

Expungement and Sealing Action Steps

Optional Action: Figure out your Why

- Expungement and sealing is a multi-step process requiring your commitment.
- The more specific you can be about what you expect to accomplish by going through this process, the easier it will be for you to continue when things get complicated.
- Document your why in a personal statement to share with the judge. This isn't required but it helps the judge understand your journey and see you as more than a list of charges.

Optional Action: Become a good candidate for relief

- Employment of any kind and a volunteer commitment are the two best ways to convince a judge that you would benefit from expungement and sealing.
- If your record is an obstacle to a job or volunteering this fact becomes part of your why and can be documented in your personal statement.

Required Action: Get your RAP sheet - Report of Arrests and Prosecutions

- A RAP sheet lists all of your arrests. It is available to you (for a fee) from the department that arrested you, and the Illinois State Police if you have been arrested in more than one city.

Required Action: Complete your petition

- Free legal help through CGLA's help desk (<https://www.cgla.net/get-legal-help>) or other legal aid organizations is available to make sure all eligible arrests and criminal cases in addition to their outcomes are listed on your petition.

Required Action: Obtain a drug screen (only IF you have drug convictions)

- You may test positive for cannabis and still receive credit for a clear drug screen.
- A negative drug screen will include illegal substances and controlled substances taken without a prescription.

Required Action: File your petition and pay the filing fee

- CGLA or another legal aid organization can work with you to obtain a filing fee waiver (income conditions apply). You may also pay this fee yourself.
- Include copies of your RAP sheet and case summaries with your petition.
- If you have a drug conviction include your drug screen.
- Include your personal statement if written.