

How to Petition the Court to Seal Your Eviction Records

Step One: Compile Your List of Cases

- You can search the court record databases for free at the courthouse. Alternatively, you can search online in the court records for a fee.
- First, search for your name in this court search engine:
<https://www.lacourt.org/paonlineservices/civilindex/cipublicmain.aspx>
 - If you make an account on the court website, it will cost \$1 per search for your first ten searches each month
 - This will give you a list of cases (not just UDs) under your name. Note any that might be evictions. (More recent cases will have UD in the middle of the case name; older cases won't.)
- To learn more about what happened in each of those cases, you can use the Case Summary search engine here: <https://www.lacourt.org/casesummary/ui/>
 - It is free to search, and will give you a list of what happened in the case, and a list of documents.
 - It does cost money to download the documents.
- At the end of this search process, you should have a list of one or more eviction cases. Note down: 1) their case numbers and 2) case names, and (3) the courthouse and (4) department number where the case was heard. (5) Also write down if there is a lawyer listed for the landlord, and (6) any contact information listed for the landlord or their lawyer.

You will need to follow the rest of these steps for each of the cases on your list.

Step Two: Ask Each Landlord to Agree to Sealing the Case

- Reach out to landlord(s) and their lawyer (if they had one in the case) to request their cooperation in getting the case sealed.
- If you don't have landlord's agreement to seal the case, you can still ask the court to do it anyway.
- You can look up contact information for landlord's lawyer here: [Attorney Search - The State Bar of California](#)

Step Three: File a Motion to Seal for Each Case

- Where: File each motion in the courthouse and department where the case was decided.
 - For each motion, call the department and ask for a motion date (the date when your motion will be heard).
 - Phone numbers for the departments: [Judicial Officers - Contacts and Locations - LA Court](#)
- When:

- The motion date will need to be 16 court days (plus 5 additional days if you serve by mail) after you serve notice on the other side (the landlord or their lawyer, if they had one in the case).
- This means that in requesting a motion date, make sure you have enough time to write the motion and serve it on the other side, plus 16 or 21 court days. Court days do not include weekends and judicial holidays.
 - Court date calculator [Court Date Calculator - Online Services - LA Court](#)
- What to file
 - Fee Waiver forms
 - Court form FW-001 - Request to Waive Court Fees
 - Court form FW-003 - Order on Court Fee Waiver
 - Motion packet, based on the sample
 - Notice section
 - Memorandum of Points and Authorities
 - Declaration
 - Describe how the unsealed eviction record is affecting your ability to access housing
 - If you have any examples of landlords telling you they are rejecting you because of an eviction on your record, include this info
 - It's also good to include info about how hard you've been looking for housing - for example, how many prospective landlords you've talked to, or apartments you've applied to
 - If you are unhoused, or otherwise really struggling to access housing, include information about what that has been like, if you feel comfortable sharing it. The goal is for the judge to understand how important it is for the case to be sealed.
 - Proof of Service - court form POS-040

Step Five: Serve the Motion

- You will need to serve a copy of the motion on landlord or their lawyer.
 - However, it can't be you personally - it needs to be someone who was not a party to the case (meaning, they were not one of the people suing or being sued).
- The papers can be served by handing them to the landlord/their lawyer, or by mail
 - Include an unsigned proof of service form when you serve the papers
 - How to find contact info for landlord's lawyer: [Attorney Search - The State Bar of California](#)

Step Six: File the Papers

- File the above documents at courthouse
 - In the version of the papers you file, the proof of service form should be signed by the person who served the documents

Step Seven: Attend the Hearing

- Show up! In person is best, but you can also attend online.
 - How to sign up for a remote hearing: [LACC - Welcome Page \(lacourt.org\)](http://lacourt.org)

Step Eight: Receive the Ruling

- The judge will either tell you their ruling at the hearing, or say they are “taking it under submission,” which means they need to think about it and will mail you their ruling.