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HOUSE BILL NO. 934

Offered January 13, 2016

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A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 19.2-392.1, 19.2-392.2, and 19.2-392.4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to expungement of police and court records; certain misdemeanors.

Patron—Carr

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 19.2-392.1, 19.2-392.2, and 19.2-392.4 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 19.2-392.1. Statement of policy.

The General Assembly finds that arrest records can be a hindrance to an innocent citizen's ability to obtain employment, an education and to obtain credit. It further finds that the police and court records of those of its citizens who have been absolutely pardoned for crimes for which they have been unjustly convicted, *or who have demonstrated their rehabilitation*, can also be a hindrance. This chapter is intended to protect such persons from the unwarranted damage which may occur as a result of being arrested and convicted.

§ 19.2-392.2. Expungement of police and court records.

A. If a person is charged with the commission of a crime or any offense defined in Title 18.2, and

1. Is acquitted, or

2. A nolle prosequi is taken or the charge is otherwise dismissed, including dismissal by accord and satisfaction pursuant to § 19.2-151, he may file a petition setting forth the relevant facts and requesting expungement of the police records and the court records relating to the charge.

B. Any person who has been convicted of a misdemeanor may file a petition setting forth the relevant facts and requesting expungement of police records and court records relating to the charge and conviction after at least 10 years have passed since the person was convicted of the offense that he seeks to have expunged. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to any person who has been convicted of (i) any criminal offense other than the conviction he seeks to have expunged; (ii) a violation of § 18.2-266, 29.1-738, or 46.2-341.24; (iii) any offense involving child abuse or neglect; (iv) any offense involving domestic violence for which a person is denied any firearm rights under 18 U.S.C. § 922(g); (v) any offense for which registration is required pursuant to § 9.1-902; or (vi) any offense in Chapter 4 (§ 18.2-30 et seq.) of Title 18.2. In order to qualify under this subsection, the petitioner shall have no pending charges; shall have no outstanding fines, costs, or restitution; and shall have completed all terms of sentencing and probation, including successful completion of any drug or alcohol treatment program, and be dependency free. The Department of State Police shall maintain a record of any expungement granted pursuant to this subsection. Any conviction that is expunged under this subsection shall be considered a prior conviction for purposes of prosecution of any subsequent offense for which such prior conviction statutorily enhances punishment.

C. If any person whose name or other identification has been used without his consent or authorization by another person who has been charged or arrested using such name or identification, he may file a petition with the court disposing of the charge for relief pursuant to this section. Such person shall not be required to pay any fees for the filing of a petition under this subsection. A petition filed under this subsection shall include one complete set of the petitioner's fingerprints obtained from a law-enforcement agency.

~~C. D.~~ D. The petition with a copy of the warrant or indictment if reasonably available shall be filed in the circuit court of the county or city in which the case was disposed of by ~~acquittal or being otherwise dismissed~~ and shall contain, except where not reasonably available, the date of arrest and the name of the arresting agency. Where this information is not reasonably available, the petition shall state the reason for such unavailability. The petition shall further state the specific criminal charge *or conviction* to be expunged, the date of final disposition of the charge *or conviction* as set forth in the petition, the petitioner's date of birth, and the full name used by the petitioner at the time of arrest.

~~D. E.~~ E. A copy of the petition shall be served on the attorney for the Commonwealth of the city or county in which the petition is filed. The attorney for the Commonwealth may file an objection or answer to the petition or may give written notice to the court that he does not object to the petition within 21 days after it is served on him.

~~E. F.~~ F. The petitioner shall obtain from a law-enforcement agency one complete set of the petitioner's

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59 fingerprints and shall provide that agency with a copy of the petition for expungement. The
60 law-enforcement agency shall submit the set of fingerprints to the Central Criminal Records Exchange
61 (CCRE) with a copy of the petition for expungement attached. The CCRE shall forward under seal to
62 the court a copy of the petitioner's criminal history, a copy of the source documents that resulted in the
63 CCRE entry that the petitioner wishes to expunge, and the set of fingerprints. Upon completion of the
64 hearing, the court shall return the fingerprint card to the petitioner. If no hearing was conducted, upon
65 the entry of an order of expungement or an order denying the petition for expungement, the court shall
66 cause the fingerprint card to be destroyed unless, within 30 days of the date of the entry of the order,
67 the petitioner requests the return of the fingerprint card in person from the clerk of the court or provides
68 the clerk of the court a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of the fingerprint card.

