

5593

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

May 15, 2015

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Introduced by Sen. HASSELL-THOMPSON -- read twice and ordered printed,  
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the criminal procedure law and the executive law, in  
relation to permitting the sealing of records of certain nonviolent  
misdemeanor or non-sexual misdemeanor offenses

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEM-  
BLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "second  
2 chance for ex-offenders act".  
3     S 2. The criminal procedure law is amended by adding a new section  
4 160.65 to read as follows:  
5 S 160.65 CONDITIONAL SEALING OF CERTAIN MISDEMEANOR OFFENSES.  
6     1. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, THE TERM "ELIGIBLE MISDEMEANOR"  
7 SHALL BE A MISDEMEANOR OFFENSE DEFINED IN THE PENAL LAW, PROVIDED THAT  
8 AN ELIGIBLE MISDEMEANOR SHALL NOT INCLUDE ANY SEX OFFENSE AS DEFINED  
9 UNDER SUBDIVISION TWO OF SECTION ONE HUNDRED SIXTY-EIGHT-A OF THE  
10 CORRECTION LAW.  
11     2. A PERSON HAVING A CONVICTION FOR NO MORE THAN THREE MISDEMEANORS,  
12 WHO DOES NOT STAND CONVICTED OF ANY FELONY, OR WHO IS NOT REQUIRED TO  
13 MAINTAIN REGISTRATION UNDER ARTICLE SIX-C OF THE CORRECTION LAW, MAY  
14 PETITION THE COURT TO CONDITIONALLY SEAL UP TO THREE ELIGIBLE MISDEMEA-  
15 NORS WHEN:  
16     (A) AT LEAST FIVE YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE COMPLETION OF A SENTENCE  
17 ON AN ELIGIBLE MISDEMEANOR; AND  
18     (B) SUCH PERSON HAS NOT BEEN CONVICTED OF AN OFFENSE DURING THE LAST  
19 FIVE YEARS AND IS NOT THE SUBJECT OF AN UNDISPOSED ARREST.  
20     3. THE PETITION AUTHORIZED BY THIS SECTION SHALL BE FILED IN THE COURT  
21 OF RECORD THAT LAST IMPOSED A SENTENCE UPON PETITIONER FOR AN ELIGIBLE  
22 MISDEMEANOR. ON THE DEFENDANT'S MOTION, THE COURT MAY ORDER THAT ALL  
23 OFFICIAL RECORDS AND PAPERS RELATING TO THE ARREST, PROSECUTION AND  
24 CONVICTION RECORDS FOR NO MORE THAN THREE OF THE DEFENDANT'S PRIOR

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 ELIGIBLE MISDEMEANORS BE CONDITIONALLY SEALED. THE COURT MAY ONLY SEAL  
2 THE RECORDS OF THE DEFENDANT'S ARRESTS, PROSECUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS  
3 WHEN:

4 (A) THE SENTENCING COURT HAS REQUESTED AND RECEIVED FROM THE DIVISION  
5 OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES OR THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION A  
6 FINGERPRINT BASED CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD OF THE DEFENDANT, INCLUDING  
7 ANY SEALED OR SUPPRESSED INFORMATION. THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
8 SERVICES SHALL ALSO INCLUDE A CRIMINAL HISTORY REPORT, IF ANY, FROM THE  
9 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION REGARDING ANY CRIMINAL HISTORY INFORMA-  
10 TION THAT OCCURRED IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS. THE DIVISION IS HEREBY  
11 AUTHORIZED TO RECEIVE SUCH INFORMATION FROM THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVE-  
12 TIGATION FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE PARTIES SHALL BE PERMITTED TO EXAMINE  
13 THESE RECORDS;

14 (B) THE DEFENDANT OR COURT HAS IDENTIFIED THE MISDEMEANOR CONVICTION  
15 OR CONVICTIONS FOR WHICH RELIEF MAY BE GRANTED;

16 (C) THE COURT HAS RECEIVED DOCUMENTATION THAT THE SENTENCES IMPOSED ON  
17 THE ELIGIBLE MISDEMEANOR CONVICTIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED, OR IF NO SUCH  
18 DOCUMENTATION IS REASONABLY AVAILABLE, A SWORN AFFIDAVIT THAT THE  
19 SENTENCES IMPOSED ON THE PRIOR MISDEMEANORS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED; AND

