pardon document from the Governor. A judge will then order that the record be expunged, and within two to six months, all records of the crime for which you received a pardon will be erased by both the court and the Pennsylvania State Police.

RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

1. Board of Pardons

333 Market Street, 15th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
(717) 787-2596
<http://www.bop.pa.gov/>

2. Pardon Me Clinic

What: Provides assistance to people in Philadelphia who are applying for pardons
Where: There are clinics in West, South, and North Philadelphia
For more info: Contact Wayne Jacobs at 215-668-8477

3. Community Legal Services

Center City Office: 1424 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 1910, 215-981-3700
North Philadelphia Law Center: 1410 West Erie Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19140, 215-227-2400, www.clsphila.org

Pardon Me Clinic 2017

Assisting the formerly convicted who are no longer on probation or parole and who are seeking Clemency and a Second Chance at employment opportunities, etc. through the Governor Pardon Process.

Contact **Wayne Jacobs** of **X-Offenders for Community Empowerment** at **215-668-8477** or jacobs19132@gmail.com to learn more.

Meeting Locations and Times

Germantown: Why Not Prosper 717 E Cheltenham Ave. Phila., PA 19144 Time: 6pm to 8pm	4th Monday of Every Month: January 23, February 27, March 27, April 24, May 22, June 26, September 25, October 23, November 27, 2016 & No December meeting
North Philly: African-American United Fund 2231 N Broad St., Phila., PA 19132 Time: 6pm to 8pm	2nd Monday of Every Month: January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, September 11, November 13 & December 11
Upper North Philly: Rep. Acosta's District Office 511 W Courtland St., Suite 197, Phila., PA 19140 Time: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	2nd Tuesday of Every Month: January 10, February 14, March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13, September 12, October 10, November 14 & December 12
Frankford: Frankford Aria Hospital 2fl, CR 1-2, 4900 Frankford Ave, Phila., PA 19124 Time: 6:00pm to 8:00pm	1st Monday of Each Month: February 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5, October 2, November 6 & December 4
South Philly: The Church of the Redeemer Baptist 1440 S 24 th St., Phila., PA 19146 Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm	1st Tuesday of Every Month: January 3, February 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6, September 5, October 3, November 7 & December 5
West Philly: Sayre/Morris Recreation Center 5835 Spruce St., Phila., PA 19139 Time: 6:00pm to 8:00pm	3rd Monday of Every Month: March 20, April 17, May 15, June 19, September 18, October 16, November 20 & December 18

Sponsored by: Bread & Roses, Why Not Prosper, Councilwoman Cindy Bass, Univ. of Penn Law School, Councilman Darrell L. Clarke, African-American United Fund, & State Rep. Leslie Acosta

Legal Rights of People with Criminal Records: Employment

WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS CONSIDER UNDER FEDERAL LAW?

- Employers **CANNOT** consider arrests that did not lead to convictions (e.g. withdrawn, dismissed, nolle prossed, or “not guilty” charges).
- Employers can consider a **conviction**, but **MUST** consider: 1) how minor the conviction is, 2) how long ago it happened, and 3) how it relates to the job sought.
- Each case should be treated **individually!** An employer should consider “individualized evidence” including:
 - Facts surrounding the offense
 - Number of convictions the applicant has
 - Age at the time of conviction
 - History of performing similar work since the conviction with no incidents of criminal conduct
 - Work history before and after conviction
 - Rehabilitation efforts, including education and training
 - Employment and/or character references
- If an employer plans to use information from a commercial background report to reject or terminate you, they **MUST** give you notice, a copy of the report first, and an opportunity to correct any mistakes in the report.

WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS CONSIDER UNDER STATE LAW?

- Under Pennsylvania law, employers can consider **felony and misdemeanor convictions ONLY to the extent they relate to the job.**
- Employers should **NOT** consider summary convictions (e.g. disorderly conduct, low-level retail theft), juvenile adjudications, or arrests without convictions.



Center City Office:

1424 Chestnut St. | Philadelphia, PA 19102-2505 | Telephone: 215-981-3700 clsphila.org

North Philadelphia Law Center:

1410 West Erie Ave. | Philadelphia, PA 19140-4136 | Telephone: 215-227-2400

WHAT CAN PHILADELPHIA EMPLOYERS CONSIDER?

