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S.294

Introduced by Senators Sears, Baruth, Benning and White

Referred to Committee on Judiciary

Date: January 14, 2020

Subject: Criminal procedures; expungement and sealing of criminal history  
records

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to expand  
eligibility for expungement or sealing of a criminal history record to most  
criminal offenses and several civil offenses.

An act relating to expanding access to expungement and sealing of criminal  
history records

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

~~Sec. 1, 13 V.S.A. § 5301 is amended to read:~~

§ 5301. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

\* \* \*

(7) "Listed crime" means any of the following offenses:

(A) stalking as defined in section 1062 of this title;

(B) aggravated stalking as defined in subdivision 1063(a)(3) or (4)(b)

~~of this title,~~

- 1           (C) domestic assault as defined in section 1042 of this title;
- 2           (D) first degree aggravated domestic assault as defined in section  
3 1043 of this title;
- 4           (E) second degree aggravated domestic assault as defined in section  
5 1044 of this title;
- 6           (F) sexual assault as defined in section 3252 of this title or its  
7 predecessor as it was defined in section 3201 or 3202 of this title;
- 8           (G) aggravated sexual assault as defined in section 3253 of this title;
- 9           (H) lewd or lascivious conduct as defined in section 2601 of this  
10 title;
- 11          (I) lewd or lascivious conduct with a child as defined in section 2602  
12 of this title;
- 13          (J) murder as defined in section 2301 of this title;
- 14          (K) aggravated murder as defined in section 2311 of this title;
- 15          (L) manslaughter as defined in section 2304 of this title;
- 16          (M) aggravated assault as defined in section 1024 of this title;
- 17          (N) assault and robbery with a dangerous weapon as defined in  
18 subsection 608(b) of this title;
- 19          (O) arson causing death as defined in section 501 of this title;
- 20          (P) assault and robbery causing bodily injury as defined in subsection  
21 608(c) of this title;

- 1           (Q) maiming as defined in section 2701 of this title;
- 2           (R) kidnapping as defined in section 2405 of this title or its  
3 predecessor as it was defined in section 2401 of this title;
- 4           (S) unlawful restraint in the second degree as defined in section 2406  
5 of this title;
- 6           (T) unlawful restraint in the first degree as defined in section 2407 of  
7 this title;
- 8           (U) recklessly endangering another person as defined in section 1025  
9 of this title;
- 10          (V) violation of abuse prevention order as defined in section 1030 of  
11 this title, excluding violation of an abuse prevention order issued pursuant to  
12 15 V.S.A. § 1104 (emergency relief) or 33 V.S.A. § 6936 (emergency relief);
- 13          (W) operating vehicle under the influence of alcohol or other  
14 substance with either death or serious bodily injury resulting as defined in  
15 23 V.S.A. § 1210(f) and (g);
- 16          (X) ~~careless or negligent~~ grossly negligent operation resulting in  
17 serious bodily injury or death as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 1091(b);
- 18          (Y) leaving the scene of an accident with serious bodily injury or  
19 death as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 1128(b) or (c);
- 20          (Z) burglary into an occupied dwelling as defined in subsection  
21 ~~1201(c) of this title,~~

1           (AA) ~~the attempt to commit any of the offenses listed in this section;~~

2           (BB) abuse (section 1376 of this title), abuse by restraint (section  
3 1377 of this title), neglect (section 1378 of this title), sexual abuse (section  
4 1379 of this title), financial exploitation (section 1380 of this title), and  
5 exploitation of services (section 1381 of this title);

6           (CC) aggravated sexual assault of a child in violation of section  
7 3253a of this title;

8           (DD) human trafficking in violation of section 2652 of this title; and

9           (EE) aggravated human trafficking in violation of section 2653 of  
10 this title.

11 Sec. 2. 13 V.S.A. § 7601 is amended to read:

12 § 7601. DEFINITIONS

13       As used in this chapter:

14           (1) “Court” means the Criminal Division of the Superior Court.

15           (2) “Criminal history record” means all information documenting an  
16 individual’s contact with the criminal justice system, including data regarding  
17 identification, arrest or citation, arraignment, judicial disposition, custody, and  
18 supervision.

19           (3) “Predicate offense” means a criminal offense that can be used to  
20 enhance a sentence levied for a later conviction, and includes operating a  
21 ~~vehicle under the influence of alcohol or other substance in violation of~~

1 ~~S.A. § 1201, domestic assault in violation of section 1042 of this title, and~~  
2 starting in violation of section 1062 of this title. “Predicate offense” shall not  
3 include misdemeanor possession of marijuana, a disorderly conduct offense  
4 under section 1026 of this title, or possession of a controlled substance in  
5 violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a), 4231(a), 4232(a), 4233(a), 4234(a),  
6 4234a(a), 4234b(a), 4235(b), or 4235a(a).

7 (4) “Qualifying crime” means: any criminal offense that is not an  
8 offense listed in subdivision 5301(7) of this title or a violation of 18 V.S.A.  
9 § 4231(c), 4233(c), 4233a(b), 4234a(c), or 4230(c), or any offense for which a  
10 person has been granted an unconditional pardon from the Governor.

