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Youthful Indiscretions Don't Have to Last a Lifetime

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We've all made mistakes. For some, however, those youthful lapses in judgment resulted in a minor criminal conviction that still shows up on their record today. People grow up, move on, and some become professionals who may be subject to periodic background checks that could cause a problem for them in their career. Can anything be done about that? The good news is that there is a way to "expunge" or set aside a record of some types of convictions.

Before a conviction can be removed from a criminal record, the applicant must prove that he or she has not been charged and convicted of more than one crime (or two minor offenses if one was committed by a person under the age of 21), the crime is within the category of offenses that can be expunged from a record, and at least five years has passed since the conviction occurred or the terms of the sentence were completed, whichever is later.

There are several types of crimes that do not qualify for expungement, including sex offenses, crimes of violence, and traffic offenses, among others. It is also important to note that an expungement is discretionary, which simply means the judge doesn't have to grant it if he or she finds reason not to.

Our office has successfully assisted many clients in setting aside criminal convictions. If you are interested in learning more about the process, I am available to meet with you and discuss the unique circumstances of your case and help you determine whether you would qualify to have a conviction expunged from your record.