20 (D) THE COURT HAS NOTIFIED THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF EACH JURISDICTION  
21 IN WHICH THE DEFENDANT HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF AN OFFENSE WITH RESPECT TO  
22 WHICH SEALING IS SOUGHT, AND THE COURT OR COURTS OF RECORD FOR SUCH  
23 OFFENSES, THAT THE COURT IS CONSIDERING SEALING THE RECORDS OF THE  
24 DEFENDANT'S ELIGIBLE MISDEMEANOR CONVICTIONS. BOTH THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
25 AND THE COURT SHALL BE GIVEN A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY, WHICH SHALL NOT  
26 BE LESS THAN THIRTY DAYS, IN WHICH TO COMMENT AND SUBMIT MATERIALS TO  
27 AID THE COURT IN MAKING SUCH A DETERMINATION. WHEN THE COURT NOTIFIES A  
28 DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF A SEALING APPLICATION, THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY SHALL  
29 PROVIDE NOTICE TO THE VICTIM, IF ANY, OF THE SEALING APPLICATION BY  
30 MAILING WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE VICTIM'S LAST-KNOWN ADDRESS. FOR PURPOSES  
31 OF THIS SECTION "VICTIM" MEANS ANY PERSON WHO HAS SUSTAINED PHYSICAL OR  
32 FINANCIAL INJURY TO PERSON OR TO PROPERTY AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE  
33 MISDEMEANOR CRIME OR MISDEMEANOR CRIMES FOR WHICH SEALING IS APPLIED.

34 4. AT THE REQUEST OF THE DEFENDANT OR THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF A COUN-  
35 TY IN WHICH THE DEFENDANT COMMITTED A CRIME THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THE  
36 SEALING APPLICATION, THE COURT MAY CONDUCT A HEARING TO CONSIDER AND  
37 REVIEW ANY RELEVANT EVIDENCE OFFERED BY EITHER PARTY THAT WOULD AID THE  
38 COURT IN ITS DECISION WHETHER TO SEAL THE RECORDS OF THE DEFENDANT'S  
39 ARRESTS, PROSECUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS. IN MAKING SUCH A DETERMINATION,  
40 THE COURT SHALL CONSIDER ANY RELEVANT FACTORS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED  
41 TO:

42 (A) THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND SERIOUSNESS OF THE OFFENSE OR OFFENSES THAT  
43 RESULTED IN THE CONVICTION OR CONVICTIONS;

44 (B) THE CHARACTER OF THE DEFENDANT, INCLUDING WHAT STEPS THE PETITION-  
45 ER HAS TAKEN SINCE THE TIME OF THE OFFENSE TOWARD PERSONAL REHABILI-  
46 TATION, INCLUDING TREATMENT, WORK, SCHOOL, OR OTHER PERSONAL HISTORY  
47 THAT DEMONSTRATES REHABILITATION;

48 (C) THE DEFENDANT'S CRIMINAL HISTORY;

49 (D) THE IMPACT OF SEALING THE DEFENDANT'S RECORDS UPON HIS OR HER  
50 REHABILITATION AND HIS OR HER SUCCESSFUL AND PRODUCTIVE REENTRY AND  
51 REINTEGRATION INTO SOCIETY, AND ON PUBLIC SAFETY; AND

52 (E) ANY STATEMENTS MADE BY THE VICTIM OF THE OFFENSE WHERE THERE IS IN  
53 FACT A VICTIM OF THE CRIME.

54 5. AFTER A COURT DECLARES ITS WILLINGNESS TO GRANT THE DEFENDANT'S  
55 REQUEST FOR CONDITIONAL SEALING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, BUT BEFORE THE  
56 COURT ORDERS SEALING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, THE DEFENDANT SHALL PAY A