11 (A) ~~a misdemeanor offense that is not:~~

12 (i) ~~a listed crime as defined in subdivision 5301(7) of this title;~~

13 (ii) ~~an offense involving sexual exploitation of children in~~  
14 ~~violation of chapter 64 of this title;~~

15 (iii) ~~an offense involving violation of a protection order in~~  
16 ~~violation of section 1030 of this title;~~

17 (iv) ~~prostitution as defined in section 2632 of this title, or~~  
18 ~~prohibited conduct under section 2601a of this title; or~~

19 (v) ~~a predicate offense;~~

20 (B) ~~a violation of subsection 3701(a) of this title related to criminal~~

21 ~~mischief;~~

- 1 ~~(C) a violation of section 2501 of this title related to grand larceny;~~
- 2 ~~(D) a violation of section 1201 of this title related to burglary,~~  
3 ~~excluding any burglary into an occupied dwelling, as defined in subdivision~~  
4 ~~1201(b)(2) of this title;~~
- 5 ~~(E) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4223 related to fraud or deceit;~~
- 6 ~~(F) a violation of section 1802 of this title related to uttering a forged~~  
7 ~~or counterfeited instrument;~~
- 8 ~~(G) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a) related to possession of~~  
9 ~~marijuana;~~
- 10 ~~(H) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4231(a) related to possession of~~  
11 ~~cocaine;~~
- 12 ~~(I) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4232(a) related to possession of LSD;~~
- 13 ~~(J) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4233(a) related to possession of heroin;~~
- 14 ~~(K) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234(a) related to possession of~~  
15 ~~depressant, stimulant, and narcotic drugs;~~
- 16 ~~(L) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234a(a) related to possession of~~  
17 ~~methamphetamine;~~
- 18 ~~(M) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234b(a) related to possession of~~  
19 ~~ephedrine and pseudoephedrine;~~
- 20 ~~(N) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4235(b) related to possession of~~  
21 ~~hallucinogenic drugs;~~

1 ~~(O) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4235a(a) related to possession of~~  
2 ~~eccstasy; or~~

3 ~~(P) any offense for which a person has been granted an unconditional~~  
4 ~~pardon from the Governor.~~

5 Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 7602 is amended to read:

6 § 7602. EXPUNGEMENT AND SEALING OF RECORD,  
7 POSTCONVICTION; PROCEDURE

8 (a)(1) A person may file a petition with the court requesting expungement  
9 or sealing of the criminal history record related to the conviction if:

10 (A) the person was convicted of a qualifying crime or qualifying  
11 crimes arising out of the same incident or occurrence;

12 (B) the person was convicted of an offense for which the underlying  
13 conduct is no longer prohibited by law or designated as a criminal offense;

14 (C) pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (g) of this  
15 section, the person was convicted of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a) related  
16 to operating under the influence of alcohol or other substance, excluding a  
17 violation of that section resulting in serious bodily injury or death to any  
18 person other than the operator, or related to operating a school bus with a  
19 blood alcohol concentration of 0.02 or more or operating a commercial vehicle  
20 with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.04 or more; or

21 (D) pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (h) of this  
22 ~~section, the person was convicted under 1201(c)(3)(A) of a violation of~~

1 ~~division 1201(a) of this title related to burglary when the person was 25 years of~~  
2 age or younger, and the person did not carry a dangerous or deadly weapon  
3 during commission of the offense.

4 (2) The State's Attorney or Attorney General shall be the respondent in  
5 the matter.

6 (3) The court shall grant the petition without hearing if the petitioner  
7 and the respondent stipulate to the granting of the petition. The respondent  
8 shall file the stipulation with the court, and the court shall issue the petitioner  
9 an order of expungement and provide notice of the order in accordance with  
10 this section.

11 (4) This section shall not apply to an individual licensed as a  
12 commercial driver pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39 seeking to seal or expunge  
13 a record of a conviction for a felony offense committed in a motor vehicle as  
14 defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4.

15 (b) Qualifying nonpredicate misdemeanors and possession of a controlled  
16 substance offenses. For petitions filed to expunge or seal a criminal history  
17 record of a nonpredicate misdemeanor offense or a violation of 18 V.S.A.  
18 § 4230(a), 4231(a), 4232(a), 4233(a), 4234(a), 4234a(a), 4234b(a), 4235(b), or  
19 4235a(a).



1 ~~(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history~~  
2 record be expunged pursuant to section 7606 of this title if the following  
3 conditions are met:

4 (A) At least five years have elapsed since:

5 (i) the date on which the person successfully completed the terms  
6 and conditions of the sentence for the conviction, or if the person has  
7 successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of  
8 probation that commenced at least five years previously; or

9 (ii) if the person committed a subsequent offense, the date on  
10 which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the  
11 conviction of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence after the  
12 person was convicted for the qualifying crime, whichever is later.

13 (B) ~~The person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a~~  
14 ~~new incident or occurrence since the person was convicted for the qualifying~~  
15 ~~crime.~~ [Repealed.]

16 (C) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.

17 (D) The court finds that expungement of the criminal history record  
18 serves the interests of justice.

19 (2) The court shall grant the petition and order that all or part of the  
20 ~~criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the~~

1 ~~conditions of subdivisions (1)(A), (B), and (C) of this subsection are met and~~

2 the court finds that:

3 (A) sealing the criminal history record better serves the interests of  
4 justice than expungement; and

5 (B) the person committed the qualifying crime after reaching 19  
6 years of age.

7 (3) If the respondent stipulates to a petition filed prior to, on, or after the  
8 date the offense is eligible for expungement or sealing as set forth in this  
9 subsection, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

10 (c) Qualifying predicate misdemeanors. For petitions filed to expunge or  
11 seal a criminal history record of a qualifying predicate misdemeanor offense:

12 (1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history  
13 record be ~~expunged~~ sealed pursuant to section ~~7606~~ 7607 of this title if the  
14 following conditions are met:

15 (A) At least ~~10~~ five years have elapsed since:

16 (i) the date on which the person ~~successfully~~ completed the terms  
17 and conditions of the sentence for the conviction; or

18 (ii) if the person committed a subsequent offense, the date on  
19 which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the  
20 conviction of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence after the

21 person was convicted for the qualifying crime, whichever is later.

