§ 160.50 Order upon termination of criminal action in favor of the accused.

1. Upon the termination of a criminal action or proceeding against a person in favor of such person, as defined in subdivision three of this section, unless the district attorney upon motion with not less than five days notice to such person or his or her attorney demonstrates to the satisfaction of the court that the interests of justice require otherwise, or the court on its own motion with not less than five days notice to such person or his or her attorney determines that the interests of justice require otherwise and states the reasons for such determination on the record, the record of such action or proceeding shall be sealed and the clerk of the court wherein such criminal action or proceeding was terminated shall immediately notify the commissioner of the division of criminal justice services and the heads of all appropriate police departments and other law enforcement agencies that the action has been terminated in favor of the accused, and unless the court has directed otherwise, that the record of such action or proceeding shall be sealed. Upon receipt of notification of such termination and sealing:

(a) every photograph of such person and photographic plate or proof, and all palmprints and fingerprints taken or made of such person pursuant to the provisions of this article in regard to the action or proceeding terminated, except a dismissal pursuant to section 170.56 or 210.46 of this chapter, and all duplicates and copies thereof, except a digital fingerprint image where authorized pursuant to paragraph (e) of this subdivision, shall forthwith be, at the discretion of the recipient agency, either destroyed or returned to such person, or to the attorney who represented such person at the time of the termination of the action or proceeding, at the address given by such person or attorney during the action or proceeding, by the division of criminal justice services and by any police department or law enforcement agency having any such photograph, photographic plate or proof, palmprint or fingerprints in its possession or under its control;

(b) any police department or law enforcement agency, including the division of criminal justice services, which transmitted or otherwise forwarded to any agency of the United States or of any other state or of

any other jurisdiction outside the state of New York copies of any such photographs, photographic plates or proofs, palmprints and fingerprints, including those relating to actions or proceedings which were dismissed pursuant to section 170.56 or 210.46 of this chapter, shall forthwith formally request in writing that all such copies be destroyed or returned to the police department or law enforcement agency which transmitted or forwarded them, and, if returned, such department or agency shall, at its discretion, either destroy or return them as provided herein, except that those relating to dismissals pursuant to section 170.56 or 210.46 of this chapter shall not be destroyed or returned by such department or agency;

(c) all official records and papers, including judgments and orders of a court but not including published court decisions or opinions or records and briefs on appeal, relating to the arrest or prosecution, including all duplicates and copies thereof, on file with the division of criminal justice services, any court, police agency, or prosecutor's office shall be sealed and not made available to any person or public or private agency;

(d) such records shall be made available to the person accused or to such person's designated agent, and shall be made available to (i) a prosecutor in any proceeding in which the accused has moved for an order pursuant to section 170.56 or 210.46 of this chapter, or (ii) a law enforcement agency upon ex parte motion in any superior court, or in any district court, city court or the criminal court of the city of New York provided that such court sealed the record, if such agency demonstrates to the satisfaction of the court that justice requires that such records be made available to it, or (iii) any state or local officer or agency with responsibility for the issuance of licenses to possess guns, when the accused has made application for such a license, or (iv) the New York state department of corrections and community supervision when the accused is on parole supervision as a result of conditional release or a parole release granted by the New York state board of parole, and the arrest which is the subject of the inquiry is one which occurred while the accused was under such supervision, or (v) any prospective employer of a police officer or peace officer as those terms are defined in subdivisions thirty-three and thirty-four of section 1.20 of this chapter, in relation to an application for employment as a police

officer or peace officer; provided, however, that every person who is an applicant for the position of police officer or peace officer shall be furnished with a copy of all records obtained under this paragraph and afforded an opportunity to make an explanation thereto, or (vi) the probation department responsible for supervision of the accused when the arrest which is the subject of the inquiry is one which occurred while the accused was under such supervision; and

(e) where fingerprints subject to the provisions of this section have been received by the division of criminal justice services and have been filed by the division as digital images, such images may be retained, provided that a fingerprint card of the individual is on file with the division which was not sealed pursuant to this section or section 160.55 of this article.

2. A report of the termination of the action or proceeding in favor of the accused shall be sufficient notice of sealing to the commissioner of the division of criminal justice services unless the report also indicates that the court directed that the record not be sealed in the interests of justice. Where the court has determined pursuant to subdivision one of this section that sealing is not in the interest of justice, the clerk of the court shall include notification of that determination in any report to such division of the disposition of the action or proceeding.

