

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 687

(Senator McCray, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

Criminal Procedure - Expungement of Conviction - Driving While Privilege Is Canceled, Suspended, Refused, or Revoked

This bill authorizes a person to file a petition for expungement of a conviction under § 16-303 of the Transportation Article (driving on a canceled, suspended, refused, or revoked license/privilege) under § 10-110 of the Criminal Procedure Article.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential significant increase in general fund expenditures for the Judiciary to process additional petitions for expungement. Minimal increase in general fund revenues from filing fees.

Local Effect: Potential increase in expenditures for local entities to address petitions and comply with expungement orders. The bill is not expected to materially affect local revenues.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: To begin the process of expungement, a petitioner must file a petition for expungement with the court under § 10-105 or § 10-110 of the Criminal Procedure Article, which establishes eligibility for the expungement of records pertaining to a criminal charge or conviction.

Expungement of a court or police record means removal from public inspection:

- by obliteration;
- by removal to a separate secure area to which persons who do not have a legitimate reason for access are denied access; or
- if access to a court record or police record can be obtained only by reference to another such record, by the expungement of that record, or the part of it that provides access.

Pursuant to § 10-107 of the Criminal Law Article, if two or more charges, other than one for a minor traffic violation, arise from the same incident, transaction, or set of facts, they are considered to be a unit. If a person is not entitled to expungement of one charge or conviction in a unit, the person is not entitled to expungement of any other charge in the unit. This “unit rule” applies to expungements under §§ 10-105 and 10-110.

Section 10-105 of the Criminal Procedure Article

Under § 10-105 of the Criminal Procedure Article, a person who has been charged with the commission of a crime for which a term of imprisonment may be imposed or who has been charged with a civil offense or infraction, except a juvenile offense, may file a petition for expungement of a police record, court record, or other record maintained by the State or a political subdivision of the State, under various circumstances listed in the statute. These grounds include acquittal, dismissal of charges, entry of probation before judgment, entry of *nolle prosequi*, stet of charge, and gubernatorial pardon. Individuals convicted of a crime that is no longer a crime, convicted of possession of marijuana under § 5-601 of the Criminal Law Article, or convicted of or found not criminally responsible for specified public nuisance crimes or specified misdemeanors are also eligible for expungement of the associated criminal records under certain circumstances.

In general, a petition for expungement under § 10-105 may not be filed until three years after the disposition, unless the petitioner files a written waiver and release of all tort claims arising from the charge.

A person is not entitled to expungement if (1) subject to a specified exception, the petition is based on the entry of probation before judgment and the person, within three years of the entry of the probation before judgment, has been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation or a crime where the act on which the conviction is based is no longer a crime or (2) the person is a defendant in a pending criminal proceeding.

Section 10-110 of the Criminal Procedure Article

Section 10-110 of the Criminal Procedure Article authorizes an individual convicted of any of a list of approximately 100 specified offenses or an attempt, a conspiracy, or a solicitation of any of these offenses, to file a petition for expungement of the conviction, subject to specified procedures and requirements. An itemized list of convictions eligible for expungement under § 10-110 is shown in the **Appendix – Convictions Eligible for Expungement**.

In general, a petition for expungement of these convictions is subject to a 10-year waiting period from when the petitioner completed the sentences imposed for all convictions for which expungement is sought, including parole, probation, or mandatory supervision. However, a petition for expungement of a felony or a conviction for misdemeanor second-degree assault, common law battery, or for an offense classified as a domestically related crime under § 6-233 of the Criminal Procedure Article is subject to a 15-year waiting period.

Timeline for Expungement

Maryland's expungement process for removing an eligible record takes a minimum of 90 days. If a State's Attorney or victim, as applicable, objects, the court must hold a hearing on the petition. If an objection is not filed within 30 days, as specified, the court must pass an order requiring the expungement of all police and court records concerning the charges. After the court orders are sent to each required agency, each agency has 60 days from receipt to comply with the order.

Background: **Exhibit 1** contains fiscal 2019 statistics on the number of violations and convictions in the District Court under § 16-303 of the Transportation Article. As noted below, approximately 5,000 convictions rendered in fiscal 2019 would be eligible for expungement under the bill.

Exhibit 1
Violations and Convictions under § 16-303 of the Transportation Article
District Court
Fiscal 2019

<u>Charge</u>	<u>Violations</u>	<u>Guilty Dispositions</u>	<u>Guilty Merged</u>	<u>Guilty Prepaid</u>
Transportation § 16-303 (a)	55	3	0	0
Transportation § 16-303 (b)	22	0	2	0
Transportation § 16-303 (c)	53,445	1,980	92	1
Transportation § 16-303 (d)	7,455	504	36	0
Transportation § 16-303 (e)	55	1	1	0
Transportation § 16-303 (f)	7,904	29	21	2
Transportation § 16-303 (g)	1,540	68	10	0
Transportation § 16-303 (h)	33,096	2,362	86	0
Transportation § 16-303 (i)	482	20	2	0
Total	104,054	4,967	250	3

Source: Maryland Judiciary

Exhibit 2 contains information on the number of petitions for expungement filed in the trial courts from fiscal 2015 through 2019.

