

Criminal Record Clearing Laws in DC: 2025 Updates

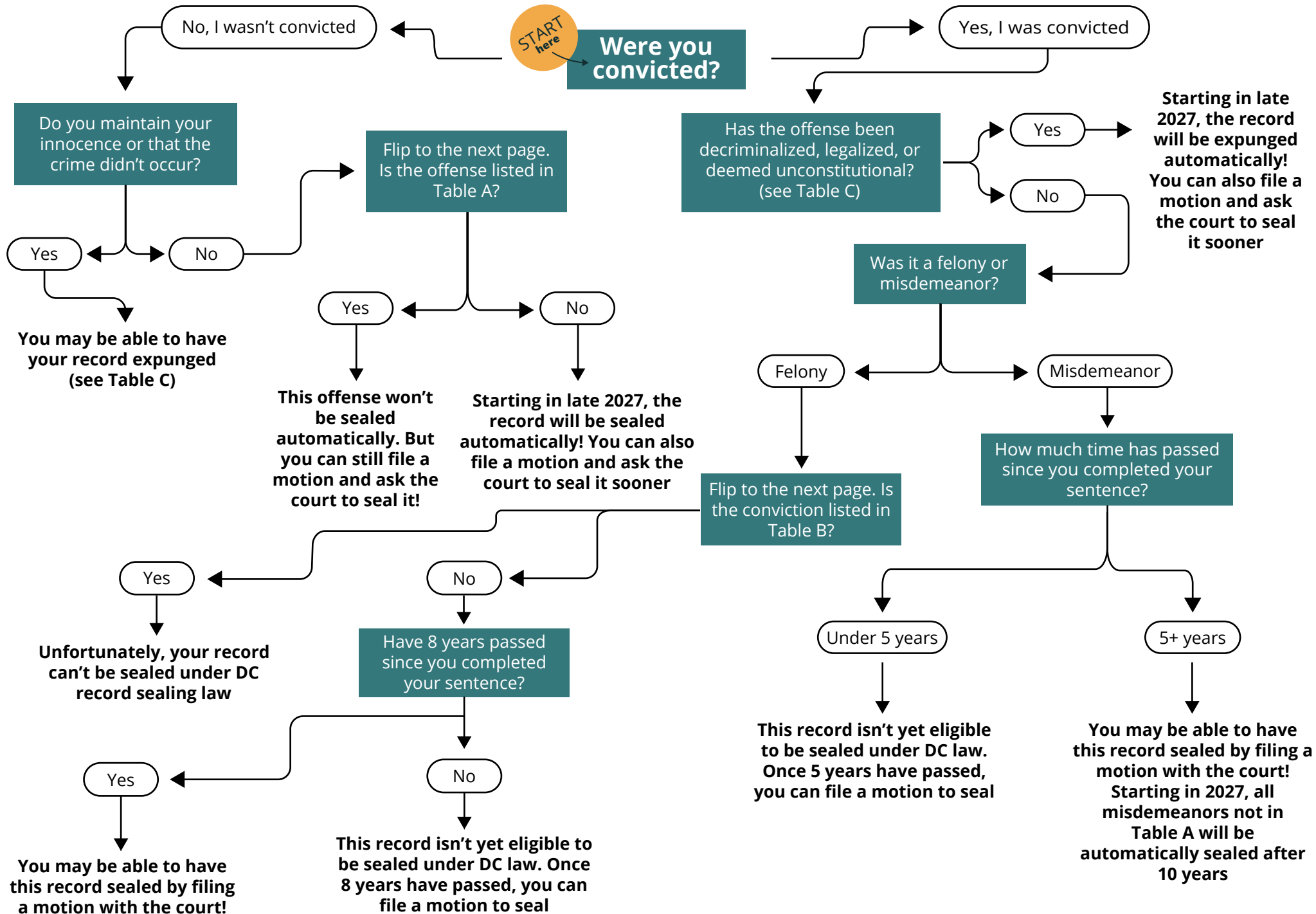


TABLE A: LIMITS ON AUTOMATIC SEALING FOR NON-CONVICTIONS

An offense that DC law defines as a “dangerous crime,” including:

- Felony weapons offenses
- Felony prostitution or pandering
- Felony drug offenses
- Arson or attempted arson
- Burglary or attempted burglary
- Robbery or attempted robbery
- Cruelty to children
- Felony sexual abuse
- Felony human trafficking offenses
- Felony fleeing from an officer in a motor vehicle

An offense that DC law defines as a “crime of violence,” including:

- Murder
- Manslaughter
- Kidnapping
- Extortion or blackmail with threats of violence
- Assault offenses: aggravated assault; assault with significant bodily injury; assault on a police officer (felony); assault with a dangerous weapon; assault with intent to kill; assault with intent to commit any other offense; malicious disfigurement; strangulation
- Abuse and sexual abuse offenses: first-, second-, or third-degree sexual abuse; child sexual abuse, misdemeanor sexual abuse; misdemeanor sexual abuse of a child or minor; first-degree cruelty to children
- Theft offenses: Burglary; robbery; carjacking; armed carjacking
- Gang offenses: Gang recruitment, participation, or retention by the use or threatened use of force, coercion or intimidation
- Terrorism offenses: act of terrorism; manufacture or possession of a weapon of mass destruction; use, dissemination, or detonation of a weapon of mass destruction; mayhem
- Attempt, solicitation, or conspiracy to commit any of the above

Additional offenses:

- Intrafamily offense against an intimate partner, family member, or household member
- Parental kidnapping
- Criminal abuse or financial exploitation of vulnerable adult or elderly person
- Refusal or neglect of guardian to provide for child under 14
- Sexual offenses such as misdemeanor sexual abuse, incest, nonconsensual pornography, or child pornography
- Offense requiring sex offender registration or registration violations
- Stalking
- Driving under the influence/operating a vehicle while impaired

Full details about “dangerous crimes” and “crimes of violence” under DC law can be found at: code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/23-1331

TABLE B: LIMITS ON RECORD SEALING FOR CONVICTIONS

- First-degree murder
- First-degree murder while armed
- Second-degree murder
- Second-degree murder while armed
- First-degree sex abuse
- First-degree sex abuse while armed
- First degree child sex abuse
- Voluntary manslaughter while armed*
- Carjacking while armed*
- Assault with intent to kill while armed*
- Armed burglary I*

*If you were 24 years old or younger at the time of this offense, you may be eligible to have the conviction set aside under the Youth Rehabilitation Amendment Act.

TABLE C: OPTIONS FOR EXPUNGEMENT

Record sealing removes a record from public view, but it could still be accessed by certain government agencies or officials. Expungement goes a step further and, for the most part, makes it as if you were never convicted.

- If you were convicted of an offense that has since been decriminalized, legalized, or found unconstitutional, you may be eligible for expungement.
 - Legalized: an action that was previously against the law that is now allowed
 - Decriminalized: an action that is still against the law but that the government won't prosecute for
 - Deemed Unconstitutional: a law or action that is recognized as being against the Constitution and is made invalid
- You may also be eligible for expungement if you can prove you did not commit the crime for which you were accused or that no crime occurred, and you were not convicted of that crime

Legal Aid DC may be able to help you file a motion to have your record sealed. For more information, visit LegalAidDC.org/help or call 202-628-1161