



Ohio Revised Code

Section 2151.356 Sealing of juvenile court records.

Effective: April 6, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 343

(A) The records of a case in which a person was adjudicated a delinquent child for committing a violation of section 2903.01, 2903.02, or 2907.02 of the Revised Code shall not be sealed under this section.

(B)(1) The juvenile court shall promptly order the immediate sealing of records pertaining to a juvenile in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) If the court receives a record from a public office or agency under division (B)(2) of this section;
- (b) If a person was brought before or referred to the court for allegedly committing a delinquent or unruly act and the case was resolved without the filing of a complaint against the person with respect to that act pursuant to section 2151.27 of the Revised Code;
- (c) If a person was charged with violating division (E)(1) of section 4301.69 of the Revised Code and the person has successfully completed a diversion program under division (E)(2)(a) of section 4301.69 of the Revised Code with respect to that charge;
- (d) If a complaint was filed against a person alleging that the person was a delinquent child, an unruly child, or a juvenile traffic offender and the court dismisses the complaint after a trial on the merits of the case or finds the person not to be a delinquent child, an unruly child, or a juvenile traffic offender;
- (e) Notwithstanding division (C) of this section and subject to section 2151.358 of the Revised Code, if a person has been adjudicated an unruly child, that person has attained eighteen years of age, and the person is not under the jurisdiction of the court in relation to a complaint alleging the person to be a delinquent child.

(2) The appropriate public office or agency shall immediately deliver all original records at that



public office or agency pertaining to a juvenile to the court, if the person was arrested or taken into custody for allegedly committing a delinquent or unruly act, no complaint was filed against the person with respect to the commission of the act pursuant to section 2151.27 of the Revised Code, and the person was not brought before or referred to the court for the commission of the act. The records delivered to the court as required under this division shall not include fingerprints, DNA specimens, and DNA records described under division (A)(3) of section 2151.357 of the Revised Code.

(C)(1) The juvenile court shall consider the sealing of records pertaining to a juvenile upon the court's own motion or upon the application of a person if the person has been adjudicated a delinquent child for committing an act other than a violation of section 2903.01, 2903.02, or 2907.02 of the Revised Code, an unruly child, or a juvenile traffic offender and if, at the time of the motion or application, the person is not under the jurisdiction of the court in relation to a complaint alleging the person to be a delinquent child. The court shall not require a fee for the filing of the application. The motion or application may be made on or after the time specified in whichever of the following is applicable:

(a) If the person is under eighteen years of age, at any time after six months after any of the following events occur:

(i) The termination of any order made by the court in relation to the adjudication;

(ii) The unconditional discharge of the person from the department of youth services with respect to a dispositional order made in relation to the adjudication or from an institution or facility to which the person was committed pursuant to a dispositional order made in relation to the adjudication;

(iii) The court enters an order under section 2152.84 or 2152.85 of the Revised Code that contains a determination that the child is no longer a juvenile offender registrant.

(b) If the person is eighteen years of age or older, at any time after the later of the following:

(i) The person's attainment of eighteen years of age;



(ii) The occurrence of any event identified in divisions (C)(1)(a)(i) to (iii) of this section.

(2) In making the determination whether to seal records pursuant to division (C)(1) of this section, all of the following apply:

(a) The court may require a person filing an application under division (C)(1) of this section to submit any relevant documentation to support the application.

(b) The court may cause an investigation to be made to determine if the person who is the subject of the proceedings has been rehabilitated to a satisfactory degree.

(c) The court shall promptly, but not less than thirty days prior to the hearing, notify the prosecuting attorney of any proceedings to seal records initiated pursuant to division (C)(1) of this section. The prosecutor shall provide timely notice to a victim and a victim's representative, if applicable, if the victim or victim's representative requested notice of the proceedings in the underlying case.

(d)(i) The prosecuting attorney may file a response with the court within thirty days of receiving notice of the sealing proceedings.

(ii) If the prosecuting attorney does not file a response with the court or if the prosecuting attorney files a response but indicates that the prosecuting attorney does not object to the sealing of the records, the court may order the records of the person that are under consideration to be sealed without conducting a hearing on the motion or application. If the court decides in its discretion to conduct a hearing on the motion or application, the court shall conduct the hearing within thirty days after making that decision and shall give notice, by regular mail, of the date, time, and location of the hearing to the prosecuting attorney and to the person who is the subject of the records under consideration. The victim, the victim's representative, and the victim's attorney, if applicable, may be present and heard orally, in writing, or both at any hearing under this division. The court shall consider the oral and written statement of any victim, victim's representative, and victim's attorney, if applicable.

(iii) If the prosecuting attorney files a response with the court that indicates that the prosecuting attorney objects to the sealing of the records, the court shall conduct a hearing on the motion or



application within thirty days after the court receives the response. The court shall give notice, by regular mail, of the date, time, and location of the hearing to the prosecuting attorney and to the person who is the subject of the records under consideration. The victim, the victim's representative, and the victim's attorney, if applicable, may be present and heard orally, in writing, or both at any hearing under this division. The court shall consider the oral and written statement of any victim, victim's representative, and victim's attorney, if applicable.

(e) After conducting a hearing in accordance with division (C)(2)(d) of this section or after due consideration when a hearing is not conducted, except as provided in division (B)(1)(c) of this section, the court may order the records of the person that are the subject of the motion or application to be sealed if it finds that the person has been rehabilitated to a satisfactory degree. In determining whether the person has been rehabilitated to a satisfactory degree, the court may consider all of the following:

- (i) The age of the person;
- (ii) The nature of the case;
- (iii) The cessation or continuation of delinquent, unruly, or criminal behavior;
- (iv) The education and employment history of the person;
- (v) The granting of a new tier classification or declassification from the juvenile offender registry pursuant to section 2152.85 of the Revised Code, except for public registry-qualified juvenile offender registrants;
- (vi) Any other circumstances that may relate to the rehabilitation of the person who is the subject of the records under consideration.

(D)(1)(a) The juvenile court shall provide verbal notice to a person whose records are sealed under division (B) of this section, if that person is present in the court at the time the court issues a sealing order, that explains what sealing a record means, states that the person may apply to have those records expunged under section 2151.358 of the Revised Code, and explains what expunging a



record means.

(b) The juvenile court shall provide written notice to a person whose records are sealed under division (B) of this section by regular mail to the person's last known address, if that person is not present in the court at the time the court issues a sealing order and if the court does not seal the person's record upon the court's own motion, that explains what sealing a record means, states that the person may apply to have those records expunged under section 2151.358 of the Revised Code, and explains what expunging a record means.

(2) Upon final disposition of a case in which a person has been adjudicated a delinquent child for committing an act other than a violation of section 2903.01, 2903.02, or 2907.02 of the Revised Code, an unruly child, or a juvenile traffic offender, the juvenile court shall provide written notice to the person that does all of the following:

(a) States that the person may apply to the court for an order to seal the record;

(b) Explains what sealing a record means;

(c) States that the person may apply to the court for an order to expunge the record under section 2151.358 of the Revised Code;

(d) Explains what expunging a record means.

(3) The department of youth services and any other institution or facility that unconditionally discharges a person who has been adjudicated a delinquent child, an unruly child, or a juvenile traffic offender shall immediately give notice of the discharge to the court that committed the person. The court shall note the date of discharge on a separate record of discharges of those natures.