

Booklet 6

What You Should Know about Drivers' Licenses and Drug Convictions



How does the change in law help some people get their drivers' licenses back?

The Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) no longer suspends driver's licenses automatically after convictions for trafficking marijuana and most other drug convictions. (Mass. Gen. Law Chapter 94C).

Important. If you were convicted of "trafficking" more serious drugs, the RMV will still suspend your license. For example, trafficking cocaine.

But if you lost your license because of a drug conviction before the law changed in 2016,

- You can get your license back;
- You do not have to wait; and
- You do not have to pay the \$500 reinstatement fee.

This change in the law does **NOT** apply to driving under the influence (DUI) convictions or other alcohol offenses.

How Do I Get My License Back?

Go to a branch of the RMV.

If your license has been suspended for more than 2 years, you will have to pay for a permit and pass a road test. The permit costs \$30 and the road test fee is \$35.

Will my drug conviction(s) show up on my driving record?

As of October 2016, the RMV was required remove information about your drug convictions from your public driving record. The RMV also must remove related expired warrants from your driving record.

Will my drug conviction(s) show up on a criminal background check?

A CORI report or criminal background check is not the same as a driving record. Your conviction stays on your CORI report or criminal background check until it is sealed. The CORI reports that most

employers get do not show sealed criminal cases. Please note, however, that after you seal your case, police and law enforcement will still be able find out that you have the conviction(s).

LEGAL RESOURCES FOR LOW INCOME PEOPLE

If you live in the Boston area and need help sealing criminal records, you can call 617-603-1700 or Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) at 617-371-1234. If you live in the Boston area, you'll be screened for eligibility for an intake for GBLS.

- To find a legal aid program if you live outside Boston or get more information about record sealing and related issues, go to: www.masslegalhelp.org
- To request your CORI report online, go to: <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/dcjis/>
- Read other booklets in this series: https://www.gbls.org/cori_record_sealing_booklets

Booklet 1: How to Get a Copy of Your Criminal Record (CORI)

Booklet 2: How to Seal Old Criminal Cases

Booklet 3: Sealing Cases that Ended without a Conviction or First Time Drug Convictions

Booklet 4: Representing Yourself in Court after Filing a Petition to Seal Criminal Cases

Booklet 5: One Stop CORI Sealing in Boston Municipal Court

Booklet 6: What You Should Know about Drivers' Licenses and Drug Convictions

Booklet 7: How to Seal Decriminalized Marijuana Cases

Booklet 8: Avoiding Guilty Pleas and Criminal Case Dispositions that Give You Life-Time Criminal Records

Booklet 9: How to Expunge Juvenile and Criminal Records

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