

## **HOW TO OBTAIN YOUR CONVICTION RECORD NEEDED TO PURSUE A CERTIFICATE OF REHABILITATION**

Contact the public agencies with whom you interacted during and after arrest, such as:

1. The arresting agency.
2. The Clerk of the Court where you were prosecuted, if applicable.
3. Illinois State Police ("ISP"), Bureau of Identification, 260 North Chicago Street, Joliet, IL 60432, 815/740-5160.
4. FBI, U. S. Department of Justice, 1000 Custer Hollow Road, Clarksburg, WV 26306, 304/625-3878.

FBI requests must be *written* and state specifically that you are entitled to a copy of your arrest records under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. §551, *et seq.* You must include your name, address, date and place of birth, and fingerprints. Additional information is available at <http://foia.fbi.gov/>.

### **IN COOK COUNTY:**

To obtain a copy of your Chicago Police Department "rap sheet," go to Chicago Police headquarters at 3510 S. Michigan between the hours of 8 and 12, Monday through Friday. Pay \$16, have your prints taken, and a couple days later go back to pick up the rap sheet.

### **BEST PRACTICE FOR COMPLETENESS:**

Contact as many agencies as possible to ensure the record is complete and accurate. The more times you have been arrested, the more work required to compile a complete record. A thorough background check is time-consuming but crucial. It allows cross-checking the public record for accuracy and reveals arrests that you may have forgotten.

**Once you can document your convictions, to proceed with pursuing a Certificate of Rehabilitation and referral to an attorney contact:**

Michael Sweig, JD  
Public Policy Liaison  
Safer Foundation  
312-454-3385  
[Michael.Sweig@Saferfoundation.org](mailto:Michael.Sweig@Saferfoundation.org)



## The Illinois Law for Certificates of Rehabilitation

### Effective January 1, 2010:

- The Circuit Court that entered a sentence of conviction, and no longer the Prisoner Review Board, now has exclusive jurisdiction to grant Certificates of Rehabilitation.
- The new law expands eligibility as to who may prove their rehabilitation and receive a **Certificate of Relief from Disabilities** (no waiting period for occupational licensing), and **Certificate of Good Conduct** (three-year waiting period for relief from general, non-licensing employment bars).
- Now even violent and non-probationable offenses may be eligible for relief.
- Now *the only eligibility limitations* are:
  - (1) more than two felonies,
  - (2) a Class X felony,
  - (3) any felony that resulted in “great bodily harm or permanent disability”
  - (4) conviction for aggravated DUI or aggravated domestic battery; and
  - (5) offenses that require post-release registration (sex offenses, offenses against children, rape, arson, etc).
- Employers have immunity from third-party claims if they have hired the holder of a Certificate of Relief or Certificate of Good Conduct.
- Before a person with a criminal record begins the licensing process, the Department of Professional Regulation now offers a *free of charge*, non-binding advisory opinion regarding whether his or her criminal offense will be a permanent obstacle to occupational licensing

**The Pro Bono Panel for Obtaining Certificates of Rehabilitation:** Safer Foundation is organizing a statewide group of attorneys and law school clinics who will be available *free of charge* to assess a potential certificate applicants’ eligibility for relief, and if eligible, these attorneys will represent certificate applicants in court *free of charge*.

For information or referrals, contact:  
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