1 MANDATORY CONDITIONAL SEALING FEE. THE MANDATORY CONDITIONAL SEALING FEE  
2 WILL BE A FEE OF EIGHTY DOLLARS, HOWEVER, SUCH FILING FEE SHALL BE  
3 WAIVED IN CASES OF INDIGENCE. THE MANDATORY FILING FEE SHALL BE PAID TO  
4 THE CLERK OF THE COURT OR ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL THAT RENDERED THE  
5 CONVICTION. WITHIN THE FIRST TEN DAYS OF THE MONTH FOLLOWING COLLECTION  
6 OF THE MANDATORY FILING FEE, THE COLLECTING AUTHORITY IF IT IS AN ADMIN-  
7 ISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL, OR A TOWN OR VILLAGE JUSTICE COURT, SHALL THEN PAY  
8 SUCH MONEY TO THE STATE COMPTROLLER WHO SHALL DEPOSIT SUCH MONEY IN THE  
9 STATE TREASURY PURSUANT TO SECTION ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-ONE OF THE STATE  
10 FINANCE LAW TO THE CREDIT OF THE INDIGENT LEGAL SERVICES FUND. IF SUCH  
11 COLLECTING AUTHORITY IS ANY OTHER COURT OF THE UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM, IT  
12 SHALL, WITHIN SUCH PERIOD, PAY SUCH MONEY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE MANDATORY  
13 FILING FEE TO THE STATE COMMISSIONER OF TAXATION AND FINANCE TO THE  
14 CREDIT OF THE INDIGENT LEGAL SERVICES FUND ESTABLISHED BY SECTION NINE-  
15 TY-EIGHT-B OF THE STATE FINANCE LAW.

16 6. WHEN A COURT ORDERS SEALING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, ALL OFFICIAL  
17 RECORDS AND PAPERS RELATING TO THE ARRESTS, PROSECUTIONS, AND  
18 CONVICTIONS, INCLUDING ALL DUPLICATES AND COPIES THEREOF, ON FILE WITH  
19 THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES OR ANY COURT SHALL BE SEALED  
20 AND NOT MADE AVAILABLE TO ANY PERSON OR PUBLIC OR PRIVATE AGENCY;  
21 PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THE DIVISION SHALL RETAIN ANY FINGERPRINTS, PALM-  
22 PRINTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, OR DIGITAL IMAGES OF THE SAME.

23 7. WHEN THE COURT ORDERS SEALING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, THE CLERK  
24 OF SUCH COURT SHALL IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY THE COMMISSIONER OF THE DIVISION  
25 OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES, AND ANY COURT THAT SENTENCED THE DEFENDANT  
26 FOR AN OFFENSE WHICH HAS BEEN CONDITIONALLY SEALED, REGARDING THE  
27 RECORDS THAT SHALL BE SEALED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

28 8. RECORDS SEALED PURSUANT TO THIS SUBDIVISION SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE  
29 TO:

30 (A) THE DEFENDANT OR THE DEFENDANT'S DESIGNATED AGENT;

31 (B) QUALIFIED AGENCIES, AS DEFINED IN SUBDIVISION NINE OF SECTION  
32 EIGHT HUNDRED THIRTY-FIVE OF THE EXECUTIVE LAW, AND FEDERAL AND STATE  
33 LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, WHEN ACTING WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THEIR LAW  
34 ENFORCEMENT DUTIES;

35 (C) ANY STATE OR LOCAL OFFICER OR AGENCY WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE  
36 ISSUANCE OF LICENSES TO POSSESS GUNS, WHEN THE PERSON HAS MADE APPLICA-  
37 TION FOR SUCH A LICENSE; OR

38 (D) ANY PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER OF A POLICE OFFICER OR PEACE OFFICER AS  
39 THOSE TERMS ARE DEFINED IN SUBDIVISIONS THIRTY-THREE AND THIRTY-FOUR OF  
40 SECTION 1.20 OF THIS CHAPTER, IN RELATION TO AN APPLICATION FOR EMPLOY-  
41 MENT AS A POLICE OFFICER OR PEACE OFFICER; PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT EVERY  
42 PERSON WHO IS AN APPLICANT FOR THE POSITION OF POLICE OFFICER OR PEACE  
43 OFFICER SHALL BE FURNISHED WITH A COPY OF ALL RECORDS OBTAINED UNDER  
44 THIS PARAGRAPH AND AFFORDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE AN EXPLANATION THERE-  
45 TO.

46 9. THE COURT SHALL NOT SEAL THE DEFENDANT'S RECORD PURSUANT TO THIS  
47 SECTION WHILE ANY CHARGED OFFENSE IS PENDING.