Exhibit 2
Petitions for Expungement
Fiscal 2015-2019

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
District Court	32,726	39,706	47,697	62,631	74,508
Circuit Courts	2,448	4,706	6,811	7,909	10,951

Source: Maryland Judiciary

State Revenues: General fund revenues increase at least minimally from District Court filing fees for petitions for expungement. The District Court charges a \$30 fee to petition for expungement of a guilty disposition (conviction).

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures increase, perhaps significantly, for the Judiciary to evaluate and process additional expungements under the bill.

Judiciary

As previously noted, approximately 5,000 convictions from fiscal 2019 alone would be eligible for expungement under the bill, barring any other disqualifications. The bill applies retroactively to older convictions.

The Judiciary advises that approximately 31 additional District Court clerks are needed to implement the bill, based on an increase of 25,000 petitions per year (accounting for petitions to expunge older convictions), a 1.5 hour processing time per expungement, and the time clerks have available to devote to the process. The cost associated with this personnel is \$1.7 million in fiscal 2021 and increases to \$2.2 million by fiscal 2025.

The Department of Legislative Services notes that while the number of additional petitions filed under the bill is likely to be higher initially, as petitions to expunge older convictions are filed, the volume is likely to stabilize over time. However, the level of effort needed to handle additional petitions each year cannot be reliably estimated at this time and can only be determined with actual experience under the bill. A person with an older conviction for driving on a suspended/revoked/canceled license may be less inclined to engage in the expungement process, given the 10-year waiting period and the lack of stigma associated with the offense, absent other consequences or factors (*e.g.*, job opportunities with transportation responsibilities or the inability to expunge another disposition within the unit of charges due to a conviction under § 16-303).

However, *for illustrative purposes only*, adding one clerk to each of the five jurisdictions with the highest case volume results in additional general fund expenditures of \$276,255 in fiscal 2021, which increases to \$355,149 by fiscal 2025.

Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services advises that the bill does not affect the Criminal Justice Information System Central Repository (CJIS). Under § 10-201 of the Criminal Procedure Article, data about a violation of a State traffic law is specifically excluded from “criminal history record information,” and therefore does not appear on a CJIS background check.

Other Agencies

The Maryland State Archives (MSA) is the repository for older court records. MSA advises that while a modest increase in expungements of MSA records can be accommodated using

existing resources, a significant increase in expungements may result in a future need for additional personnel.

The Department of State Police advises that it can implement the bill with existing resources, since the only records it retains pertaining to § 16-303 convictions are records relating to the issuance of an electronic citation.

The Maryland Department of Transportation advises that the bill does not have a fiscal or operational impact. The expungement statutes in the Criminal Procedure Article do not apply to driving records. Instead, the expungement of driving records is addressed in the Transportation Article. Section 16-117.1 of the Transportation Article generally requires the Motor Vehicle Administration to automatically expunge public driving records from its database under specified circumstances, including if the licensee, within the preceding 10 years, has not been convicted of or granted probation before judgment for specified driving-related violations and has not been convicted of any other moving violation or criminal offense involving a motor vehicle, regardless of the number of suspensions or revocations.

Local Expenditures: Expenditures may increase for affected local entities (*e.g.*, State's Attorneys' offices and police departments) to evaluate petitions for expungement or comply with orders for expungement under the bill. The extent to which this occurs depends on the number of petitions and orders under the bill and existing staffing resources within the jurisdiction.

For example, Baltimore City and Kent County do not anticipate a fiscal or operational impact from the bill. However, the City of Westminster advises that the bill has a significant impact because of already strained resources to comply with expungement orders. The city advises that depending on the volume of expungements, it may have to hire a full-time employee to address the additional workload.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City; Kent and Montgomery counties; City of Westminster; Town of Leonardtown; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Office of the Public Defender; Maryland State's Attorneys' Association; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland State Archives; Department of Legislative Services

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Appendix – Convictions Eligible for Expungement

Convictions Eligible for Expungement under Section 10-110 of the Criminal Procedure Article

Misdemeanors Eligible for Expungement

Alcoholic Beverages Article

AB, § 6-320 – Disorderly Intoxication

Business Occupations and Professions Article

BOP, § 17-613(a): Crimes relating to real estate brokers and agents (*e.g.*, failure to deposit money in trust accounts, engaging in discriminatory real estate practices, acting as a dual agent, providing brokerage services without a license, *etc.*)

