## GREATER BOSTON LEGAL SERVICES EXPUNGEMENT PACKET

## BOOKLET 9: EXPUNGING UNDER MASS. GEN. LAWS CHAPTER 276, § 100K

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- If you are not a citizen, do NOT expunge any records and talk to an immigration lawyer about your criminal cases and record expungement.
- If your records are destroyed and there are no records, you may be unable to prove to immigration officials how your case ended, or that that the case ended in your favor.
- There may be other situations where destruction of the records will interfere with exercise of other legal rights, such as getting reimbursed for fees you paid in a case dismissed due to the Dookhan or Farak drug scandals, or bringing a police brutality lawsuit.

### 1. What is the difference between sealing and expungement?

Sealing of a criminal case only limits who has access to the records. Expungement destroys all the records of the case and the records are no longer available to anyone. You should always get certified copies of the docket sheets before you expunge or seal records.

### 2. Should expunge a criminal case if I am NOT a citizen?

If you are not a citizen, do NOT expunge your records until you get legal advice from an immigration lawyer about whether to expunge your records. Your criminal record history is reviewed when you apply for a "green card," citizenship or try to change your immigration status. A criminal record can be grounds for exclusion or deportation. The FBI often has records of a criminal case even if the state court record was sealed or expunged, but the records often do not include the final outcome of a case. This means you may not be able to show how your case ended, or prove to Immigration Customs & Enforcement (ICE) that the case was dismissed or ended in your favor if you expunge your records.

### 3. Who is eligible to expunge records under section 100K of Chapter 276?

After a case has closed, a judge can order expungement of juvenile or criminal records without a waiting period based on "what is in the best interests of justice" if there is "clear and convincing evidence" that the case was the result of:

- ✓ identity theft, false or unauthorized use of identity (e.g. somebody impersonated you or misused your name);
- ✓ a decriminalized offense (e.g. marijuana possession under 2 ounces; being in the presence of heroin; disrupting assembly or disorderly conduct at an elementary or high school when you were a student there; a juvenile case filed against a child under 12 because these cases can no longer be prosecuted);
- errors by law enforcement (e.g., misidentification of a defendant; errors related to failed perception or other impairment, misconduct or racial bias that resulted in filing a complaint in error or without probable cause);
- errors by witnesses (civilian or expert) (e.g. cases dismissed due to the Annie Dookhan or Sonia Farak drug lab scandals; mistakes based on failed memory or perception, or other impairment; errors related to misconduct or racial bias; lack of scientific basis for expert opinion);
- errors by court employees (e.g. complaint issued due to clerical error, or docket entry mistake that carries a stigma or causes adverse consequences); or
- ✓ demonstrable fraud perpetrated on the court (bribery of a judge or other fraud involving the court system itself).

## Greater Boston Legal Services, 197 Friend Street, Boston, MA 02114

### 4. How can I expunge?

Expungement is available for both adult and juvenile cases under section 100K of Chapter 267 if you qualify as explained above. The process is free. It is often better to have a lawyer represent in court, but the law permits you to represent yourself.

**Step 1.** To expunge your records, look at the attached sample **PETITION TO EXPUNGE** and fill in the blank form. Makes copies of it for yourself and the District Attorney's office.

**Practice note.** The law provides that a hearing is held if either you or the District Attorney request a hearing. The law is still very new and we have been requesting hearings in case a judge has questions. Otherwise, if the petition gets denied on the papers, it may be hard to know why the judge denied the petition.

**Step 2.** A petition form must be filed in the court that handled the case and you must mail or deliver a copy of the petition to the District Attorney's office that covers that court. The court usually gives you a future hearing date when you file the petition or within a week or so. If you do not get a date, you should call the court to find out what happened.

**Step 3**. Show up for any hearing date. Bring copies of the paperwork you filed in case the judge asks something about it. Be ready to explain why your case should be expunged. If your petition is denied, you should seek legal advice.