3. For the purposes of subdivision one of this section, a criminal action or proceeding against a person shall be considered terminated in favor of such person where:

(a) an order dismissing the entire accusatory instrument against such person pursuant to article four hundred seventy was entered; or

(b) an order to dismiss the entire accusatory instrument against such person pursuant to section 170.30, 170.50, 170.55, 170.56, 180.70, 210.20, 210.46 or 210.47 of this chapter was entered or deemed entered, or an order terminating the prosecution against such person was entered pursuant to section 180.85 of this chapter, and the people have not appealed from such order or the determination of an appeal or appeals by the people from such order has been against the people; or

(c) a verdict of complete acquittal was made pursuant to section

330.10 of this chapter; or

(d) a trial order of dismissal of the entire accusatory instrument against such person pursuant to section 290.10 or 360.40 of this chapter was entered and the people have not appealed from such order or the determination of an appeal or appeals by the people from such order has been against the people; or

(e) an order setting aside a verdict pursuant to section 330.30 or 370.10 of this chapter was entered and the people have not appealed from such order or the determination of an appeal or appeals by the people from such order has been against the people and no new trial has been ordered; or

(f) an order vacating a judgment pursuant to section 440.10 of this chapter was entered and the people have not appealed from such order or the determination of an appeal or appeals by the people from such order has been against the people, and no new trial has been ordered; or

(g) an order of discharge pursuant to article seventy of the civil practice law and rules was entered on a ground which invalidates the conviction and the people have not appealed from such order or the determination of an appeal or appeals by the people from such order has been against the people; or

(h) where all charges against such person are dismissed pursuant to section 190.75 of this chapter. In such event, the clerk of the court which empaneled the grand jury shall serve a certification of such disposition upon the division of criminal justice services and upon the appropriate police department or law enforcement agency which upon receipt thereof, shall comply with the provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) of subdivision one of this section in the same manner as is required thereunder with respect to an order of a court entered pursuant to said subdivision one; or

(i) prior to the filing of an accusatory instrument in a local criminal court against such person, the prosecutor elects not to prosecute such person. In such event, the prosecutor shall serve a certification of such disposition upon the division of criminal justice services and upon the appropriate police department or law enforcement agency which, upon receipt thereof, shall comply with the provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) of subdivision one of this section in the same manner as is required thereunder with respect to an order of a

court entered pursuant to said subdivision one.

(j) following the arrest of such person, the arresting police agency, prior to the filing of an accusatory instrument in a local criminal court but subsequent to the forwarding of a copy of the fingerprints of such person to the division of criminal justice services, elects not to proceed further. In such event, the head of the arresting police agency shall serve a certification of such disposition upon the division of criminal justice services which, upon receipt thereof, shall comply with the provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) of subdivision one of this section in the same manner as is required thereunder with respect to an order of a court entered pursuant to said subdivision one.

(k) (i) The conviction was for a violation of article two hundred twenty or section 240.36 of the penal law prior to the effective date of article two hundred twenty-one of the penal law, and the sole controlled substance involved was marihuana and the conviction was only for a misdemeanor and/or violation; or

(ii) the conviction is for an offense defined in section 221.05 or 221.10 of the penal law prior to the effective date of chapter one hundred thirty-two of the laws of two thousand nineteen; or

(iii) the conviction is for an offense defined in former section 221.05 221.10, 221.15, 221.20, 221.35, or 221.40 of the penal law; or

(iv) the conviction was for an offense defined in section 240.37 of the penal law; or

(v) the conviction was for a violation of section 220.03 or 220.06 of the penal law prior to the effective date of the chapter of the laws of two thousand twenty-one that amended this paragraph, and the sole controlled substance involved was concentrated cannabis; or

(vi) the conviction was for an offense defined in section 222.10, 222.15, 222.25 or 222.45 of the penal law.

No defendant shall be required or permitted to waive eligibility for sealing or expungement pursuant to this section as part of a plea of guilty, sentence or any agreement related to a conviction for a violation of section 222.10, 222.15, 222.25 or 222.45 of the penal law and any such waiver shall be deemed void and wholly unenforceable.

(l) An order dismissing an action pursuant to section 215.40 of this chapter was entered.

