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\$4 million investment in Clean Slate Pilot program launched to assist returning citizens with setting aside a conviction

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity awards funds to Michigan Works! Agencies to support local expungement efforts

LANSING, Mich. – Over the coming months, returning citizens can get help with expunging eligible convictions from their criminal record to aid them in their pursuit of full-time, self-sufficient employment thanks to a \$4M investment in the Clean Slate Pilot program from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO).

"My goal since day one of taking office has been to build fundamental reforms to make our communities safer and improve the people's outcomes going through our criminal justice system. The bipartisan Clean Slate legislation fundamentally changed Michigan's criminal history expungement laws, for the better," said Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist II. "The Clean Slate Pilot program offers a stop-gap for expungement services until automatic expungements go into effect. We're excited to get to work. Soon Michiganders will be able to feel the real changes that will come about from this program."

Setting aside a conviction, sometimes called expungement of criminal records, will remove a specific conviction from a public criminal record. If returning citizens get an order setting aside their conviction, they can legally state on any job or school application that they have never been convicted of or arrested for that crime. They will also be able to state that they have not been convicted of that crime on applications for public benefits, housing or employment.

"Before this legislation and this pilot program, there were many barriers in place for returning citizens," Susan Corbin, LEO Director said. "These barriers to seeking criminal record expungement include a lack of information, time constraints, cost of retaining a private attorney and fear of the criminal justice system. With the Clean Slate Pilot program, Michigan Works! Agencies will help these citizens overcome many of these barriers and guide them on a path to success."

The Clean Slate Pilot Program funding will be awarded to all 16 Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs) throughout the state with each of the agencies providing localized efforts.

"Before this legislation, just under 7% of eligible individuals pursued an expungement," said Shamar Herron, Executive Director, Michigan Works! Southeast. "We know how important equitable access to expungements are for job seekers. According to a [University of Michigan Study](#), after having a record expunged, job seekers obtained employment at an increase of 11% and their income rose by 25% in two years. Michigan Works! Agencies and the Clean Slate Pilot program will help job seekers overcome many barriers and guide them on a path to success, while providing support to area businesses by increasing the number of available workers, adding to the talent pool."

Some of the components of the current expungement law include:

- A person who is convicted of one or more criminal offenses may file an application with the convicting court for the entry of an order setting aside one or more convictions as follows:
 - A person convicted of one or more criminal offenses, but not more than a total of three felony offenses, in Michigan, may apply to have their convictions from the State set aside.
 - Up to three felonies can be expunged.
 - If there are multiple convictions for the same offense (with a max sentence of 10 years) only one can be expunged.
 - Unlimited misdemeanors may be expunged.
 - Only two convictions for assaultive crimes may be expunged (this is true for misdemeanors and felonies).
 - “One Bad Night” counts multiple convictions that occurred as part of the same transaction within 24 hours as one conviction.
- Convictions NOT eligible for this are:
 - Assaultive crimes.
 - Crimes involving the use or possession of a dangerous weapon.
 - Crime with a maximum penalty for 10 or more years' imprisonment.
- An applicant may not have more than a total of two convictions for an assaultive crime set aside under the Act during his or her lifetime.
- An applicant may not have more than one felony conviction for the same offense set aside if the offense is punishable by more than 10 years' imprisonment.

All MWAs will have localized Clean Slate Pilot Program processes in place. For more information, visit MichiganWorks.org or call 800-285-9675.