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New Jersey Adds Request for Expungement Kit to Online Catalogue of Materials for Self-represented Litigants

The Judiciary has added an expungement kit to the selection of materials available online for self-represented litigants, today announced Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts.

Under New Jersey law, certain types of criminal records and certain offenses committed by juveniles can be expunged. Because a criminal record may prevent an employer from wanting to hire an otherwise qualified applicant, the expungement kit may be a critical tool for obtaining a job.

"This kit may be the difference between a life of chronic unemployment and a life of gainful productivity," said Judge Grant. "I hope those who are eligible will seek an expungement, particularly if they have been unable to find work due to their criminal record."

The kit explains that an expungement is the removal and isolation of all records on file within any court, detention or correctional facility, law enforcement, criminal justice agency or juvenile justice agency concerning a person's apprehension, arrest, detention, trial or disposition of an offense within the criminal or juvenile justice system.

Those eligible for an expungement must prepare and file a Petition for Expungement in the Superior Court in the county where the arrest or prosecution took place. A judge will decide whether the person should be granted an Expungement Order.

Nancy Gramaglia, manager of litigant services for the Judiciary, said, "We encourage all of our litigants to work with an attorney if they can. However, some litigants feel that they cannot afford an attorney or, for some other reason, choose to come to court without an attorney. The materials in the expungement kit provide basic information about how to file a Petition for Expungement for those who want to pursue an expungement on their own."

The New Jersey Judiciary provides a number of kits with forms and instructions for self-represented litigants, such as a kit on how to sue for an amount of money up to \$15,000, how to sue in small claims court for an amount up to \$3,000, and how to ask the family court to change or enforce an order. The kits can be found in the self-help resource center at njcourts.com and are available at each county courthouse.

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