Business Regulation Article

BR, § 5-610: Violation of Business Regulation Article, Title 5, Subtitle 6 (perpetual care of cemeteries)

BR, § 5-712: Failure to deposit money received under or in connection with a preneed burial contract

BR, § 5-904: Violation of any provision of Title 5, Subtitle 9 of the Business Regulation Article (cemetery-related violations – failure to register as operator, operating a cemetery without the proper form of business entity, and unauthorized representations)

BR, § 19-304: Violations of laws relating to returnable containers and returnable textiles (improper use, improper registration, defacing, *etc.*)

BR, § 19-308: Violations of laws relating to plastic secondary packaging

Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article

CJ, § 3-1508: Failure to comply with a peace order

CJ, § 10-402: Divulging contents of communications (subsection (d))

Commercial Law Article

CL, § 14-1915: Violations of the Maryland Credit Services Businesses Act

CL, § 14-2902: False and fraudulent advertising

CL, § 14-2903: Bait and switch

Criminal Procedure Article

CP, § 5-211: Failure to surrender after forfeiture of bail or recognizance

Criminal Law Article

CR, § 3-203: Assault in the second degree (misdemeanor)

CR, § 3-808: Filing a fraudulent lien or encumbrance

CR, § 5-601: Possession or administration of a controlled dangerous substance (not involving use or possession of marijuana)

CR, § 5-618: Possession or purchase of noncontrolled substance that the person reasonably believes is a controlled substance

CR, § 5-619: Use or possession of drug paraphernalia

CR, § 5-620: Obtaining, possessing, or distributing controlled paraphernalia

CR, § 5-703: Unsolicited mailing of a controlled dangerous substance, prescription drug, or medicine

CR, § 5-708: Smelling or inhaling harmful substances

CR, § 5-902: Omitting, removing, altering, or obliterating a symbol required by federal law for a substance governed by Title 5 of the Criminal Law Article (controlled dangerous substance (CDS), prescriptions, and other substances); refusal or failure to maintain specified documentation required under Title 5; refusing entry into a premises or inspection of a premises authorized under Title 5), maintaining a place resorted to by others for illegal use of CDS or for the keeping or selling of a CDS; unauthorized manufacturing, dispensing, or distribution of CDS by a registrant; CDS/paraphernalia-related violations by authorized provider; and contraband

CR, § 6-105: Malicious burning of personal property in the second degree

CR, § 6-108: Willful and malicious burning of a trash container

CR, § 6-206: Breaking and entering a motor vehicle – rogue and vagabond

CR, § 6-303: Public utility interference – electrical equipment

CR, § 6-306: Alteration of manufacturer's serial number or sale of good with altered serial number

CR, § 6-307: Sale or possession of stolen serial number or vehicle identification plate or possession of a manufactured serial number or vehicle identification plate with intent to affix to stolen property or use for fraudulent purposes

CR, § 6-402: Trespass on posted property

CR, § 6-503: Unauthorized riding on railroad vehicle or unauthorized entry onto railroad property

CR, § 7-104: General theft (less than \$100 and at least \$100 but less than \$1,500)

CR, § 7-203: Unauthorized removal of property

CR, § 7-205: Abandonment of or failure to return leased or rented motor vehicle

CR, § 7-304: Obtaining telephone records without authorization

CR, § 7-308: Prohibited transfer of recorded sounds or images (penalty contained in CR, § 7-309)

CR, § 8-103: Obtaining property or services by bad check (less than \$100 and at least \$100 but less than \$1,500)

CR, § 8-206: Misdemeanor credit card crimes (less than \$100 and at least \$100 but less than \$1,500)

CR, § 8-401: Fraudulent conversion of partnership assets

CR, § 8-402: Fraudulent misrepresentation by corporate officer or agent

CR, § 8-404: Pyramid promotional schemes

CR, § 8-406: Misuse of documents of title

CR, § 8-408: Unlawful subleasing of motor vehicle

CR, § 8-503: Public assistance fraud – generally

CR, § 8-521: Fraudulently obtaining legal representation from the Office of the Public Defender

CR, § 8-523: Housing assistance fraud, making false statements

CR, § 8-904: Racing a horse under a name other than its registered name

CR, § 9-204: Bribing a person participating in or connected with an athletic contest

CR, § 9-205: Acceptance of a bribe by a person participating in or connected with an athletic contest

CR, § 9-503: Making a false statement to a State or local official/agency concerning a crime or hazard

CR, § 9-506: Making a false statement on an application for funds from the Maryland Higher Education Commission

CR, § 10-110: Illegal Dumping and Violation of Litter Control Law

CR, § 10-201: Disturbing the peace and disorderly conduct

CR, § 10-402: Unlawful removing or attempting to remove human remains from burial site

CR, § 10-404: Removal or destruction of funerary objects, graveyard plants, disorderly conduct in graveyards

