

Clean Slate Screening Project: Step-by-Step Guide for Volunteers

- **Step 1:** Receive client referrals and contact information from PBA.
- **Step 2:** Pull client's record from the court website: <https://uisportal.pacourts.us>.
 - Court records often get names and dates of birth wrong, or individuals may have used different names at different points in time. If you cannot immediately find the record, try different variations of names or try searching without birth date.
 - Review court summary first to get an overall view of the record.
 - If court summary says that a case is "archived" you will need to open the individual docket to see what happened in that case.
- **Step 3:** If you are searching for someone's record and nothing comes up, it could be because it has already been sealed. The automated portion of the Clean Slate law went into effect on June 28, 2019. The courts have one year to seal all of the cases in the database that are eligible, starting with the most recent cases first and then going backward in time. Even if you do find a record, there may be other records that have already been sealed. Please advise clients that in order to see their full criminal record, they either need to go to the court house in the county where the case took place or request an Access & Review form from the PA State Police at <https://www.psp.pa.gov/pages/request-a-criminal-history-record.aspx> (scroll down to "Download the Individual Access and Review Request Form" and click on it).
- **Step 4:** Do preliminary eligibility screening using flowchart/summary chart.
- **Step 5:** If record looks like it could possibly be sealed/expunged, but grading information is not available, you will need to advise client to contact court in the county of the case to get a copy of the file or the grading information.
 - As a reminder, cases that result in a conviction in Municipal Court (MC) are misdemeanors. If the conviction is in Common Pleas (CP) it is more likely to be a felony, but not necessarily.
- **Step 6:** Check whether court fines and costs are owed by opening up any dockets that might be sealable. **You only should check fines and costs and advise participant to pay if the record can otherwise be expunged or sealed. Remember, partial expungements do not require fines and costs to be paid off.**
- **Step 7:**
 - IF CLIENT IS ELIGIBLE: Call client to provide information based on your analysis and connect with a referral service if applicable.
 - Introduce yourself and that you are a volunteer with the Clean Slate Screening Project of the Pennsylvania Bar Association. Explain and get consent for your limited scope of providing advice about their records.
 - If individual will be eligible for automatic sealing under Clean Slate, explain that they may wish to wait for their record to be sealed than get a lawyer.

- Explain that if individual is not a citizen, should consult with an immigration attorney before proceeding with any record clearing.
- If court fines and costs are owed, provide information about what is owed and how person can resolve debt by contacting court (provide # for court clerk) or paying online at <https://ujportal.pacourts.us/PayOnline.aspx/>. **You only should advise participant to pay if the record can only be sealed or expunged if paid (e.g. summary conviction or diversionary program).**
- Explain that if individual is low-income or a veteran and a good candidate for expungement/sealing, they may want to seek help from their local legal aid program. If individual is not low-income, should call Lawyer Referral Service. Use Resource Guide to provide correct referral information.
- If a person's case(s) are in Philadelphia and they are not low-income but are of limited means, ask whether individual would like to be referred to a law firm for possible free representation. If yes, email individual's contact information to Katherine McGee kichristianmcgee@duanemorris.com and Mercedes Nunez-Salgado MMNunez-Salgado@duanemorris.com **DO NOT provide these email addresses directly to the clients.**
 - IF CLIENT IS NOT ELIGIBLE: If no (or very little) expungement/sealing is possible, you do NOT need to call participant. Email participant using "not eligible" template that directs participant to Board of Pardons website.
 - IF YOU CANNOT LOCATE RECORD: If after trying various combinations you still cannot locate record, email client using "no record found" template with advice to send away for Access & Review State Police Record.
- **Step 8:** For clients who are eligible, after speaking with them, or if you are unable to reach them by phone after two attempts, send email using template that summarizes their situation and next steps.
- **Step 9:** Contact PBA or CLS to report that consultation is complete.