4. A person in whose favor a criminal action or proceeding was terminated, as defined in paragraph (a) through (h) of subdivision two of this section, prior to the effective date of this section, may upon motion apply to the court in which such termination occurred, upon not less than twenty days notice to the district attorney, for an order granting to such person the relief set forth in subdivision one of this section, and such order shall be granted unless the district attorney demonstrates to the satisfaction of the court that the interests of justice require otherwise. A person in whose favor a criminal action or proceeding was terminated, as defined in paragraph (i) or (j) of subdivision two of this section, prior to the effective date of this section, may apply to the appropriate prosecutor or police agency for a certification as described in said paragraph (i) or (j) granting to such person the relief set forth therein, and such certification shall be granted by such prosecutor or police agency.

5. (a) Expungement of certain marihuana-related records. A conviction for an offense described in paragraph (k) of subdivision three of this section shall, on and after the effective date of this paragraph, in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph, be vacated and dismissed, and all records of such conviction or convictions and related to such conviction or convictions shall be expunged, as described in subdivision forty-five of section 1.20 of this chapter, and the matter shall be considered terminated in favor of the accused and deemed a nullity, having been rendered by this paragraph legally invalid. All such records for an offense described in this paragraph where the conviction was entered on or before the effective date of the chapter of the laws of 2019 that amended this paragraph shall be expunged promptly and, in any event, no later than one year after such effective date.

(b) Duties of certain state officials and law enforcement agencies. Commencing upon the effective date of this paragraph:

(i) the chief administrator of the courts shall promptly notify the commissioner of the division of criminal justice services and the heads of all appropriate police departments, district attorney's offices and other law enforcement agencies of all convictions that have been vacated and dismissed pursuant to paragraph (a) of this subdivision and that all

records related to such convictions shall be expunged and the matter shall be considered terminated in favor of the accused and deemed a nullity, having been rendered legally invalid. Upon receipt of notification of such vacatur, dismissal and expungement, all records relating to such conviction or convictions, or the criminal action or proceeding, as the case may be, shall be marked as expunged by conspicuously indicating on the face of the record and on each page or at the beginning of the digitized file of the record that the record has been designated as expunged. Upon the written request of the individual whose case has been expunged or their designated agent, such records shall be destroyed. Such records and papers shall not be made available to any person, except the individual whose case has been expunged or such person's designated agent; and

(ii) where automatic vacatur, dismissal, and expungement, including record destruction if requested, is required by this subdivision but any record of the court system in this state has not yet been updated to reflect same (A) notwithstanding any other provision of law except as provided in paragraph (d) of subdivision one of this section and paragraph (e) of subdivision four of section eight hundred thirty-seven of the executive law: (1) when the division of criminal justice services conducts a search of its criminal history records, maintained pursuant to subdivision six of section eight hundred thirty-seven of the executive law, and returns a report thereon, all references to a conviction for an offense described in paragraph (k) of subdivision three of this section shall be excluded from such report; and (2) the chief administrator of the courts shall develop and promulgate rules as may be necessary to ensure that no written or electronic report of a criminal history record search conducted by the office of court administration contains information relating to a conviction for an offense described in paragraph (k) of subdivision three of this section; and (B) where court records relevant to such matter cannot be located or have been destroyed, and a person or the person's attorney presents to an appropriate court employee a fingerprint record of the New York state division of criminal justice services, or a copy of a court disposition record or other relevant court record, which indicates that a criminal action or proceeding against such person was terminated by conviction of an offense described in paragraph (k) of subdivision three of this

section, then promptly, and in any event within thirty days after such notice to such court employee, the chief administrator of the courts or his or her designee shall assure that such vacatur, dismissal, and expungement, including record destruction if requested, have been completed in accordance with subparagraph (i) of this paragraph.

(c) Vacatur, dismissal and expungement as set forth in this subdivision is without prejudice to any person or such person's attorney seeking further relief pursuant to article four hundred forty of this chapter or any other law. Nothing in this section is intended or shall be interpreted to diminish or abrogate any right or remedy otherwise available to any person.

(d) The office of court administration, in conjunction with the division of criminal justice services, shall develop an affirmative information campaign and widely disseminate to the public, through its website, public service announcements and other means, in multiple languages and through multiple outlets, information concerning the expungement, vacatur and resentencing of marihuana convictions established by the chapter of the laws of two thousand nineteen that added this paragraph, including, but not limited to, the automatic expungement of certain past convictions, the means by which an individual may file a motion for vacatur, dismissal and expungement of certain past convictions, and the impact of such changes on such person's criminal history records.