



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

This is a partnership of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Pro Bono Office and Community Legal Services.

Step 1: Receive client referrals and contact information from PBA.

Contact David Trevaskis at dkd@pabar.org or call/text 717-571-7414

Step 2: Pull client's record from the court website: <https://ujportal.pacourts.us>.

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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: Do preliminary eligibility screening using flowchart/summary chart. *(If you do not have this, or any of the other forms described in this step-by-step guide, please email David Trevaskis at dkd@pabar.org to request copies of the forms which will be sent to you electronically)*

Step 4: 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 5: Check whether court fines and costs are owed by opening any dockets that might be sealable. **You only should check fines and costs and advise participant to pay if the record can otherwise be sealed. Remember, partial expungements do not require fines and costs to be paid off.**

Step 6: IF CLIENT IS ELIGIBLE: Call client to provide information based on your analysis and connect with a referral service if applicable.

- a) Introduce yourself and state 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.
- b) If individual will be eligible for automatic sealing under Clean Slate, explain that they may wish to wait for that to take effect rather than get a lawyer.
- c) Explain that if the individual is not a citizen, they should consult with an immigration attorney before proceeding with any record clearing.
- d) 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 otherwise be sealed.**

- e) 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 or check out <https://www.palawhelp.org/> to provide correct referral information.
- f) 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 KC Obenschain KCObenschain@duanemorris.com. **DO NOT provide these email addresses directly to the clients.**

Step 7: IF CLIENT IS NOT ELIGIBLE: If no 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.

Step 8: IF YOU CANNOT LOCATE RECORD: If after trying various combinations and you still cannot locate record, email client using "no record found" template with advice to send away for Access & Review State Police Record.

Step 9: 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 10: Contact PBA to report that consultation is complete. You may ask for more files to review at this time.

Step 11: All Pennsylvania pro bono volunteers should go to Paprobono.net and register for the helpful site.

For more information:

David Keller Trevaskis, Esquire

PBA Pro Bono Coordinator

717-571-7414 (cell)

dkt@pabar.org

Check out mycleanslatepa.com to learn more about the work of Community Legal Services on Clean Slate—the PBA Pro Bono Office is proud to partner with CLS in this effort!