- **The Philadelphia Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance** prevents Philadelphia employers from asking about criminal records on job applications or in interviews. Employers can only run background checks after making **conditional offers of employment**.
- If a background check reveals a conviction, an employer can take back the offer if:
 - The conviction or incarceration occurred in the **past 7 years AND**
 - The conviction is **so related to the job** that the employer determines the applicant poses an unacceptable risk.
- This Philadelphia law does not apply when state or federal laws have different rules for hiring people with records (e.g. in child care jobs).

WHERE CAN YOU GO TO FILE COMPLAINTS?

If you are African American/Latino and feel an employer improperly rejected or fired you because of a criminal record, you can file a charge of race discrimination with:

- **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:** 801 Market Street, Suite 1300 (walk in hours M-F, 8:30-3:30); <http://www.eeoc.gov/field/philadelphia/charge.cfm>
- **Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission:** 110 North 8th Street, Suite 501; http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/file_a_complaint/18976/employment_discrimination_complaint_forms/726963
- **Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations:** 601 Walnut Street, Suite 300 S.; <http://www.phila.gov/HumanRelations/DiscriminationAndEnforcement/Documents/Employment%20Discrimination.pdf>

If you apply for a job in Philadelphia and an employer violates the **Philadelphia Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance** you can file a complaint with:

- **Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations:** 601 Walnut Street, Suite 300 S.; <http://www.phila.gov/HumanRelations/DiscriminationAndEnforcement/Pages/FilingABanTheBoxComplaint.aspx>

Updated October 2017



Center City Office:

1424 Chestnut St. | Philadelphia, PA 19102-2505 | Telephone: 215-981-3700 clsphila.org

North Philadelphia Law Center:

1410 West Erie Ave. | Philadelphia, PA 19140-4136 | Telephone: 215-227-2400

“Fair Hiring Law”: New Changes to How Employers Can Consider Criminal Records in Philadelphia

If an employer violates the "Fair Hiring Law" you can:

- **File a complaint** with the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations within 300 days:

EITHER go in person to:
601 Walnut St, Ste 300 So
Philadelphia, PA 19106
phone (215) 686-4670
OR, get the complaint
form online at
www.phila.gov/humanrelations, then mail, fax, or
email it to
fax (215) 686-4684
email: pchr@phila.gov

The “Fair Hiring Law” does not apply to:

- Criminal justice agencies
- Domestic service workers in employers' own homes

Most employers in Philadelphia County:

- **Cannot** ask you about your criminal record on job applications or in interviews.
- **Can only** run background checks once they have made you an offer of employment subject to your background check.
- **Cannot** take back their offers of employment if you have not been convicted or incarcerated in the past **7 years**, unless the law requires that they deny you the job.
- **Cannot** reject you based on arrest(s) that did not lead to conviction(s), regardless of when they occurred.

If you have been convicted or incarcerated in the past 7 years, employers in Philadelphia County:

- **Can only** take back the job offer if your conviction(s) are so related to the job that they believe hiring you would be an unacceptable risk.
- **Must** notify you in writing, and give you a copy of your criminal record if they reject you because of your record. You then have 10 days to explain the conviction(s), or to prove that the record is inaccurate.



COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES

OF PHILADELPHIA

Center City Office: 1424 Chestnut St. | Philadelphia, PA 19102-2505 | Telephone: 215-981-3700 clsphila.org
North Philadelphia Law Center: 1410 West Erie Ave. | Philadelphia, PA 19140-4136 | Telephone: 215-227-2400

Do you have a **LEGAL** problem or question? *We want to help you!*

Philadelphia Legal Assistance (PLA) and Community Legal Services (CLS) provide **FREE** legal help for low-income residents of Philadelphia by phone and in-person at three Philadelphia locations. Please, call *before* coming in to make sure our hours have not changed.