### 5. What are my rights after sealing or expungement?

The "Ban the Box" law prohibits most employers from asking about convictions and other cases on an initial job application whether or not the record is sealed or expunged.

After a record is **expunged**, the law provides that no person whose record was expunged shall be held guilty of perjury or giving a false statement by reason of the person's failure to acknowledge such record, or portion thereof, in response to any inquiry made of him or her for any purpose. You also can say "I have no record" after expungement. G. L. c. 276, § 100M-N.

A new law also requires that the FBI and Dept. of Justice (DOJ) be notified of sealing and expungement orders and that our state request that they seal or expunge their corresponding records. G.L. c. 276, § 100T.

### RESOURCES

To find legal help for low income people in your community, go to this website: <u>https://www.masslegalhelp.org/</u>

For more information about sealing and expungement, read our other booklet, KNOW YOUR CORI RIGHTS available at <u>https://www.gbls.org/cori\_record\_sealing\_booklets</u>

You also can read our other booklets on our website at: https://www.gbls.org/what-we-do/cori-and-reentry

**IMPORTANT.** This information is provided as a public service by Greater Boston Legal Services and does not constitute legal advice which can only be given to you after a consultation with your own attorney. September 21, 2019

## Greater Boston Legal Services, 197 Friend Street, Boston, MA 02114

PETITION FOR EXPUNGEMENT G.L. c. 276, § 100K	DOCKET NO.	Trial Court of 🕼 👔
YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS	COURT DEPARTMENT Boston Municipal Court District Court COURT DIVISION	☐ Juvenile Court ☐ Superior Court
I request the assistance of an interpreter for the follo (There is no charge to you for interpreter or translat)		
I request that this Court order that the records of the fo	llowing charges be expunged (list	charges):
I make this request because the records were created	as a result of:	
False use of my identification		
Unauthorized use of my identity		
Theft of my identity		
The offense(s) described above is/are no longer a	a crime	
Errors by law enforcement		
Errors by civilian or expert witness(es)		
Errors by Court employees		
Fraud perpetrated upon the Court	al terreta de la companya de companya de companya de la companya de companya de companya de companya de company	
Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explair	ing the reasons for your request).	
I request that the Court hold a hearing on my petitio	n.	
If you need more space to explain, check this box a also attach additional pages if necessary.		l on the back of this sheet. You may
If you have documents that support your petition, ch	neck this box and attach them to th	his petition.
I provided this petition and supporting documents to the ☐ by delivering a copy in hand <b>OR</b> ☐ by mailing a co	-	3.51 6
l swear under the pains and penalty of per to the best of my knowledge and belief.	jury that all information I p	rovided in this Petition is true
	ONER'S SIGNATURE	

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO PETITIONER:

#### Reasons for Expunging a Record Under G.L. c. 276, § 100K

Under chapter 276, § 100K, you can directly ask a judge to permanently destroy, or "expunge", the official court records that were created because of one of the following reasons: (i) false use of your identification; (ii) unauthorized use of your identity; (iii) theft of your identity; (iv) an offense that is no longer a crime; (v) demonstrable errors by law enforcement; (vi) demonstrable errors by civilian or expert witnesses; (vii) errors by a court employee; or (viii) demonstrable fraud perpetrated upon the court.

Under this law, the judge can order expungement of the court record <u>only</u> if he or she determines on clear and convincing evidence that the record was created because of one of the reasons above <u>and</u> that expungement of the record would be in the interests of justice.

Expungement may also be available in circumstances other than those listed above. If you want to seek expungement under one of these other circumstances, you must fill out a different petition and submit it to the Office of the Commissioner of Probation. You can find information about these other provisions, including eligibility requirements, at www.mass.gov.

#### What You Must Show

You must demonstrate to the judge that the court record was created because of one of the reasons above <u>and</u>that expunging the record would be in the interests of justice. When you fill out this petition, you should provide as much detail as possible. You may give the judge copies of documents that support your reasons for asking for expungement. On the petition, there is a box to check for a hearing. At a hearing, you can tell the judge why your petition fits under one of the reasons above, <u>and</u>why granting the petition would be in the interests of justice.

