Criminal records

A completed sentence should not become permanent civil status.

THE POSITION

Continued publication of criminal records and collateral restrictions can deny work, housing, licenses, education, and civic participation after the sentence imposed by law is complete. Fees and difficult petitions make civil standing depend on money and legal skill. Matilda Law supports automatic relief for eligible records, without unnecessary cost, delay, or procedure.

Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Utah have each adopted automatic forms of record relief. Their laws differ, but they show that a state can identify eligible records and limit continued public exposure without requiring each person to begin another legal process.

SOURCES

Pennsylvania, 18 Pa.C.S. § 9122.2
Automatically limits continued public access to certain eligible criminal-history records.

Michigan, MCL § 780.621g
Automatically sets aside eligible convictions after the required waiting periods.

Utah Code § 77-40a-205
Provides automatic expungement for eligible records.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This guide gives general information, not legal advice or representation. Laws and deadlines vary by place and circumstance. Check current official sources before acting.