

Step #1: Gather Your Records

- 1. Get Your Records from Court.** Before COVID, people got their records by going to the courthouse. Now, it's best to call first to check if the court is open and find out how you can get your records during COVID.

To find your court's phone number:

- Go to www.mncourts.gov/Find-Courts.aspx
- Choose your county from the drop-down under "District (Trial) Courts"
- Click "Go"

- 2. Get Your Records from BCA.** You also need to get your record from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (the BCA).

The BCA records have information that isn't in the court records. Fill out a "Request for Copy of Criminal Record" letter, get it notarized, and mail it to the BCA with an \$8 money order, check, or cash. Download a copy of the request form at www.lawhelpmn.org/BCA-request.

- 3. Get Other Records.** If you have records from another state or from federal court, call the courthouse where your case took place and ask for the records.

Step #2: Get Your Forms and Fill Them Out

You can get expungement forms in person at the courthouse or online. To get them online:

- Go to www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx
- Click on "Criminal Expungement"
- Click on the link that says "Expungement (Sealing) of a Criminal Record"
- Click "PDF" to download the instructions and each of the other forms

Fill out all of the forms. If you need step-by-step help, there is a Step-by-Step Expungement Guide you can use to help fill out the papers: www.lawhelpmn.org/expungement-guide.

You need a set of forms for each case you want to expunge.

Step #3: ‘Serve’ Your Expungement Forms

Now you have to ‘serve’ your papers. You need to have someone mail the papers to different government and law enforcement agencies involved in your case. The person who mails the papers fills out a “proof of service” form. The “proof of service” form is one of the ones you downloaded in Step #2.

You have to send the papers to many different agencies. Look at page 14 of the Step-by-Step Expungement Guide to figure out which agencies you need to mail your papers to: www.lawhelpmn.org/expungement-guide.

Step #4: File Your Papers

Now you file your paperwork with the court.

If the case you want to expunge was **dismissed** or you were found **not guilty**, you **DON’T** have to pay a fee.

Otherwise, you have to pay a filing fee **OR** fill out the forms to ask for a fee waiver. To get the fee waiver forms:

- Go to www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx
- Click on Fee Waiver
- Click on “Fee Waiver (IFP)”
- Click “PDF” to download the instructions and each of the other forms

Step #5: Get Ready for Your Hearing

Think about how you want to tell your story to the judge. Take notes about what you want to say so you remember everything. Focus on the facts and why the expungement will make your life better. You can also explain what you’ve done to improve yourself, like going to treatment or being involved in your community.

Look at page 18 of the Step-by-Step Expungement Guide for more tips on preparing for your hearing: www.lawhelpmn.org/expungement-guide.

The judge has 90 days to tell you their decision.

You Can Do It!!

Expungement can seem like a long and hard process. Don’t give up! There are resources out there to help you. For detailed information about the process and how to fill out the forms, and for information about lawyers who can help for free, check out www.lawhelpmn.org/criminal-expungement. The court also has information at www.mncourts.gov/Help-Topics/Criminal-Expungement.aspx.