1 ~~(B) The person has not been convicted of a felony arising out of a~~  
2 ~~new incident or occurrence in the last seven years. [Repealed.]~~

3 ~~(C) The person has not been convicted of a misdemeanor during the~~  
4 ~~past five years. [Repealed.]~~

5 ~~(D) Any restitution ordered by the court for any crime of which the~~  
6 ~~person has been convicted has been paid in full.~~

7 ~~(E) After considering the particular nature of any subsequent offense,~~  
8 ~~the court finds that expungement of the criminal history record for the~~  
9 ~~qualifying crime serves the interests of justice.~~

10 ~~(2) The court shall grant the petition and order that all or part of the~~  
11 ~~criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the~~  
12 ~~conditions of subdivisions (1)(A), (B), (C), and (D) of this subsection are met~~  
13 ~~and the court finds that:~~

14 ~~(A) sealing the criminal history record better serves the interests of~~  
15 ~~justice than expungement; and~~

16 ~~(B) the person committed the qualifying crime after reaching 19 years~~  
17 ~~of age. A criminal history record sealed pursuant to this subsection (c) shall be~~  
18 ~~eligible for expungement pursuant to section 7606 of this title five years after~~  
19 ~~the date on which sealing order is issued if the person does not commit any~~  
20 ~~criminal offense subsequent to the sealed offense. If the person commits a~~  
21 ~~criminal offense subsequent to the sealed offense, the sealed record shall be~~

1 ~~eligible for expungement five years after the date on which the person~~  
2 ~~completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the subsequent~~  
3 ~~conviction.~~

4 \* \* \*

5 (g) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(C) of this section, only  
6 petitions to seal may be considered or granted by the court. This subsection  
7 shall not apply to an individual licensed as a commercial driver pursuant to  
8 23 V.S.A. chapter 39. Unless the court finds that sealing would not be in the  
9 interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal  
10 history record be sealed in accordance with section 7607 of this title if the  
11 following conditions are met:

12 (1) At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person  
13 ~~successfully~~ completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the  
14 conviction, or if the person has ~~successfully~~ completed the terms and  
15 conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least 10  
16 years previously.

17 (2) At the time of the filing of the petition:

18 (A) the person has only one conviction of a violation of 23 V.S.A.  
19 ~~§ 1201, which shall be construed in accordance with 23 V.S.A. § 1211, and~~

1 ~~(B) the person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new~~  
2 incident or occurrence since the person was convicted of a violation of  
3 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a).

4 (3) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.

5 (4) The court finds that sealing of the criminal history record serves the  
6 interests of justice.

7 (h) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(D) of this section,  
8 unless the court finds that expungement or sealing would not be in the interests  
9 of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history  
10 record be expunged or sealed in accordance with section 7606 or 7607 of this  
11 title if the following conditions are met:

12 (1) At least 15 years have elapsed since the date on which the person  
13 successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the  
14 conviction, or the person has successfully completed the terms and conditions  
15 of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least 15 years  
16 previously.

17 (2) The person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new  
18 incident or occurrence since the person was convicted of a violation of  
19 subdivision 1201(c)(3)(A) of this title.

20 ~~(3) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.~~

1 ~~(4) The court finds that expungement or sealing of the criminal history~~  
2 record serves the interests of justice.

3 (i) Qualifying felony property offenses and selling, dispensing, or  
4 transporting regulated substances offenses. For petitions filed to expunge or  
5 seal a criminal history record of a nonpredicate felony theft, fraud, or property  
6 damage offense or a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(b), 4231(b), 4232(b),  
7 4233(b), 4234(b), 4234a(c), 4234b(b), 4235(c), or 4235a(b):

8 (1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history  
9 record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the following  
10 conditions are met:

11 (A) At least 10 years have elapsed since:

12 (i) the date on which the person completed the terms and  
13 conditions of the sentence for the conviction; or

14 (ii) if the person committed a subsequent offense, the date on  
15 which the person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the  
16 conviction of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence after the  
17 person was convicted for the qualifying crime, whichever is later.

18 (B) Any restitution ordered by the court for any crime of which the  
19 person has been convicted has been paid in full.

1 ~~(C) After considering the particular nature of any subsequent offense,~~  
2 the court finds that expungement of the criminal history record for the  
3 qualifying crime serves the interests of justice.

4 (2) A criminal history record sealed pursuant to this subsection (i) shall  
5 be eligible for expungement pursuant to section 7606 of this title 10 years after  
6 the date on which sealing order is issued if the person does not commit any  
7 criminal offense subsequent to the sealed offense. If the person commits a  
8 criminal offense subsequent to the sealed offense, the sealed record shall be  
9 eligible for expungement 10 years after the date on which the person  
10 completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the subsequent  
11 conviction.

12 (3) If the respondent stipulates to a petition filed prior to, on, or after the  
13 date the offense is eligible for sealing as provided in this subsection, the court  
14 may grant the petition to seal without a hearing.

15 (j) Qualifying felonies. For petitions filed to expunge or seal a criminal  
16 history record of any other qualifying felony offense not specified in  
17 subsection (f), (h), or (i) of this section:

18 (1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history  
19 record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the following  
20 conditions are met.