69 ~~F. G.~~ After receiving the criminal history record information from the CCRE, the court shall conduct
70 a hearing on the petition. If the court finds that the continued existence and possible dissemination of
71 information relating to the arrest, *charge*, or *conviction* of the petitioner causes or may cause
72 circumstances which constitute a manifest injustice to the petitioner, it shall enter an order requiring the
73 expungement of the police and court records, including electronic records, relating to the *arrest*, *charge*,
74 or *conviction*. Otherwise, it shall deny the petition. However, if the petitioner has no prior criminal
75 record and the arrest, *charge*, or *conviction* was for a misdemeanor violation, the petitioner shall be
76 entitled, in the absence of good cause shown to the contrary by the Commonwealth, to expungement of
77 the police and court records relating to the *arrest*, *charge*, or *conviction*, and the court shall enter an
78 order of expungement. If the attorney for the Commonwealth of the county or city in which the petition
79 is filed (i) gives written notice to the court pursuant to subsection ~~D~~ *E* that he does not object to the
80 petition and (ii) when the charge to be expunged is a felony, stipulates in such written notice that the
81 continued existence and possible dissemination of information relating to the arrest of the petitioner
82 causes or may cause circumstances which constitute a manifest injustice to the petitioner, the court may
83 enter an order of expungement without conducting a hearing.

84 ~~G. H.~~ The Commonwealth shall be made party defendant to the proceeding. Any party aggrieved by
85 the decision of the court may appeal, as provided by law in civil cases.

86 ~~H. I.~~ Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, when the charge is dismissed because the
87 court finds that the person arrested or charged is not the person named in the summons, warrant,
88 indictment or presentment, the court dismissing the charge shall, upon motion of the person improperly
89 arrested or charged, enter an order requiring expungement of the police and court records relating to the
90 charge. Such order shall contain a statement that the dismissal and expungement are ordered pursuant to
91 this subsection and shall be accompanied by the complete set of the petitioner's fingerprints filed with
92 his petition. Upon the entry of such order, it shall be treated as provided in subsection ~~K~~ *L*.

93 ~~I. J.~~ Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, when a person has been granted an absolute
94 pardon for the commission of a crime that he did not commit, he may file in the circuit court of the
95 county or city in which the conviction occurred a petition setting forth the relevant facts and requesting
96 expungement of the police records and the court records relating to the charge and conviction, and the
97 court shall enter an order requiring expungement of the police and court records relating to the charge
98 and conviction. Such order shall contain a statement that the expungement is ordered pursuant to this
99 subsection. Upon the entry of such order, it shall be treated as provided in subsection ~~K~~ *L*.

100 ~~J. K.~~ Upon receiving a copy of a writ vacating a conviction pursuant to § 19.2-327.5 or 19.2-327.13,
101 the court shall enter an order requiring expungement of the police and court records relating to the
102 charge and conviction. Such order shall contain a statement that the expungement is ordered pursuant to
103 this subsection. Upon the entry of the order, it shall be treated as provided in subsection ~~K~~ *L*.

104 ~~K. L.~~ Upon the entry of an order of expungement, the clerk of the court shall cause a copy of such
105 order to be forwarded to the Department of State Police, which shall, pursuant to rules and regulations
106 adopted pursuant to § 9.1-134, direct the manner by which the appropriate expungement or removal of
107 such records shall be effected.

108 ~~L. M.~~ Costs shall be as provided by § 17.1-275, but shall not be recoverable against the
109 Commonwealth.

110 ~~M. N.~~ Any order entered where (i) the court or parties failed to strictly comply with the procedures
111 set forth in this section or (ii) the court enters an order of expungement contrary to law, shall be
112 voidable upon motion and notice made within three years of the entry of such order.

113 **§ 19.2-392.4. Prohibited practices by employers, educational institutions, agencies, etc., of state**
114 **and local governments.**

115 A. An employer or educational institution shall not, in any application, interview, or otherwise,
116 require an applicant for employment or admission to disclose information concerning any arrest ~~or~~,
117 criminal charge, or *conviction* against him that has been expunged. An applicant need not, in answer to
118 any question concerning any arrest ~~or~~, criminal charge that has not resulted in a conviction, or
119 *conviction* include a reference to or information concerning arrests ~~or~~, charges, or *convictions* that have
120 been expunged.

121 B. Agencies, officials, and employees of the state and local governments shall not, in any
122 application, interview, or otherwise, require an applicant for a license, permit, registration, or
123 governmental service to disclose information concerning any arrest ~~or~~, criminal charge against him, *or*
124 *conviction* that has been expunged. An applicant need not, in answer to any question concerning any
125 arrest ~~or~~, criminal charge that has not resulted in a conviction, *or conviction*, include a reference to or
126 information concerning *arrests*, charges, *or convictions* that have been expunged. Such an application
127 may not be denied solely because of the applicant's refusal to disclose information concerning any arrest
128 ~~or~~, criminal charge against him, *or conviction* that has been expunged.

129 C. A person who willfully violates this section is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor for each violation.