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| File a Petition to Seal an Eviction |

Congratulations {{ users }}! You have finished all the forms you need to file a Petition to Seal an Eviction. The rest of the pages in this packet are your petition in **{{ users }} v {{ other\_parties }}**.

## Next steps

1. **Keep a copy for yourself.**
2. **{%p if True %}{# update with code later once we determine which scenarios require notice #}**
3. Deliver a copy to {{ showifdef('other\_parties[0]') }} or their attorney.
4. {%p endif %}
5. The judge or a court clerk may decide you need a hearing before they seal your eviction. If you have a hearing, the clerk will send you a notice with the date and time of the hearing.
6. {%p if showifdef(“efile”) %}
7. **Because you e-filed your petition:** regularly check the email address that you e-filed with, {{ my\_username }}. If you get an email from the court, read it. It may tell you to take another step. You can call the court with questions about any emails you get.
8. {%p endif %}
9. Check the order when you get it to make sure it is correct.

## {%p if not showifdef(“efile”) %}

## To file your petition right away

1. Look over the forms below, one more time. Make sure everything is correct.
2. Go to the {{ trial\_court }} and file your petition. You may mail it to the court if you wish.
3. {%p if defined('trial\_court.address.address') %}
4. The address of your court is:   
   {{ trial\_court.address.on\_one\_line() }}.
5. {%p endif %}

{%p endif %}

## What could happen to my case?

The judge may either:

1. Hold a hearing.
2. Decide based on the petition you file without a hearing.

If the judge decided your original eviction case in favor of the landlord in certain kinds of cases, a hearing may be required by the sealing law.

## What can the judge do at the hearing?

At the hearing the judge reads the complaint and the evidence. They may ask you questions.

**Tell** the judge why you need a Petition to Seal Eviction. Talk about the facts that you wrote in your petition. Tell the judge about any evidence that you have.

## How can I prepare for a hearing?

* + - 1. Check to see that you have met the requirements to be eligible for sealing.
      2. Review the important dates of your case, such as when it was settled by agreement, or when judgment was entered. If you have papers from your case, review them and bring them with you to the hearing.
      3. If your landlord wrote the court to object to the sealing:
         1. Read the court document.
         2. Learn why they objected.
         3. Think of an answer to each reason so you can explain it at the hearing.
      4. {%p if showifdef(“**nonpayment\_appl\_expired”) %}**
      5. Because you had a non-payment of rent case, before the hearing, begin compiling:
         1. bank statements,
         2. pay stubs,
         3. proof of past rent payments,
         4. tax returns, and
         5. other documents showing your financial history.

1. {%p endif %}
2. {%p if showifdef(“**eviction\_reason\_139”) %}**
3. Because you had a **Chapter 139, Section 19 civil action**:
   * + - 1. You (or your lawyer) may need to get a copy of your criminal record from masscourts.org.
         2. Be ready to explain what was about your life at the time of the alleged criminal activity. Think of factors like domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental illness, and how you can show that you have not and will not repeat this activity again.
4. {%p endif %}

## What happens if the judge grants my petition?

If the judge decides to grant your petition, you should r**ead** the order as soon as you get it. Call the court to fix any mistakes. You may need to go back in front of the judge to get the order corrected.

Once the court seals your record, you should check the online records to be sure that the records are actually removed from public view.

* + - 1. Go to masscourts.org.
      2. Find the court where you filed the petition to seal.
      3. Search for your case by the docket number.

If it says, “Restricted,” your record is sealed. If your name is still there, call the clerk’s office in the court where the petition was filed.

## Learn more

Visit <https://www.masslegalhelp.org/housing-apartments-shelter/eviction-sealing/can-i-seal-my-eviction-record> or scan the QR code below:

