

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD SEALING

What is Administrative Record Sealing?

Administrative Record Sealing is a process by which some juvenile records are automatically sealed from public view by the juvenile court. Only certain juvenile records are eligible for administrative sealing. No resident of a JR institution is eligible for Administrative Record Sealing. A youth with an Administrative Sealing date that comes before their release date will have to take active steps to seal their record after they are released. For more information, please visit [our website](https://teamchild.org/record-sealing/): <https://teamchild.org/record-sealing/>.

Who is eligible for Administrative Record Sealing?

A youth's record will be administratively sealed only if the youth has:

1. Completed their terms of disposition, including time at Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR), and
2. Paid off all of their restitution. (The court may reduce money owed to an insurance company.)

A youth's record will not be administratively sealed if their charge was:

- A "most serious offense" per [RCW 9.94A.030](#) (Class A felonies and some other violent offenses)
- A drug offense per [RCW 9.94A.030](#) (felony drug offenses)
- A sex offense per [RCW 9A.44](#) (felony sex offenses)

A youth with any of the above offenses can still seal their record, but they must take active steps to do so after release from JR. The youth's record will not be automatically sealed by the court. Depending on their offense(s), a youth can seal their record either two years or five years after their release from JR. Please visit the website above for more information about this process.

What is the procedure for Administrative Record Sealing?

At a youth's disposition hearing in juvenile court, the court must schedule an administrative sealing hearing, even if the youth is not eligible. This hearing will be scheduled after whichever of these events occurs last:

- The youth turns 18 years old,
- The completion of the youth's probation or parole, if ordered, or
- The youth's expected release from confinement in a detention center or JR facility.

At the administrative hearing, the youth's juvenile record will be sealed unless:

- The charge is not eligible for administrative sealing, or
- The court receives an objection to sealing the record, or
- The court has a compelling reason not to seal the record, such as the youth being ineligible for administrative sealing at the time of the hearing. (See above.)

The youth does not need to attend the administrative hearing but should be notified if their record was not successfully sealed. At the hearing, the youth or their attorney can request a hard-copy of the court's order to seal their record. This is the only opportunity the youth will have to obtain written proof of their sealed record.

If the youth's record is not sealed:

1. A contested hearing should be scheduled to determine eligibility for record sealing.
2. The youth is entitled to full due process protections for the contested hearing, including, if necessary, the appointment of counsel.
3. Notice must be sent to the youth, the youth's last attorney of record, and the victim, if applicable, at least 18 days before the contested hearing date.
4. After the contested hearing, the court will enter a written order immediately sealing the record unless the court determines that sealing is not appropriate.

If the youth is convicted of a new offense as a juvenile or adult, the court will unseal their record.

Sealing Juvenile Records: Administrative Sealing Hearings

RCW 13.50.260(1)

A youth is eligible for administrative record sealing if:

1. They have completed the terms of their disposition, including confinement at JR,
2. They have paid all restitution to the individual named in the restitution order, and
3. Their offense is not a “most serious offense”, sex offense, or drug offense.