1 ~~(A) At least 15 years have elapsed since the date on which the person~~  
2 ~~completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction or, if the~~  
3 ~~person committed a subsequent offense, 10 years from the date on which the~~  
4 ~~person completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction~~  
5 ~~of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence after the person was~~  
6 ~~convicted for the qualifying crime, whichever is later.~~

7 ~~(B) Any restitution ordered by the court for any crime of which the~~  
8 ~~person has been convicted has been paid in full.~~

9 ~~(C) After considering the particular nature of any subsequent offense,~~  
10 ~~the court finds that expungement of the criminal history record for the~~  
11 ~~qualifying crime serves the interests of justice.~~

12 ~~(2) A criminal history record sealed pursuant to this subsection (j) shall~~  
13 ~~not be eligible for expungement pursuant to section 7606 of this title.~~

14 Sec. 4. 33 V.S.A. § 5119 is amended to read:

15 § 5119. SEALING OF RECORDS

16 \* \* \*

17 (g) On application of a person who has pleaded guilty to or has been  
18 convicted of the commission of a crime under the laws of this State which the  
19 person committed prior to attaining the age of ~~21~~ 22, or on the motion of the  
20 ~~court having jurisdiction over such a person, after notice to all parties of record~~



1 and hearing, the court shall order the sealing of all files and records related to  
2 the proceeding if it finds:

- 3 (1) two years have elapsed since the final discharge of the person;
- 4 (2) the person has not been convicted of a listed crime as defined in  
5 13 V.S.A. § 5301 or adjudicated delinquent for such an offense after the initial  
6 conviction, and no new proceeding is pending seeking such conviction or  
7 adjudication; and
- 8 (3) the person's rehabilitation has been attained to the satisfaction of the  
9 court.

10 \* \* \*

11 Sec. 5. 23 V.S.A. § 2303 is added to read:

12 § 2303. EXPUNGEMENT OF VIOLATION RECORDS

13 (a) Automatic expungement. The Judicial Bureau shall automatically enter  
14 an expungement order for convictions or adjudications of the following  
15 violations on the two-year anniversary of the conviction or adjudication:

- 16 (1) 7 V.S.A. § 656(a)(2) (underage alcohol);
- 17 (2) 18 V.S.A. § 4230b(a) (underage marijuana);
- 18 (3) section 301 of this title (operating an unregistered vehicle);
- 19 (4) subsection 307(a) of this title (failing to possess registration);
- 20 (5) section 611 of this title (failing to possess license); and
- 21 (6) subsection 676(a) of this title (operating after suspension).

(b) Effect of expungement

(1) Upon entry of an expungement order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the individual whose record is expunged shall be treated in all respects as if he or she had never been convicted or adjudicated of the violation. This includes the expungement of any points accumulated pursuant to chapter 25 of this title.

(2) The Judicial Bureau shall report the expungement to the Department of Motor Vehicles within 14 days.

(3) The Judicial Bureau shall keep a special index of cases that have been expunged together with the expungement order. The index shall list only the name of the individual convicted or adjudicated of the violation, his or her date of birth, the docket number, and the violation that was the subject of the expungement. All other court documents and records that are subject to an expungement order, whether held by the Judicial Bureau or the Department of Motor Vehicles, shall be destroyed.

(4) Upon receiving an inquiry from any person regarding an expunged record, the Judicial Bureau and Department of Motor Vehicles shall respond that "NO RECORD EXISTS."

(c) Policies for implementation. The Court Administrator shall establish policies for implementing this section.

1 ~~Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

2 ~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.~~

*Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. § 5301 is amended to read:*

*§ 5301. DEFINITIONS*

*As used in this chapter:*

*\* \* \**

*(7) "Listed crime" means any of the following offenses:*

*(A) stalking as defined in section 1062 of this title;*

*(B) aggravated stalking as defined in subdivision 1063(a)(3) ~~or~~  
(4)(b) of this title;*

*(C) domestic assault as defined in section 1042 of this title;*

*(D) first degree aggravated domestic assault as defined in section  
1043 of this title;*

*(E) second degree aggravated domestic assault as defined in section  
1044 of this title;*

*(F) sexual assault as defined in section 3252 of this title or its  
predecessor as it was defined in section 3201 or 3202 of this title;*

*(G) aggravated sexual assault as defined in section 3253 of this title;*

*(H) lewd or lascivious conduct as defined in section 2601 of this  
title;*

*(I) lewd or lascivious conduct with a child as defined in section 2602  
of this title;*

*(J) murder as defined in section 2301 of this title;*

*(K) aggravated murder as defined in section 2311 of this title;*

*(L) manslaughter as defined in section 2304 of this title;*

*(M) aggravated assault as defined in section 1024 of this title;*

*(N) assault and robbery with a dangerous weapon as defined in  
subsection 608(b) of this title;*

*(O) arson causing death as defined in section 501 of this title;*

*(P) assault and robbery causing bodily injury as defined in  
subsection 608(c) of this title;*

*(Q) maiming as defined in section 2701 of this title;*

*(R) kidnapping as defined in section 2405 of this title or its predecessor as it was defined in section 2401 of this title;*

*(S) unlawful restraint in the second degree as defined in section 2406 of this title;*

*(T) unlawful restraint in the first degree as defined in section 2407 of this title;*

*(U) recklessly endangering another person as defined in section 1025 of this title;*

*(V) violation of abuse prevention order as defined in section 1030 of this title, excluding violation of an abuse prevention order issued pursuant to 15 V.S.A. § 1104 (emergency relief) or 33 V.S.A. § 6936 (emergency relief);*

*(W) operating vehicle under the influence of alcohol or other substance with either death or serious bodily injury resulting as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 1210(f) and (g);*

*(X) ~~careless~~ or negligent or grossly negligent operation resulting in serious bodily injury or death as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 1091(b);*

