



BCPO News

LaChia L. Bradshaw, Prosecutor
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Free Expungement Clinic and Job Fair Offered This Friday in Burlington County

Those who are seeking to clear a criminal conviction from their record can receive free legal assistance this Friday through an expungement clinic being offered at two locations in Burlington County.

The event, which will also feature a job fair and complimentary food, will be held from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Tabernacle Baptist Church, 150 East Second Street in Burlington City, and Friendship A.M.E. Church, 711 Lakehurst Road in the Browns Mills section of Pemberton Township.

“A criminal record can prevent people from finding better jobs and moving forward with their goals,” Burlington County Prosecutor LaChia L. Bradshaw said. “Not everyone is aware that in New Jersey, certain crimes can be erased from a criminal history through a process known as expungement. We strongly encourage anyone who needs this service to come out and see us on October 28.”

No appointment is needed. Those interested in pursuing an expungement should come to one of the two locations, where they will be paired with an attorney who will determine whether they are statutorily eligible. If they are, the attorney will initiate the process by filing a petition on the state judiciary’s electronic platform.

Once a petition is filed, it will be reviewed by the county prosecutor’s office and the court system. If the expungement is granted, courts and law enforcement agencies throughout the state are served with an order directing them to remove the person’s criminal history from their records.

“Research has shown that expungements are a win-win,” said Stephen Hunter, Recovery Court director for the state Office of the Public Defender. “People who receive expungements are less likely to commit new crimes and their wages increase, on average, by 25 percent.”

Those seeking employment can attend the job fair regardless of whether an expungement is being sought. Employers who have committed to the event thus far include Amazon, Altus/St. Mary’s, America Works, Burlington County Workforce Development Board, Occupational Training Center, Office of Transitional Workforce Services, Pemberton Township Public Works Department and UPS.

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“Many people who are eligible for expungements do not apply because they cannot afford to hire an attorney to file the application,” said Burlington County First Assistant Prosecutor Brenda Román Manerí, who is president of the Burlington County Bar Association. “Which is why we are emphasizing that this service is being provided entirely free of charge.”

Román Manerí also encouraged Spanish-speaking individuals to attend, noting that bilingual personnel will be on hand to assist them with the process.

The clinic is sponsored by the Prosecutor’s Office, New Jersey Office of the Public Defender - Burlington County, Burlington County Bar Association, Burlington County Department of Human Services, Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey, Garden State Bar Association, City of Burlington Police Department, Tabernacle Baptist Church of Burlington NJ, Friendship A.M.E. Church, Trulieve, From the Block to the Boardroom, The Links, Incorporated - Rancocas Valley Chapter, Altus, NJ, LLC and Garden State Green.

“In the search to fulfill our humanistic purpose, we must embrace activism that speaks with power to the people ‘for such a time as this,’” said the Rev. Samuel L. Hayes Jr. of Friendship A.M.E. Church in Browns Mills. “We applaud the leadership in the Burlington County justice system as they endeavor to labor in the fields of forgiveness and grace, exalting the downtrodden in society.”

The Rev. Dr. Cory L. Jones, of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Burlington City, said his congregation supports the expungement clinic because they view it as an extension of God’s grace.

“Our communities are filled with people forced to suffer the perpetual repercussions of actions committed in their youth or mistakes made in their adult lives,” said “Expungements provide forgiveness, grace and a second chance to those who just want the opportunity to excel in life.”

For more information, visit <https://burlcobar.org/dayofservice.php>

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