48 10. IF, SUBSEQUENT TO THE SEALING OF RECORDS PURSUANT TO THIS SUBDIVI-  
49 SION, THE PERSON WHO IS THE SUBJECT OF SUCH RECORDS IS ARRESTED FOR OR  
50 FORMALLY CHARGED WITH ANY MISDEMEANOR OR FELONY OFFENSE, SUCH RECORDS  
51 SHALL BE UNSEALED IMMEDIATELY AND REMAIN UNSEALED; PROVIDED, HOWEVER,  
52 THAT IF SUCH NEW MISDEMEANOR OR FELONY ARREST RESULTS IN A TERMINATION  
53 IN FAVOR OF THE ACCUSED AS DEFINED IN SUBDIVISION THREE OF SECTION  
54 160.50 OF THIS ARTICLE OR BY CONVICTION FOR A NON-CRIMINAL OFFENSE AS  
55 DESCRIBED IN SECTION 160.55 OF THIS ARTICLE, SUCH UNSEALED RECORDS SHALL  
56 BE CONDITIONALLY SEALED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

1 S 3. Subdivision 16 of section 296 of the executive law, as separately  
2 amended by section 3 of part N and section 14 of part AAA of chapter 56  
3 of the laws of 2009, is amended to read as follows:

4 16. It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice, unless specif-  
5 ically required or permitted by statute, for any person, agency, bureau,  
6 corporation or association, including the state and any political subdivi-  
7 sion thereof, to make any inquiry about, whether in any form of appli-  
8 cation or otherwise, or to act upon adversely to the individual  
9 involved, any arrest or criminal accusation of such individual not then  
10 pending against that individual which was followed by a termination of  
11 that criminal action or proceeding in favor of such individual, as  
12 defined in subdivision two of section 160.50 of the criminal procedure  
13 law, or by a youthful offender adjudication, as defined in subdivision  
14 one of section 720.35 of the criminal procedure law, or by a conviction  
15 for a violation sealed pursuant to section 160.55 of the criminal proce-  
16 dure law or by a conviction which is sealed pursuant to section 160.58  
17 of the criminal procedure law, OR BY A CONVICTION WHICH IS SEALED PURSU-  
18 ANT TO SECTION 160.65 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE LAW, in connection with  
19 the licensing, employment or providing of credit or insurance to such  
20 individual; provided, further, that no person shall be required to  
21 divulge information pertaining to any arrest or criminal accusation of  
22 such individual not then pending against that individual which was  
23 followed by a termination of that criminal action or proceeding in favor  
24 of such individual, as defined in subdivision two of section 160.50 of  
25 the criminal procedure law, or by a youthful offender adjudication, as  
26 defined in subdivision one of section 720.35 of the criminal procedure  
27 law, or by a conviction for a violation sealed pursuant to section  
28 160.55 of the criminal procedure law, or by a conviction which is sealed  
29 pursuant to section 160.58 of the criminal procedure law, OR BY A  
30 CONVICTION WHICH IS SEALED PURSUANT TO SECTION 160.65 OF THE CRIMINAL  
31 PROCEDURE LAW. The provisions of this subdivision shall not apply to the  
32 licensing activities of governmental bodies in relation to the regu-  
33 lation of guns, firearms and other deadly weapons or in relation to an  
34 application for employment as a police officer or peace officer as those  
35 terms are defined in subdivisions thirty-three and thirty-four of  
36 section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law; provided further that the  
37 provisions of this subdivision shall not apply to an application for  
38 employment or membership in any law enforcement agency with respect to  
39 any arrest or criminal accusation which was followed by a youthful  
40 offender adjudication, as defined in subdivision one of section 720.35  
41 of the criminal procedure law, or by a conviction for a violation sealed  
42 pursuant to section 160.55 of the criminal procedure law, or by a  
43 conviction which is sealed pursuant to section 160.58 of the criminal  
44 procedure law, OR BY A CONVICTION WHICH IS SEALED PURSUANT TO SECTION  
45 160.65 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE LAW.

46 S 4. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after  
47 it shall have become a law and shall apply to all convictions occurring  
48 prior to, on, and after such date.