

Columbia County Juvenile Probation Services Expungement of Juvenile Records Notice

You have officially completed your period of supervision with this office as directed by the Juvenile Court of Columbia County. This notice is to inform you of the law as it relates to the expungement of juvenile records. Generally, expungement means to do away with, erase or to delete. Since you have been placed on informal probation, consent decree or adjudicated delinquent, the following information is provided to you in this notice.

Your involvement with the juvenile justice system may have included having your fingerprints and photograph taken along with records pertaining to your arrest and disposition. There are usually police department records on your case along with the probation department records. For the most part, juveniles are protected by confidentiality rules as they pertain to juvenile records of information retained by police departments, probation departments and other law enforcement agencies related to juvenile cases. This does not mean that your juvenile record is sealed completely.

An expungement order signed by a Columbia County Court Judge is the only means by which all of your records can be destroyed.

Depending on the manner in which your case was handled and if you have not again become arrested under the juvenile court jurisdiction, you may qualify to have your record expunged. The responsibility to pursue an expungement is on you, not the juvenile probation department.

The Columbia County Juvenile Probation Department may assist you in filing an expungement. If you wish to pursue expungement, you need to contact juvenile probation to begin the process of filing a petition to the court to expunge your record(s). You will need to pay a fee of \$30.00 per petition to juvenile probation to prepare and file the petition and you will need to avail yourself, in person, for signature of papers prior to filing. The filing of the petition does not guarantee expungement as it must be approved by the Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, District Attorney and then forwarded to the Judge. If at any time during the process it is disapproved, a court hearing on the petition will be scheduled. **Please keep in mind that you must satisfy in full any and all court costs and fees and restitution balances involved in the case prior to requesting an expungement.** An outstanding balance will disqualify you for expungement. You may also contact an attorney of your choosing to file a petition for expungement. You would be responsible for their fees for services. They would then file before the Court on your behalf.

Generally, there are three instances in which you may be able to pursue an expungement of your juvenile records. They are listed below for your reference.

1. If you have been placed on Informal Adjustment or Consent Decree, you must wait six (6) months after you have been released from juvenile probation supervision, provided that during that time you have not been convicted of a felony, misdemeanor, or adjudicated delinquent and no such proceeding is pending seeking such conviction or adjudication. An Informal Adjustment or Consent Decree will be automatically expunged if there is nothing pending and any fee shall be waived.

2. If you have been Adjudicated Delinquent, you must wait until five (5) years after you have been released from juvenile probation supervision provided that during that time you have not been convicted of a felony, misdemeanor or adjudicated delinquent and no such proceeding is pending seeking such conviction or adjudication. Fee shall be applicable unless juvenile is determined to be indigent.
3. If you do not qualify under #1 or #2, but are 18 years of age or older, you may file a petition to expunge your juvenile case and the District Attorney may consent to the expungement after giving consideration to the following factors:
 - a. The type of offense.
 - b. The individual's age, history of employment, criminal activity, and drug/alcohol problems.
 - c. Adverse consequences that the individual may suffer if the records are not expunged.
 - d. Whether retention of the record is required for the purposes of protecting the community.

If you believe you meet the criteria and would like to expunge a juvenile record(s), contact Columbia County Juvenile Probation at 26 West First Street, PO Box 380, Bloomsburg, PA 17815 or (570) 389-5684 for additional information.

Please note that having a delinquency record may result in collateral consequences depending on the offense and how your case was handled. Such consequences may involve some records open to the public, or may negatively impact employment opportunities, public housing, military, driver's license, license to carry a firearm. A juvenile record may affect an adult sentencing score should you be convicted of an offense as an adult. This list is not exhaustive and is subject to change. The expungement process does take some time to complete; therefore, do not have an expectation it will process quickly for you to achieve a desired goal that is impacted by your juvenile record. It is in your best interest to retain this letter with your important documents for future reference.

Sincerely,

Denise LaBuda
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer
dlabuda@columbiapa.org