FOR PROBLEMS WITH...	Philadelphia Legal Assistance 718 Arch Street, Suite 300N 215-981-3800	Community Legal Services 1424 Chestnut Street 215-981-3700	Community Legal Services 1410 W. Erie Avenue 215-227-2400
Bankruptcy and Debt Collection	Walk in: Mon. & Wed. 9–11:30 Call: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30–12	---	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Child Abuse (allegations causing problems with employment)	---	Mon. – Fri. 9–noon	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Child Custody; Phone Only; no walk ins	Call 215-981-3838 (no walk ins) Mon. & Wed. 10–noon	---	---
Criminal Records (including child abuse; employment issues)	---	Mon. – Fri. 9–noon	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
DHS/Dependency (parents with kids involved with DHS)	---	Walk in: Mon. – Fri. 9–noon Call: Mon. – Fri. 9–5 215-981-3765	---
Divorce (Philadelphia County <i>defendants only</i>); Online Only	www.philalegal.org/apply	---	---
Employment (including problems with criminal records)	---	Mon. – Fri. 9–noon	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Federal Tax (IRS) Disputes/Collections (not preparation services)	Walk in: Mon. & Wed. 9–11:30 Call: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30–12	---	---
Homeownership/Deeds/Tangled Titles	Walk in: Mon. & Wed. 9–11:30 Call: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30–12	---	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Lawsuits (<i>Defendants Only</i>)	Walk in: Mon. & Wed. 9–11:30 Call: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30–12	---	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Loans and Consumer Scams	---	---	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Long-term Care (including in-home care)	---	---	Mon. & Wed. 9–noon
Mortgages	Save Your Home Philly Hotline 215-334-HOME (4663)	---	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Private Landlord/Tenant Issues	---	Walk in: Mon. – Thurs. 9–11 Call: Mon. – Fri. 9–4:30 267-443-2500	---
Probate	Walk in: Mon. & Wed. 9–11:30 Call: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30–12	---	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon

FOR PROBLEMS WITH...	Philadelphia Legal Assistance 718 Arch Street, Suite 300N 215-981-3800	Community Legal Services 1424 Chestnut Street 215-981-3700	Community Legal Services 1410 W. Erie Avenue 215-227-2400
Property Taxes	Save Your Home Philly Hotline 215-334-HOME (4663)	---	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Protection from Abuse Orders (<i>Plaintiffs Only</i>); Phone Only	Call 215-981-3838 (no walk-ins) Mon. & Wed. 10–noon	---	---
Public Housing (Subsidized including Landlord/Tenant Issues, HUD, Section 8, PHA)	---	Walk in: Mon. – Thurs. 9–11 Call: Mon. – Fri. 9–4:30 267-443-2500	---
SSI Disability Benefits Appeals	---	Closed until January 2, 2018	Closed until January 2, 2018
SSI/Soc. Sec. (other than proving disability), Medicare, VA	---	---	Mon. & Wed. 9–noon
Unemployment Compensation	Walk in: Mon. & Wed. 9–11:30 Call: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30–12	---	---
Utilities		Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon
Welfare (TANF, Food Stamps, Medical Assistance, Childcare Subsidy, and LIHEAP)	Walk in: Mon. & Wed. 9–11:30 Call: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30–12	---	Mon., Wed., & Fri. 9–noon

Other Places You Can Get Legal Help



Defender Association of Philadelphia
Criminal Cases
215-568-3190



SeniorLAW Center
Legal assistance for Philadelphians 60+
215-988-1242



Women Against Abuse Legal Unit
Protection from abuse and some custody cases for battered men and women
215-686-7082
24-Hour Hotline
866-723-3014



AIDS Law Project
Legal assistance for people who are HIV+
215-587-9377



Women's Law Project
Discrimination against women, reproductive rights, and family law
215-928-9801



Lawyer Referral and Information Service
NOT a free service
215-238-6333



Legal Aid of Southeastern PA
Legal assistance for people outside of Philadelphia (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties)
877-429-5994



TURN
Provide referrals to other legal aid organizations to tenants for rental housing issues
267-443-2500

We are committed to serving non-English speakers in their own language. If possible, please call in advance so we can make an interpreter available.
Last updated 10/5/2017



Do You Need Health Insurance?

In 2015, Pennsylvania expanded its Medical Assistance (Medicaid) program. **Most lower-income people now qualify**, even if they are working and do not have children.

You can apply for **free** coverage!

To apply for Medical Assistance:

Visit compass.state.pa.us; or

Call (866) 550-4355.

If you do not qualify for Medical Assistance, you may qualify for help buying insurance through Pennsylvania's Marketplace (Obamacare). To get Marketplace coverage for 2017, **sign up between November 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017.**

You can get help applying for Medical Assistance or coverage through Pennsylvania's Marketplace!

For help applying in person or over the phone:

Call (877) 570-3642.



COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES OF PHILADELPHIA

www.clsphila.org • (215) 981-3700 • (215) 227-2400

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