



July 14, 2021

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Dallas County Expunction Expo receives most applications ever in 1 week

More than 1,300 applications — the most ever — have been completed in just one week for this year's Dallas County Expunction Expo.

Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot and Dallas County District Clerk Felicia Pitre announced the opening of the three-week application period for the 5th annual Expo on July 6.

By early Wednesday, 1,399 applications had been completed in eight days, surpassing the previous record of 1,284 completed during three weeks in 2019.

“We said we wanted this to be our best Expo yet. I’m thrilled so many people are taking the step to clean up their records,” Creuzot said.

The community program identifies people who may have Dallas County criminal offenses eligible to be legally cleared from their record and then pairs them with volunteer attorneys, who help the individuals file the necessary legal paperwork.

These cases may include instances in which someone was arrested but a criminal charge was never filed or the case was no-billed. Without an expunction, these cases still appear on a person's criminal background check.

The staff at the district clerk's office has been working overtime to answer telephone calls and assist those without internet access to fill out their forms.

“It is rewarding to hear the excitement in their voices when they realize the possibility of clearing their records at no cost to them for attorney and court fees,” Pitre said. “For many that I have personally spoken with, they simply want to clear their name.”

The county first offered the event in 2017. Since then, 942 cases have been expunged through the program.

Applications will be accepted until July 26.

The applications will be reviewed by the Dallas County District Attorney's Office Expunction Division. Those who may qualify for an expunction will be notified by Sept. 3 and invited to attend a virtual pre-qualification clinic on Sept. 10–11. Applicants will be paired with a volunteer attorney at the clinic.

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There is no legal fee associated with the Expo for the participants. The Dallas County District Clerk's filing fee is waived for almost all of the participants.

In the end, those whose expunctions have been agreed to by the DA's office and granted by a Dallas County judge are invited to a graduation ceremony in December.

The program is hosted in partnership with the City of Dallas, the Dallas County Public Defender's Office, the UNT Dallas College of Law, the SMU Dedman School of Law criminal clinic, and the Texas Offenders Reentry Initiative (TORI).

For the purposes of the Expo, only Dallas County offenses or offenses in any city in Dallas County can be considered. For more, go to www.dallascounty.org/expunction.

Expunction eligibility

Per Texas statute, individuals who have offenses on their criminal record **may qualify** for an expunction if any of the following apply:

- You were arrested but a charge was never filed or was not billed by the grand jury,
- Your criminal charge was dismissed without any type of community supervision or probation prior to dismissal, except for Class C offenses,
- You successfully completed Class C deferred adjudication,
- You were acquitted on your charge by a judge or jury (usually by a finding of "Not Guilty"), or appellate court, or
- You were convicted of a crime but later pardoned by the Governor of Texas or the President of the United States.

You are **not eligible** for an expunction if:

- Your case is still pending;
- You were convicted in the case you want expunged, even if you just paid a fine (convictions on other cases do not prevent expunction, unless they are from the same arrest);
- You were placed on probation, community supervision, or deferred adjudication for any felony or Class A or B misdemeanor you want expunged, even if your case was later dismissed (Class C deferred adjudication is the only exception); or
- You were convicted or received any kind of probation on another felony offense arising from the same offense.

For assistance applying, call the District Clerk's office at 214-712-3088 or City of Dallas Community Courts at 214-670-7129.

For Expo information, call 214-653-2905.