



CLEAN SLATE

ELIGIBILITY EXPANSION

SUPPORT HB 4362 AND SB 1628

INCREASE ACCESS TO PETITION-BASED RECORD SEALING TO IMPROVE JOBS, SAFETY, AND THE ECONOMY FOR ALL TEXANS

1 in 3 Americans has a criminal record, including more than 9 million Texans. Individuals with records face lifelong barriers to employment, housing, public assistance, educational opportunities, and more. Too often, a criminal record — even for minor, low-level offenses and for people who have completely turned their lives around — is a lifetime sentence to poverty.

Texans with conviction records experience an estimated combined total of \$32 billion in lost wages.

Eligibility to attempt to have one's record sealed in Texas is extremely limited. With few exceptions, only people who successfully completed deferred adjudication or who were convicted of a first-time misdemeanor are eligible to have their record sealed (officially called an Order of Nondisclosure).

WORKFORCE & SAFETY BENEFITS OF RECORD SEALING

- Unlike expunction, record sealing will not destroy the record. This remedy strikes the right balance between maintaining the information for law enforcement, licensing and other limited uses while clearing a path for people to successfully find employment, housing, and other key sources of stability.
- Researchers have found a 23% improvement in substantive employment two years after record sealing and a 23% increase in wages.
- People who receive record relief not only experience improvements in economic outcomes, but also pose little public-safety risk — within 5 years, only 2.6% of recipients of record relief were rearrested and less than 1% were reconvicted for violent crimes.

HB 4362 AND SB 1628 WOULD:

- Reduce the period of time a person must wait to petition for relief after completion of their sentence to minimize the likelihood of committing another offense and help people get back to work quicker.
- Expand access to sealing for people with past nonviolent state jail felony convictions.
- Allow more than one non-violent conviction (misdemeanors or state jail felonies) to be sealed after a specified number of years have passed since a person completed their last sentence.