*(Y) leaving the scene of an accident with serious bodily injury or death as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 1128(b) or (c);*

*(Z) burglary into an occupied dwelling as defined in subsection 1201(c) of this title;*

*(AA) the attempt to commit any of the offenses listed in this section;*

*(BB) abuse (section 1376 of this title), abuse by restraint (section 1377 of this title), neglect (section 1378 of this title), sexual abuse (section 1379 of this title), financial exploitation (section 1380 of this title), and exploitation of services (section 1381 of this title);*

*(CC) aggravated sexual assault of a child in violation of section 3253a of this title;*

*(DD) human trafficking in violation of section 2652 of this title; and*

*(EE) aggravated human trafficking in violation of section 2653 of this title.*

*Sec. 2. 13 V.S.A. § 7601 is amended to read:*

*§ 7601. DEFINITIONS*

*As used in this chapter:*

(1) *“Court” means the Criminal Division of the Superior Court.*

(2) *“Criminal history record” means all information documenting an individual’s contact with the criminal justice system, including data regarding identification, arrest or citation, arraignment, judicial disposition, custody, and supervision.*

(3) *“Predicate offense” means a criminal offense that can be used to enhance a sentence levied for a later conviction, and includes operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or other substance in violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201, domestic assault in violation of section 1042 of this title, and stalking in violation of section 1062 of this title. “Predicate offense” shall not include misdemeanor possession of marijuana, a disorderly conduct offense under section 1026 of this title, or possession of a controlled substance in violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a), 4231(a), 4232(a), 4233(a), 4234(a), 4234a(a), 4234b(a), 4235(b), or 4235a(a).*

(4) *“Qualifying crime” means: any criminal offense that is not an offense listed in subdivision 5301(7) of this title or a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4231(c), 4233(c), 4233a(b), 4234a(c), or 4230(c), or any offense for which a person has been granted an unconditional pardon from the Governor.*

*(A) a misdemeanor offense that is not:*

*(i) a listed crime as defined in subdivision 5301(7) of this title;*

*(ii) an offense involving sexual exploitation of children in violation of chapter 64 of this title;*

*(iii) an offense involving violation of a protection order in violation of section 1030 of this title;*

*(iv) prostitution as defined in section 2632 of this title, or prohibited conduct under section 2601a of this title; or*

*(v) a predicate offense;*

*(B) a violation of subsection 3701(a) of this title related to criminal mischief;*

*(C) a violation of section 2501 of this title related to grand larceny;*

*(D) a violation of section 1201 of this title related to burglary, excluding any burglary into an occupied dwelling, as defined in subdivision 1201(b)(2) of this title;*

*(E) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4223 related to fraud or deceit;*

*(F) a violation of section 1802 of this title related to uttering a forged or counterfeited instrument;*

~~(G) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a) related to possession of marijuana;~~

~~(H) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4231(a) related to possession of cocaine;~~

~~(I) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4232(a) related to possession of LSD;~~

~~(J) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4233(a) related to possession of heroin;~~

~~(K) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234(a) related to possession of depressant, stimulant, and narcotic drugs;~~

~~(L) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234a(a) related to possession of methamphetamine;~~

~~(M) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4234b(a) related to possession of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine;~~

~~(N) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4235(b) related to possession of hallucinogenic drugs;~~

~~(O) a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4235a(a) related to possession of ecstasy; or~~

~~(P) any offense for which a person has been granted an unconditional pardon from the Governor.~~

(5) “Qualifying felony property offense” means a felony level violation of 9 V.S.A. § 4043 related to fraudulent use, 13 V.S.A. § 1801 related to forgery and counterfeiting, 13 V.S.A. § 1802 related to uttering forged or counterfeited instrument, 13 V.S.A. § 1804 related to counterfeiting paper money, 13 V.S.A. § 1816 related to possession or use of credit card skimming devices, 13 V.S.A. § 2001 related to false personation, 13 V.S.A. § 2002 related to false pretenses or tokens, 13 V.S.A. § 2029 related to home improvement fraud, 13 V.S.A. § 2030 related to identity theft, 13 V.S.A. § 2501 related to grand larceny, 13 V.S.A. § 2502 related to petit larceny, 13 V.S.A. § 2503 related to larceny from the person, 13 V.S.A. § 2531 related to embezzlement, 13 V.S.A. § 2532 related to officers or servants of incorporated bank, 13 V.S.A. § 2533 related to receiver or trustee, 13 V.S.A. § 2537 related to holding property in official capacity or belonging to the State or a municipality, 13 V.S.A. § 2561 related to receiving stolen property, 13 V.S.A. § 2575a related to organized retail theft, 13 V.S.A. § 2577 related to retail theft, 13 V.S.A. § 2582 related to theft of services, 13 V.S.A. § 2591 related to theft of rented property, 13 V.S.A. § 2592 related to failure to return a rented or leased motor vehicle, 13 V.S.A. § 3016 related to false claims, 13 V.S.A. § 3701 related to unlawful mischief, 13 V.S.A. § 3705 related to unlawful trespass, 13 V.S.A. § 3733 related to mills, dams or bridges, 13 V.S.A. § 3761 related to unauthorized removal of human remains,

13 V.S.A. § 3767 related to grave markers and ornaments, 13 V.S.A. § 4103 related to access to computer for fraudulent purposes, 13 V.S.A. § 4104 related to alteration, damage, or interference, or 13 V.S.A. § 4105 related to theft or destruction.

(6) “Subsequent offense” means a crime committed by the person who is the subject of a petition to expunge or seal a criminal history record that arose out of a new incident or occurrence after the person was convicted of the crime to be expunged or sealed.

Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 7602 is amended to read:

§ 7602. EXPUNGEMENT AND SEALING OF RECORD,  
POSTCONVICTION; PROCEDURE

(a)(1) A person may file a petition with the court requesting expungement or sealing of the criminal history record related to the conviction if:

(A) the person was convicted of a qualifying crime or qualifying crimes arising out of the same incident or occurrence;

(B) the person was convicted of an offense for which the underlying conduct is no longer prohibited by law or designated as a criminal offense;

(C) pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (g) of this section, the person was convicted of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a) related to operating under the influence of alcohol or other substance, excluding a violation of that section resulting in serious bodily injury or death to any person other than the operator, or related to operating a school bus with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.02 or more or operating a commercial vehicle with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.04 or more; or

(D) pursuant to the conditions set forth in subsection (h) of this section, the person was convicted under 1201(c)(3)(A) of a violation of subdivision 1201(a) of this title related to burglary when the person was 25 years of age or younger; and the person did not carry a dangerous or deadly weapon during commission of the offense.

(2) The State’s Attorney or Attorney General shall be the respondent in the matter.

(3) The court shall grant the petition without hearing if the petitioner and the respondent stipulate to the granting of the petition. The respondent shall file the stipulation with the court, and the court shall issue the petitioner an order of expungement and provide notice of the order in accordance with this section.

*(4) This section shall not apply to an individual licensed as a commercial driver pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39 seeking to seal or expunge a record of a conviction for a felony offense committed in a motor vehicle as defined in 23 V.S.A. § 4.*

*(b) Qualifying nonpredicate misdemeanors and possession of a controlled substance offenses. For petitions filed to expunge or seal a criminal history record of a nonpredicate misdemeanor offense or a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a), 4231(a), 4232(a), 4233(a), 4234(a), 4234a(a), 4234b(a), 4235(b), or 4235a(a):*

*(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged pursuant to section 7606 of this title if the following conditions are met:*

*(A) At least five years have elapsed since:*

*(i) the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction satisfied the judgement, or if the person has successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least five years previously; or*

*(ii) if the person committed a subsequent offense, the date on which the person satisfied the judgment for the subsequent offense, whichever is later.*

*~~(B) The person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence since the person was convicted for the qualifying crime. [Repealed.]~~*

*(C) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.*

*(D) The court finds that expungement of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.*

*(2) The court shall grant the petition and order that all or part of the criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the conditions of subdivisions (1)(A), ~~(B)~~, and (C) of this subsection are met and the court finds that:*

*(A) sealing the criminal history record better serves the interests of justice than expungement; and*

*(B) the person committed the qualifying crime after reaching 19 years of age.*



(3) If the respondent stipulates to a petition filed prior to, on, or after the date the offense is eligible for expungement or sealing as set forth in this subsection, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

(c) Qualifying predicate misdemeanors. For petitions filed to expunge or seal a criminal history record of a qualifying predicate misdemeanor offense:

(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be ~~expunged~~ sealed pursuant to section 7606 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:

(A) At least ~~10~~ five years have elapsed since:

(i) the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence for the conviction satisfied the judgement; or

(ii) if the person committed a subsequent offense, the date on which the person satisfied the judgement for the subsequent offense, whichever is later.

(B) The person has not been convicted of a felony arising out of a new incident or occurrence in the last seven years. [Repealed.]

(C) The person has not been convicted of a misdemeanor during the past five years. [Repealed.]

(D) Any restitution ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full.

(E) After considering the particular nature of any subsequent offense, the court finds that expungement of the criminal history record for the qualifying crime serves the interests of justice.

(2) The court shall grant the petition and order that all or part of the criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the conditions of subdivisions (1)(A), (B), (C), and (D) of this subsection are met and the court finds that:

(A) sealing the criminal history record better serves the interests of justice than expungement; and

(B) the person committed the qualifying crime after reaching 19 years of age. A criminal history record sealed pursuant to this subsection (c) shall be eligible for expungement pursuant to section 7606 of this title five years after the date on which sealing order is issued if the person does not commit any criminal offense subsequent to the sealed.

(3) If the respondent stipulates to a petition filed prior to, on, or after the date the offense is eligible for expungement or sealing as set forth in this subsection, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

\* \* \*

(g) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(C) of this section, only petitions to seal may be considered or granted by the court. This subsection shall not apply to an individual licensed as a commercial driver pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 39. Unless the court finds that sealing would not be in the interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed in accordance with section 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:

(1) ~~At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence~~ satisfied the judgment for the conviction, or if the person has ~~successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least 10 years previously.~~

(2) At the time of the filing of the petition:

(A) the person has only one conviction of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201, which shall be construed in accordance with 23 V.S.A. § 1211; and

(B) the person has not been convicted of a ~~crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence~~ subsequent offense since the person was convicted of a violation of 23 V.S.A. § 1201(a).

(3) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.

(4) The court finds that sealing of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.