#### **Multiple Charges**

On this petition, you should include all of the charges connected to the case that you are asking the judge to expunge. If you would like to ask a judge to expunge records in different cases, you should file separate petitions for each case.

#### Where to File the Petition

You should file this petition in the clerk's office in the court where the case was heard.

#### Providing a Copy of the Petition to the District Attorney's Office

You must provide a copy of this petition and any documents that you file with the petition to the District Attorney's Office that prosecuted the case on or before the day that this petition is filed in the court. You can do this by bringing a copy to the District Attorney's Office or by mailing a copy to the District Attorney's Office by first class mail.

#### **Records will be Permanently Destroyed**

An order of expungement requires the clerk of the court where the record was created to destroy/permanently erase the trial court records within the care, custody or control of the clerk's office, probation, and the Department of Criminal Justice Information, except for information contained in the domestic violence record keeping system. It also requires criminal justice agencies to destroy/permanently erase the record from all publicly available police logs maintained pursuant to G.L. c. 41, § 98F within their care, custody or control. Further, criminal justice agencies are required to respond to inquiries from any party, including criminal justice agencies, a county agency, a municipal agency or state agency that no record exists.

While the clerk will provide you with a copy of the expungement order, if you want copies of the records, any documents that you filed, or the petition, you must make copies *before*the court orders expungement. Once the record is destroyed, you will not be able to get a copy from the court.

Additional Information:

# GREATER BOSTON LEGAL SERVICES EXPUNGEMENT PACKET

Examples of Completed Expungement Forms under Mass. Gen. Laws Chapter 276, § 100k

- 1. Decriminalized marijuana offense. Possession of 2 ounces or less is no longer a criminal offense.
- 2. Dismissed juvenile offense based on dismissal because the minimum age for Juvenile Court jurisdiction is age 12. Example where you were under 12 when the juvenile case was filed against you.
- 3. Identity fraud. Example where another person said he or she was you and a criminal case was filed against you.
- 4. Law enforcement error. Example where police listed you as the defendant by mistake.
- 5. Annie Dookhan or other drug lab scandal. Example where your conviction or other disposition was vacated due to Annie Dookhan drug scandal.

PETITION FOR EXPUNGEMENT G.L. c. 276, § 100K	DOCKET NO. O902CR123456	Trial Court of 🔛 👘
John Q. PuBlic 1234 Main St.	COURT DEPARTMENT	Juvenile Court Superior Court
Everyplace, MA 01234 617-123-4567	Rox bury	
I request the assistance of an interpreter for the fol (There is no charge to you for interpreter or transla		
I request that this Court order that the records of the for Poss. Class D Cont. Substance (marijuana)	blowing charges be expunged (list	charges):
Note: The amount was not more than 2 ounces and p	ossession of such an amount is no	w decriminalized. G.L. c. 94G, §13(c).
I make this request because the records were created	as a result of:	
☐ False use of my identification		
Unauthorized use of my identity		
Theft of my identity		
The offense(s) described above is/are no longer	a crime	
Errors by law enforcement		
Errors by civilian or expert witness(es)		
Errors by Court employees		
Fraud perpetrated upon the Court		
Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explain	ining the reasons for your request):	
It is unjust that charge is part of my CORI when the a	lleged offense is no longer a crime.	A "cloud of prosecution" will remain
even I seal my records because police and some em	ployers have access to sealed reco	rds. Police Com'r of Bos. v. Mun.
Court of Dorchester Dist., 374 Mass. 640, 659 (1978	). See, e.g., G.L. c. 276, §100D (po	lice access to sealed records); G.L
c. 6, § 172F (Dept. of Early Education & Care access	to sealed records).	
I request that the Court hold a hearing on my petiti	on.	
If you need more space to explain, check this box also attach additional pages if necessary.		on the back of this sheet. You may
If you have documents that support your petition, o	check this box and attach them to th	is petition.
I provided this petition and supporting documents to the		
by delivering a copy in hand OR 🗌 by mailing a c		
Oct 22 2019		
I swear under the pains and penalty of pen to the best of my knowledge and belief.	rjury that all information I p	rovided in this Petition is true
	TONER'S SIGNAL UTIC	
10-22-19	Gren a ris	lic
Please see reverse side (Rev. 12.20.18)	for convictions and space for additional info	mation

