

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Bill to Make Expungement Process in New Jersey More Accessible and Transparent

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TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed [A3881/SS2513 \(https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2024/A3881/bill-text?f=A4000&n=3881_R3\)](https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2024/A3881/bill-text?f=A4000&n=3881_R3), which requires the New Jersey State Police to establish and maintain an online portal allowing petitioners to obtain the status of their expungement orders.

“Individuals seeking a second chance through expungement deserve a clear and transparent process,” **said Governor Murphy**. “This bill codifies our Administration’s commitment to ensuring justice is accessible and efficient for all. With a dedicated online tracking system, petitioners can now stay informed about the status of their expungement.”

[Last year \(https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562024/approved/20240415b.shtml\)](https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562024/approved/20240415b.shtml), Governor Murphy, Attorney General Platkin, New Jersey State Police Superintendent Colonel Callahan, and the Division of Criminal Justice announced a 117% increase in processed final expungement orders from 2022 to 2023 and a nearly 70% reduction in the number of pending applications from its peak. Earlier this year, the Office of the Attorney General, New Jersey State Police, and the Office of the Public Defender agreed to litigation settlement terms that included much of what is required in today’s bill, in addition to two commitments of processing all expungement orders received before February 1, 2025 by June 1, 2025 and ensuring most expungement order reviews are completed between 90 to 120 days of receipt.

“For someone waiting for an order clearing their criminal record to be processed, transparency is critical,” **said Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin**. “This bill codifies a requirement to maintain the public portal recently set up by the New Jersey State Police and to issue periodic reports on the status of the processing queue, which will help ensure that petitioners are informed of where things stand in the process.”

“The New Jersey State Police is committed to transparency and ensuring that individuals with expungement orders have a clear, accessible way to verify their status,” **said Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police**. “The creation of an online portal reflects our dedication to maintaining the integrity of the expungement process while offering an efficient and reliable resource for those seeking a fresh start.”

“The Office of the Public Defender remains steadfast in its commitment to helping individuals overcome the barriers of their past records,” **said Public Defender Jennifer Sellitti**. “We support any measure that enables people to move beyond their mistakes and build brighter futures for themselves and their families.”

Today’s bill will also require the New Jersey State Police to submit – and make available to the public online – an annual report to the Governor and Legislature providing a status update on expungement processing, including the expungement type, the number of expungement orders received each month by expungement type, the number of expungement orders processed year-to-date, and relevant information on processing timeframe.

The primary sponsors of this bill, which passed unanimously in both chambers, are Senator Brian Stack and Assemblywoman Annette Quijano. Other prime sponsors include Senator Angela McKnight and Assemblywoman Ellen Park.



"Today, we make a tremendous stride forward in ensuring fairness and dignity for individuals who have earned a second chance. By signing this bill into law, we are protecting the privacy of individuals who have had their criminal records expunged so that outdated and incorrect information does not unfairly stand in the way of getting a job, a home, and a fresh start," **said Senator Stack**. "This law reaffirms our commitment to a more just justice system where rehabilitation is genuinely valued. People can move forward without the stigma of past mistakes. I thank Governor Murphy for his partnership on this vital issue."

"As we continue to address the backlog of expungement records, we must do right by those still waiting for their requests to be processed and prevent outdated information from hindering their success," **said Senator McKnight**. "This law, and the recent agreement to improve expungement processing, will ensure that someone's past does not define their present, giving individuals the chance to obtain employment, pursue higher education, and build a fulfilling life. Thank you Governor Murphy for working to create a justice system in New Jersey that recognizes the power and importance of new beginnings for those who have earned it."

"The signing of A3881 underscores the importance of protecting privacy and ensuring fairness in our justice system," **said Assemblywoman Quijano**. "Expungements are intended to provide people with a second chance, leading to the ability to obtain access to housing, employment, educational opportunities and more. Now, thanks to this law, individuals whose criminal histories are updated will be able to see the status of their expungement order."

"This bill will ensure that people whose criminal records have been expunged can access the status of their expungement order, allowing them to make smart decisions when it comes to applying for jobs and housing," **said Assemblywoman Park**. "It will also help them save time by making sure that don't waste energy or resources applying for opportunities without an updated expunged criminal history."

"The New Jersey State Bar Association applauds the efforts of the Legislature, specifically Assemblywoman Annette Quijano, and Gov. Phil Murphy to improve the processing of expungement orders," **said William H. Mergner, Jr., President, New Jersey State Bar**. "Timely expungements are crucial for individuals who have made earnest efforts to reintegrate into society when applying for jobs, housing and other opportunities that require criminal background histories. This new law furthers the goal of rehabilitation and reducing recidivism. Creating a transparent, accessible online portal will allow these individuals to track their expungement status and move forward without worry that their background will negatively impact their future."

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