(h) For petitions filed pursuant to subdivision (a)(1)(D) of this section, unless the court finds that expungement or sealing would not be in the interests of justice, the court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be expunged or sealed in accordance with section 7606 or 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:

(1) ~~At least 15 years have elapsed since the date on which the person successfully completed the terms and conditions of the sentence~~ satisfied the judgment for the conviction, or the person has ~~successfully completed the terms and conditions of an indeterminate term of probation that commenced at least 15 years previously.~~

*(2) The person has not been convicted of a crime arising out of a new incident or occurrence subsequent offense since the person was convicted of a violation of subdivision 1201(c)(3)(A) of this title.*

*(3) Any restitution ordered by the court has been paid in full.*

*(4) The court finds that expungement or sealing of the criminal history record serves the interests of justice.*

*(i) Qualifying felony property offenses and selling, dispensing, or transporting regulated substances offenses. For petitions filed to expunge or seal a criminal history record of a qualifying felony property offense or a violation of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(b), 4231(b), 4232(b), 4233(b), 4234(b), 4234a(b), 4234b(b), 4235(c), or 4235a(b):*

*(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:*

*(A) At least eight years have elapsed since:*

*(i) the date on which the person satisfied the judgment for the conviction; or*

*(ii) if the person committed a subsequent offense, the date on which the person satisfied the judgment for the subsequent offense, whichever is later.*

*(B) Any restitution ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full.*

*(C) After considering the particular nature of any subsequent offense, the court finds that expungement of the criminal history record for the qualifying crime serves the interests of justice.*

*(2) A criminal history record sealed pursuant to this subsection (i) shall be eligible for expungement pursuant to section 7606 of this title eight years after the date on which sealing order is issued if the person does not commit any criminal offense subsequent to the sealed offense.*

*(3) If the respondent stipulates to a petition filed prior to, on, or after the date the offense is eligible for sealing as provided in this subsection, the court may grant the petition to seal without a hearing.*

*(j) Qualifying felonies. For petitions filed to expunge or seal a criminal history record of any other qualifying felony offense not specified in subsection (f), (h), or (i) of this section:*

(1) The court shall grant the petition and order that the criminal history record be sealed pursuant to section 7607 of this title if the following conditions are met:

(A) At least 10 years have elapsed since the date on which the person satisfied the judgment for the conviction or, if the person committed a subsequent offense, 10 years from the date on which the person satisfied the judgment for the subsequent offense, whichever is later.

(B) Any restitution ordered by the court for any crime of which the person has been convicted has been paid in full.

(2) A criminal history record sealed pursuant to this subsection (j) shall not be eligible for expungement pursuant to section 7606 of this title unless the respondent stipulates to the expungement.

(3) If the respondent stipulates to a petition to seal filed prior to, on, or after the date the offense is eligible for sealing as provided in this subsection, the court may grant the petition to seal without a hearing.

Sec. 4. 33 V.S.A. § 5119 is amended to read:

§ 5119. SEALING OF RECORDS

\* \* \*

(g) On application of a person who has pleaded guilty to or has been convicted of the commission of a crime under the laws of this State which the person committed prior to attaining the age of ~~21~~ 25, or on the motion of the court having jurisdiction over such a person, after notice to all parties of record and hearing, the court shall order the sealing of all files and records related to the proceeding if it finds:

(1) two years have elapsed since the final discharge of the person;

(2) the person has not been convicted of a listed crime as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 5301 or adjudicated delinquent for such an offense ~~after the initial conviction~~ for 10 years prior to the application or motion, and no new proceeding is pending seeking such conviction or adjudication; and

(3) the person's rehabilitation has been attained to the satisfaction of the court.

\* \* \*

*Sec. 5. 23 V.S.A. § 2303 is added to read:*

§ 2303. EXPUNGEMENT OF VIOLATION RECORDS

(a) Automatic expungement. The Judicial Bureau shall automatically enter an expungement order for convictions or adjudications of the following violations on the two-year anniversary of the satisfaction of the judgment:

- (1) section 301 of this title (operating an unregistered vehicle);
- (2) subsection 307(a) of this title (failing to possess registration);
- (3) section 611 of this title (failing to possess license);
- (4) subsection 676(a) of this title (operating after suspension);
- (5) section 601 of this title (operating without a license);
- (6) section 800 of this title (operating without insurance); and
- (7) subsection 1222(c) of this title (operating an uninspected vehicle).

(b) Effect of expungement.

(1) Upon entry of an expungement order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the individual whose record is expunged shall be treated in all respects as if he or she had never been convicted or adjudicated of the violation. This includes the expungement of any points accumulated pursuant to chapter 25 of this title.

(2) The Judicial Bureau shall report the expungement to the Department of Motor Vehicles within 14 days.

(3) The Judicial Bureau shall keep a special index of cases that have been expunged together with the expungement order. The index shall list only the name of the individual convicted or adjudicated of the violation, his or her date of birth, the docket number, and the violation that was the subject of the expungement. All other court documents and records that are subject to an expungement order, whether held by the Judicial Bureau or the Department of Motor Vehicles, shall be destroyed.

(4) Upon receiving an inquiry from any person regarding an expunged record, the Judicial Bureau and Department of Motor Vehicles shall respond that "NO RECORD EXISTS."

(c) Policies for implementation. The Court Administrator shall establish policies for implementing this section.

*Sec. 6. 18 V.S.A. § 4230 is amended to read:*

*§ 4230. MARIJUANA*

*(a) Possession and cultivation.*

*(1)(A) No person shall knowingly and unlawfully possess more than one ounce of marijuana or more than five grams of hashish or cultivate more than two mature marijuana plants or four immature marijuana plants. A person who violates this subdivision shall be assessed a civil penalty as follows:*

*(A) not more than \$100.00 for a first offense;*

*(B) not more than \$200.00 for a second offense; and*

*(C) not more than \$500.00 for a third or subsequent offense.*

*(2)(A) No person shall knowingly and unlawfully possess more than two ounces of marijuana or more than ten grams of hashish or more than four mature marijuana plants or eight immature marijuana plants. For a first offense under this subdivision (A)(2), a person shall be provided the opportunity to participate in the Court Diversion Program unless the prosecutor states on the record why a referral to the Court Diversion Program would not serve the ends of justice. A person convicted of a first offense under this subdivision shall be imprisoned not more than six months or fined not more than \$500.00, or both.*