## Decriminalized marijuana offense

G.L. c. 276, § 100K	DOCKET NO. OIDXYZ	Trial Court of 🔐 Massachusetts
YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS John Doe Roe 99999 Warren St	COURT DEPARTMENT	☑ Juvenile Court □ Superior Court
Rot bury MA 02119 (17-123-4567	Suffolk County Juvenile Court	
I request the assistance of an interpreter for the foll (There is no charge to you for interpreter or translat	lowing language: tion services)	
I request that this Court order that the records of the fo	and the second	charges):
Note: I was under age 12 when the above charges we		
can longer be prosecuted for offenses in the Juvenile Lazlo L. v. Commonwealth, 482 Mass. 325, 326 (2019		
<ul> <li>Theft of my identity</li> <li>The offense(s) described above is/are no longer</li> <li>Errors by law enforcement</li> <li>Errors by civilian or expert witness(es)</li> </ul>	a crime	
I was under age 12 when these charges were filed. C c119, §§ 52, 54. It is unjust that these charges remain	children under age 12 can no longe n on my record when the same alle	r be prosecuted for such offenses. G.L ged conduct is no longer a chargeable
☐ Fraud perpetrated upon the Court Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explain I was under age 12 when these charges were filed. C c119, §§ 52, 54. It is unjust that these charges remain offense. A "cloud of prosecution" will remain even if r	children under age 12 can no longer n on my record when the same alle my records are sealed because pol	r be prosecuted for such offenses. G.L. ged conduct is no longer a chargeable ice and some employers have access t
☐ Fraud perpetrated upon the Court Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explain I was under age 12 when these charges were filed. Co c119, §§ 52, 54. It is unjust that these charges remain offense. A "cloud of prosecution" will remain even if r sealed records. Police Com'r of Bos. v. Mun. Court of	children under age 12 can no longer n on my record when the same alle my records are sealed because pol f Dorchester Dist., 374 Mass. 640,	r be prosecuted for such offenses. G.L. ged conduct is no longer a chargeable ice and some employers have access f 659 (1978). See, e.g., G.L. c. 276,§100
☐ Fraud perpetrated upon the Court Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explain I was under age 12 when these charges were filed. Co c119, §§ 52, 54. It is unjust that these charges remain offense. A "cloud of prosecution" will remain even if r sealed records. Police Com'r of Bos. v. Mun. Court of § 100D (police access to sealed records); G.L. c. 6, §	children under age 12 can no longer n on my record when the same alle my records are sealed because pol f Dorchester Dist., 374 Mass. 640, a 172F (Dept. of Early Education &	r be prosecuted for such offenses. G.L. ged conduct is no longer a chargeable ice and some employers have access t 659 (1978). See, e.g., G.L. c. 276,§100
<ul> <li>□ Fraud perpetrated upon the Court</li> <li>Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explained in the sector of the</li></ul>	children under age 12 can no longer in on my record when the same alle my records are sealed because pol f Dorchester Dist., 374 Mass. 640, a 172F (Dept. of Early Education & ion. and continue in the space provided check this box and attach them to t	r be prosecuted for such offenses. G.L ged conduct is no longer a chargeable ice and some employers have access i 659 (1978). See, e.g., G.L. c. 276,§100 Care access to sealed records). I on the back of this sheet. You may his petition.
<ul> <li>□ Fraud perpetrated upon the Court</li> <li>Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explained in the sector of the</li></ul>	children under age 12 can no longer in on my record when the same alle my records are sealed because pol f Dorchester Dist., 374 Mass. 640, a 172F (Dept. of Early Education & ion. and continue in the space provided check this box and attach them to the he District Attorney's Office of the co	r be prosecuted for such offenses. G.L. ged conduct is no longer a chargeable ice and some employers have access to 659 (1978). See, e.g., G.L. c. 276,§100 Care access to sealed records). I on the back of this sheet. You may his petition.
<ul> <li>□ Fraud perpetrated upon the Court</li> <li>Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explained in the sector of the sector o</li></ul>	children under age 12 can no longen in on my record when the same alle my records are sealed because pol f Dorchester Dist., 374 Mass. 640, a 172F (Dept. of Early Education & ion. and continue in the space provided check this box and attach them to the he District Attorney's Office of the o copy via first class mail to the Distri	r be prosecuted for such offenses. G.L. ged conduct is no longer a chargeable ice and some employers have access t 659 (1978). See, e.g., G.L. c. 276,§100 Care access to sealed records). I on the back of this sheet. You may his petition. county that prosecuted the case ct Attorney's Office on

