

JUDGE TERRE L. VANDERVOORT

INFORMATION PACKET
SEALING & EXPUNGING OF JUVENILE RECORDS

SEALING A JUVENILE RECORD

“SEALING” your juvenile record means that the offense is deemed to never have occurred and you may accurately report that “NO RECORD EXISTS”.

If your record is “SEALED” the court will remove all of your records from the main file of similar records and maintain your sealed record in a separate and secure file that contains only sealed records and is only accessible to juvenile court.

AM I ELIGIBLE TO SEAL MY JUVENILE RECORD?

You are ELIGIBLE, at the discretion of the Juvenile Court Judge, to have your record sealed if ALL of the following apply:

- A. It has been six (6) months since the termination of any order made by this court **OR** six (6) months since you have been unconditionally discharged (not on probation or parole) from The Department of Youth Services or any other institution/facility to which you may have been committed; this includes orders of court costs, fines, restitution, and community service which must be completed; **AND**
- B. You have been adjudicated any of the following:
 - 1. A juvenile traffic offender; or
 - 2. A delinquent child, unless you were adjudicated delinquent by reason of:
 - a. Aggravated Murder
 - b. Murder
 - c. Rape
 - d. An unruly child; **AND**
- C. You have been rehabilitated to the satisfaction of the court taking into consideration the following factors:
 - 1. Your age.
 - 2. The nature of the case.
 - 3. The cessation (stopping) or continuation of delinquent, unruly or criminal behavior.
 - 4. Your education and employment history; and
 - 5. Any other circumstances that may relate to your rehabilitation.

Please remember, applying to seal your record doesn’t automatically mean that it will be sealed. The Court will consider whether you have been rehabilitated, in other words, you have made positive choices since you have been in Juvenile Court to the satisfaction of the Judge.

WHAT IF I CHOOSE NOT TO SEAL MY JUVENILE RECORD?

The possible consequences of not having your record sealed may include:

1. Loss of employment opportunities.
2. Loss of any opportunity to enlist in the military; or
3. Loss of an opportunity to be licensed by the State of Ohio (for example, as a teacher, doctor, etc.).

HOW DO I APPLY TO SEAL MY RECORD?

If you wish to apply to have your record sealed, please submit the attached application to the Fairfield County Juvenile Court at the Hall of Justice, 224 E. Main Street, Room 308/Clerks' Office, Lancaster, Ohio 43130.

EXPUNGEMENT OF A JUVENILE RECORD

WHAT IS EXPUNGING A JUVENILE RECORD?

When a juvenile record is expunged it is physically destroyed.

HOW DO I APPLY TO EXPUNGE MY RECORD?

After your record has been sealed, your record will automatically be expunged after a period of five (5) years or when you reach age 23, whichever occurs sooner. You may apply to Juvenile Court to have your sealed record expunged sooner. Please request an early expungement application form from the clerk's office.

HOW IS "EXPUNGING" DIFFERENT THAN "SEALING" A RECORD?

Though a SEALED record is separated and not accessible in most circumstances, it physically exists. (When a record is "SEALED" it is removed from public access, but not destroyed). "EXPUNGE" a record means to destroy, delete, and erase a record, as appropriate for the record's physical or electronic form or characteristic. Expunge means that the record is permanently irretrievable.

DIVERSION

If you had charges that went through the Diversion process, you should proceed with Sealing as well.

ATTACHMENTS

- Application to Seal

QUESTIONS

If you have questions on the process, please contact the Fairfield County Juvenile Court's Clerk's office located at 224 E. Main Street – 3rd Floor, Lancaster, Ohio 43130; phone 740-652-7463.