*(B) A person convicted of a second or subsequent offense of knowingly and unlawfully possessing more than ~~one ounce of marijuana or more than five grams of hashish or cultivating more than two mature marijuana plants or four immature marijuana plants~~ two ounces of marijuana or more than ten grams of hashish or more than four mature marijuana plants or eight immature marijuana plants shall be imprisoned not more than two years or fined not more than \$2,000.00, or both.*

*(C) Upon an adjudication of guilt for a first or second offense under this subdivision, the court may defer sentencing as provided in 13 V.S.A. § 7041, except that the court may in its discretion defer sentence without the filing of a presentence investigation report and except that sentence may be imposed at any time within two years from and after the date of entry of deferment. The court may, prior to sentencing, order that the defendant submit to a drug assessment screening, which may be considered at sentencing in the same manner as a presentence report.*

*(3) A person knowingly and unlawfully possessing ~~two~~ eight ounces of marijuana or ~~10 grams~~ 1.4 ounces of hashish or knowingly and unlawfully cultivating more than four mature marijuana plants or eight immature*

*marijuana plants shall be imprisoned not more than three years or fined not more than \$10,000.00, or both.*

*(4) A person knowingly and unlawfully possessing more than one pound of marijuana or more than 2.8 ounces of hashish or knowingly and unlawfully cultivating more than six mature marijuana plants or 12 immature marijuana plants shall be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than \$10,000.00, or both.*

*(5) A person knowingly and unlawfully possessing more than 10 pounds of marijuana or more than one pound of hashish or knowingly and unlawfully cultivating more than 12 mature marijuana plants or 24 immature marijuana plants shall be imprisoned not more than 15 years or fined not more than \$500,000.00, or both.*

*(6) If a court fails to provide the defendant with notice of collateral consequences in accordance with 13 V.S.A. § 8005(b) and the defendant later at any time shows that the plea and conviction for a violation of this subsection may have or has had a negative consequence, the court, upon the defendant's motion, shall vacate the judgment and permit the defendant to withdraw the plea or admission and enter a plea of not guilty. Failure of the court to advise the defendant of a particular collateral consequence shall not support a motion to vacate.*

*(7) The amounts of marijuana in this subsection shall not include marijuana cultivated, harvested, and stored in accordance with section 4230e of this title.*

\* \* \*

*Sec. 7. EXPUNGEMENT OF MARIJUANA CRIMINAL HISTORY  
RECORDS*

*(a) As used in this section:*

*(1) "Court" means the Criminal Division of the Superior Court.*

*(2) "Criminal history record" means all information documenting an individual's contact with the criminal justice system, including data regarding identification, arrest or citation, arraignment, judicial disposition, custody, and supervision.*

*(b) The court shall order the expungement of criminal history records of violations of 18 V.S.A. § 4230(a)(1) that occurred prior to July 1, 2020. The process for expunging these records shall be completed not later than July 1, 2021.*



(c) Upon entry of an expungement order, the order shall be legally effective immediately and the person whose record is expunged shall be treated in all respects as if he or she had never been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for the offense. The court shall issue an order to expunge all records and files related to the arrest, citation, investigation, charge, adjudication of guilt, criminal proceedings, and probation related to the sentence. The court shall issue the person a certificate stating that the offense for which the person was convicted has been decriminalized and therefore warrants issuance of the order and that its effect is to annul the record of arrest, conviction, and sentence. The court shall provide notice of the expungement to the respondent, Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC), the arresting agency, and any other entity that may have a record related to the order to expunge. The VCIC shall provide notice of the expungement to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center.

(d) In any application for employment, license, or civil right or privilege or in an appearance as a witness in any proceeding or hearing, a person may be required to answer questions about a previous criminal history record only with respect to arrests or convictions that have not been expunged.

(e) Nothing in this section shall affect any right of the person whose record has been expunged to rely on it as a bar to any subsequent proceedings for the same offense.

(f)(1) The court shall keep a special index of cases that have been expunged together with the expungement order and the certificate issued pursuant to this chapter. The index shall list only the name of the person convicted of the offense, his or her date of birth, the docket number, and the criminal offense that was the subject of the expungement.

(2) The special index and related documents specified in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be confidential and shall be physically and electronically segregated in a manner that ensures confidentiality and that limits access to authorized persons.

(3) Inspection of the expungement order and the certificate may be permitted only upon petition by the person who is the subject of the case. The Administrative Judge may permit special access to the index and the documents for research purposes pursuant to the rules for public access to court records.

(4) All other court documents in a case that are subject to an expungement order shall be destroyed.

(5) The court shall follow policies adopted pursuant to 13 V.S.A. § 7606 in implementing this section.



(g) Upon receiving an inquiry from any person regarding an expunged record, an entity shall respond that "NO RECORD EXISTS."

*Sec. 8. VERMONT SENTENCING COMMISSION; EXPUNGEMENT OR SEALING OF LISTED CRIMES REPORT*

During the 2020 legislative interim, the Vermont Sentencing Commission shall consider whether a comprehensive policy that provides an avenue for expungement or sealing of all offenses will serve the interests of justice. On or before October 15, 2020, the Commission shall report to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee regarding any policy recommendations regarding the expungement and sealing of criminal history records, including a recommendation for whether and how to provide an avenue to seal or expunge all offenses, including the crimes listed in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7) and 18 V.S.A. chapter 84 drug trafficking offenses.

*Sec. 9. EFFECTIVE DATES*

(a) Sec. 7 (expungement of marijuana criminal history records) and this section shall take effect on passage.

(b) The rest of this act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.