# Decriminalized and dismissed juvenile offense for child under 12

PETITION FOR EXPUNGEMENT G.L. c. 276, § 100K	DOCKET NO. 1931(×012345	Trial Court of 🔛 🐞
YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS Mary Marie Maria	COURT DEPARTMENT	Uuvenile Court Superior Court
Mary Marie Maria I Jump St. Taunton, MA 02718 857-123-4567	Truston	
I request the assistance of an interpreter for the for (There is no charge to you for interpreter or transl	ollowing language:ation services)	
Assault & batter Resisting accest	following charges be expunged (list y with a dradly	charges): Wr 4 Pon
I make this secured because the second succession		
I make this request because the records were create False use of my identification	to as a result of.	
Unauthorized use of my identity		
Theft of my identity	D	
The offense(s) described above is/are no longe	ar a crime	
Errors by law enforcement		
Errors by civilian or expert witness(es)		
Errors by Court employees		
Fraud perpetrated upon the Court		
Specifically (provide as much detail as possible expla		
The person who committed the offense(s) used my		
that this offense appears on my criminal record. A "o		
police and some employers have access to sealed r		
640, 659 (1978) See, e.g., G.L. c. 276,§ 100D (polic	ce access to sealed records); G.L. c.	. 6, § 172F (Dept. of Early Education &
Care).		
I request that the Court hold a hearing on my peti	tion.	
If you need more space to explain, check this box also attach additional pages if necessary.	and continue in the space provided	on the back of this sheet. You may
If you have documents that support your petition,	check this box and attach them to the	his petition.
I provided this petition and supporting documents to by delivering a copy in hand OR $\square$ by mailing a $1 \upsilon - 2 \lambda - 1 \eta$		
intered and penalty of po to the best of my knowledge and belief.	arjury that set information I p	provided in this Petition is true
and the second se	TIONER'S SIGNATURE	
10-22-19	many marin	
Piease see reverse sid	e for inspuctions and space for additional info	ormation