CR, § 10-502: Bigamy (listed as a misdemeanor but is a felony)

CR, § 11-303: Engaging in prostitution

CR, § 11-306: Procuring or solicitation of prostitution or assignation

CR, § 11-307: Using a building, structure, or conveyance for prostitution or assignation

CR, § 12-102: Betting, wagering, gambling, *etc.*; pool on races/contests

CR, § 12-103: Playing specified games for money (*e.g.*, craps, thimbles, *etc.*)

CR, § 12-104: Keeping a gaming device or a place for gambling

CR, § 12-105: Offshore gambling

CR, § 12-109: Prearrangement or predetermination of horse race results

CR, § 12-203: Holding a lottery or selling a lottery device

CR, § 12-204: Keeping a location for the sale or barter of lottery devices

CR, § 12-205: Importing a lottery device or possession of lottery records or money

CR, § 12-302: Unlawful possession or operation of a slot machine

Election Law Article

EL, § 13-401: Failure to comply with authority line requirements in campaign material

EL, § 13-602: Specified campaign finance/election-related violations (*e.g.*, providing money/aid or a thing of value to induce or procure a vote, influence by employer of employee's vote, *etc.*)

EL, § 16-201: Voting-related offenses (*e.g.*, impersonation of another in order to vote, voting under a false name, *etc.*)

Family Law Article

FL, § 4-509: Failure to comply with protective order

Health General Article

HG, § 18-215: Violations relating to infectious or contagious disease reports

Housing and Community Development Article

HCD, § 4-411: Making a false statement or report to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for Rental Housing Program loan

HCD, § 4-2005: Making a false statement or report to DHCD for Energy-Efficient Homes Construction Loan Program loan

Insurance Article (fraudulent insurance acts)

IN, § 27-403: Failure to return premiums, making false or misleading claims to an insurer

IN, § 27-404: Insurer doing business with unlicensed persons

IN, § 27-405: Representations to public by unlicensed persons

IN, § 27-406: False applications and statements; unregulated insurers

IN § 27-406.1: Fraudulent insurance acts of individual sureties

IN, § 27-407: Solicitation of injured persons; solicitation of clients for lawyer or health care practitioner

IN, § 27-407.1: Organizing, planning, or knowingly participating in an intentional motor vehicle accident

IN, § 27-407.2: Compensation for insurance deductible

Natural Resources Article

NR, § 8-725.4: Speed limits on the Severn River imposed on specified days from April 15, 1989, to October 15, 1989
NR, § 8-725.5: Noise levels for vessels operated in tidal waters
NR, § 8-725.6: Speed limit on Seneca Creek
NR, § 8-725.7: Speed limit on certain areas of Monocacy River
NR, § 8-726: Throwing or dumping refuse on waters of the State
NR, § 8-726.1: Throwing specified types of waste on certain waters of the State
NR, § 8-727.1: Use of flashing red and yellow lights or signal devices
NR, § 8-738.2: Operating a vessel in a reckless or dangerous manner
Any prohibited act related to speed limits for personal watercraft

Public Safety Article

PS, § 5-307: Scope of handgun permit (listed in statute but is not a crime)
PS, § 5-308: Possession of handgun permit required
PS, § 6-602: Interference or obstruction of fire marshal, false representation as a fire marshal
PS, § 7-402: Interference, obstruction of fire or emergency services personnel
PS, § 14-114: Violation of order, rule, or regulation issued under Maryland Emergency Management Agency Act

Real Property Article

RP, § 7-318.1: Failure of foreclosure consultant to obtain a real estate broker's license or violation by foreclosure consultant of Maryland Real Estate Brokers Act
RP, § 7-509: Does not refer to a prohibited act – penalty provision for violations of provisions of Maryland Mortgage Assistance Relief Services Act
RP, § 10-507: Violation of Custom Home Protection Act (subsection (b)(3))

State Government Article

SG, § 9-124: Prohibited acts relating to State lottery

Tax General

TG, § 13-1001: Willful failure to file tax return
TG, § 13-1004: Income tax preparer – false return, false claim for refund, or attempted tax evasion
TG, § 13-1007: Violations of income tax withholding requirements
TG, § 13-1024: Failure to provide information with intent to evade taxes

Common Law Offenses

Affray
Battery
Criminal contempt
Hindering a law enforcement officer
Rioting

Felonies Eligible for Expungement

Criminal Law Article

CR, § 7–104: General Theft (at least \$1,500)
CR, § 5-602(2): Possession with intent to distribute a controlled dangerous substance
CR, § 6-202(a): Burglary in the first degree – breaking and entering with intent to commit theft
CR, § 6-203: Burglary in the second degree
CR, § 6-204: Burglary in the third degree

An attempt, conspiracy, or solicitation of any offense listed above is also eligible for expungement under CP, § 10-110