# Identity fraud example where another person said he or she was you

PETITION FOR EXPUNGEMENT G.L. c. 278, § 100K	DOCKET NO. 1933 (RO 123456	Trial Court of III Massachusetts
YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS Thomas Everyman 1234 Unity Highway Boston MA 02114	COURT DEPARTMENT	Juvenile Court Superior Court
Besten MA 02114 617-987-6541	Springfield	
I request the assistance of an interpreter for the foll (There is no charge to you for interpreter or translat	owing language: ion services)	
I request that this Court order that the records of the for Lar Gny Receiving Stelen y	llowing charges be expunged (lis	it charges):
I make this request because the records were created	as a result of:	
False use of my identification		
Unauthorized use of my identity		1월 21일 - 1월 21일 <u>- 1</u> 월 21일 - 1일 21일 - 1일 21일 - 1일 21일 21일 - 1일 21일 21일 21일 21일 21일 21일 21일 21일 21일
Theft of my identity		
The offense(s) described above is/are no longer a	a crime	
Errors by law enforcement		
Errors by civilian or expert witness(es)		
Errors by Court employees		
Fraud perpetrated upon the Court		
Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explain I mistakenly identified as the defendant in this case by		
name as the real defendant, but I was not involved in t	he incident that gave rise to this	case. There was no probable cause to
arrest me. It is unjust that the charges are on my record. A "cloud of prosecution" will remain even if my records are sealed.		
Police Com'r of Bos. v. Mun. Court of Dorchester Dist.	, 374 Mass. 640, 659 (1978). Po	lice and some employers have access to
sealed records. See G.L. c. 276, § 100D (police acces	s to sealed records); G.L. c. 6, §	172F (Dept. of Early Education & Care).
I request that the Court hold a hearing on my petitio	n.	
If you need more space to explain, check this box a also attach additional pages if necessary.	nd continue in the space provide	d on the back of this sheet. You may
If you have documents that support your petition, ch	neck this box and attach them to	this petition.
I provided this petition and supporting documents to the ☐ by delivering a copy in hand OR A by mailing e co 9-10-10		
I swear under the pains and penalty of gen to the best of my knowledge and beach	way that all information I	provided in this Petition is true
DATE.	OL. R'S GONATURE	
9-10-18	Thomas Greng	mon
Please see (11/1 3): side to (Rev. 12.20.18)	or instructions and space for additional in	formation.

Law enforcement error example- police listed person as the defendant by mistake

PETITION FOR EXPUNGEMENT G.L. c. 276, § 100K	DOCKET NO. 0907CR01234567	Trial Court of 🗱 👘
YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS RoBert Joseph Jones 1234 Jump. St Dorchester MA 02125	COURT DEPARTMENT	Juvenile Court Superior Court
Dorchester MA 02125	Dorchester	
I request the assistance of an interpreter for the fol (There is no charge to you for interpreter or translat	lowing language: tion services)	
I request that this Court order that the records of the fo	bllowing charges be expunged (list c	harges).
CLASS A Distributi	1.0.0	
CLASS A PISSISS		
- CLASS A PASSASS	1071	
I make this request because the records were created	as a result of:	
False use of my identification		
Unauthorized use of my identity		
Theft of my identity		
The offense(s) described above is/are no longer	a crime	
Errors by law enforcement		
Errors by civilian or expert witness(es)		
Errors by Court employees		
Fraud perpetrated upon the Court		
Specifically (provide as much detail as possible explain	ning the reasons for your request):	
The disposition in my case was vacated due to the dru	ug lab scandal. The stigma of a guil	ty finding or any sentence of
incarceration or other disposition remains on my COR	I report even if the same report indic	ates that the court vacated the
disposition and later dismissed the charge(s). Expund	gement is the only way to wipe the sl	ate clean and to address
collateral consequences that may result from the misc	conduct of the drug lab chemist. Expl	ungement of the records is in the
best interests of justice.		
I request that the Court hold a hearing on my potition	n.	
If you need more space to explain, check this box a also attach additional pages if necessary.	and continue in the space provided o	on the back of this sheet. You may
If you have documents that support your rietdice, ca	much s box and attach them to this	s petition.
I provided this petition and supporting documents to in by delivering a copy in hand OR X by masking and		
10-1-19		
I swear under the pains and penalty of per to the best of my knowledge and belief.	jury that all information I pro	ovided in this Petition is true
	IONER'S SIGNATURE	
10-1-19	Robert Jones	
Please see reverse side f	or instructions and space for additional infom	nation.

Example of Annie Dookhan or other drug lab scandal petition

(Rev. 12.20.18)