

KYGA 2024 DIGITAL TOOLKIT



ACLU
Kentucky

2024 DIGITAL TOOLKIT

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CLEAN SLATE

OVERVIEW

Over 1.3 million adults in Kentucky have a record. Studies show 94% of employers, 90% of landlords, and 72% of colleges screen applicants using background checks, and applicants with a record are half as likely to get a call back or to be considered for jobs, housing, and educational opportunities. **Simply put, a criminal record in Kentucky can be a life sentence to poverty.**

Studies show that **almost half — around 572,000 — of Kentuckians with a record have earned expungement** by completing their sentences and remaining crime-free for at least 4 years. But the current record expungement process in Kentucky is costly, complex, and difficult to navigate without a private lawyer.

Clean Slate legislation automates portions of that process, saving time and money, and ensuring that everyone who is eligible can get their record sealed rather than just people with enough money or connections.

Clean Slate is a common sense, evidence- and research-backed approach that makes it easier for eligible Kentuckians to successfully reenter society after incarceration, allowing them to more easily access education, employment, and other necessarily tools not just to survive — but to thrive.

Clean Slate policies are also good for Kentucky’s economy. Kentucky ranks in the bottom 10 states for workforce participation, and local businesses are struggling to find workers. At the same time, tens of thousands of qualified applicants can’t take these jobs because of their criminal records, some of which are decades old. **Clean Slate legislation will help these individuals build a better life while strengthening local businesses and boosting our local economy.**

Clean Slate policies have already been successfully implemented in 13 other states. **This is an opportunity for Kentucky to be on the leading edge of meaningful justice reform for eligible Kentuckians.**

CLEAN SLATE

Kentuckians deserve the chance to rebuild their lives to provide for themselves and their families without the burden of a record, and no one should have to face unnecessary and extra-judicial punishments long after they have been arrested or completed their sentence. We must pass Clean Slate legislation that automates parts of the record clearance process for eligible offenses, and automation must be applied retroactively and for all new records going forward.

CLEAN SLATE: TALKING POINTS

TOP LINES:

- More than 1.3 million adults in Kentucky have a record, and Clean Slate legislation would give half of them the opportunity to expunge their records, rebuild their lives, and provide for themselves and their families.
- Almost 94% of employers, 90% of landlords, and 72% of colleges screen applicants using background checks, and job applicants with a record are half as likely to get a call back from a potential employer.
- A criminal record shouldn't be a life sentence to poverty, and a person's whole life should not be defined by their worst mistake.
- The current record expungement process in Kentucky is confusing, lengthy, and expensive, preventing many from accessing the relief they've earned.
- Clean Slate policies automatically clears arrest or conviction records for eligible individuals who have completed their sentences and remained crime-free for at least 5 years.
- Clean Slate policies give people with a record more opportunities to obtain employment, secure housing, access educational opportunities.
- Clean Slate legislation maintains the current guidelines for expungement that ensure it only applies to individuals who have completed their sentence, as well as any probation, and remained crime-free for at least 5 years.
- No one should have to face unnecessary and extra-judicial punishments long after they have been arrested or completed their sentence.

CLEAN SLATE: TALKING POINTS

- Clean Slate policies have already been successfully implemented in 13 other states. This is an opportunity for Kentucky to be on the leading edge of meaningful justice reform for eligible Kentuckians.
- Clean Slate legislation is a common sense, evidence- and research-backed policy that makes it easier for eligible Kentuckians to successfully reenter society after incarceration, allowing them to more easily access education, employment, and other necessary tools not just to survive — but to thrive.
- Studies show that people with a prior conviction who do not commit another crime within 4 to 7 years are no more likely to commit a crime in the future than the general population.
- Kentucky ranks in the bottom 10 states for workforce participation. Clean Slate legislation will help hundreds of thousands of Kentuckians return to the workforce, strengthening local businesses and boosting our local economy.

SOCIAL MEDIA

When posting about legislative issues, always check the ACLU of Kentucky's channels for content to share! We are @ACLUofKY on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Threads](#). Following our feed is the best way to find up-to-date information and graphics. If you want to make your own posts about this issue, here is some sample text. Add personal stories and details to make more impact!

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POST: FACEBOOK/THREADS

More than 1.3 million adults in Kentucky have a record, and Clean Slate legislation would give half of them the opportunity to expunge that record, rebuild their lives, and provide for themselves and their families.

Kentuckians need a Clean Slate. Tell your legislators to vote YES on SB 218 and HB 569.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POST: TWITTER/X

A criminal record shouldn't be a life sentence to poverty, and a person's whole life shouldn't be defined by their worst mistake. Give eligible Kentuckians a Clean Slate. Vote YES on SB 218 and HB 569.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POST: INSTAGRAM (VISUAL FIRST)

Clean Slate legislation is a common sense, evidence- and research-backed policy that makes it easier for eligible Kentuckians to successfully reenter society after incarceration, allowing them to more easily access education, employment, and other necessary tools not just to survive — but to thrive.

Give eligible Kentuckians a Clean Slate. Vote YES on SB 218 and HB 569.

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

To use these images, right click on them and select “save as image” or “copy image” and save the graphic to your phone or computer.



TRADITIONAL MEDIA

SAMPLE OP-ED - AIM FOR 500-750 WORDS

A variety of individuals write opinion articles, or op eds, for news media to share. Sometimes they are certified experts, sometimes they are everyday people who feel strongly about an issue. These brief essays can help the audience better understand a complicated issue or help them relate to something they haven’t personally experienced. These pieces can be extremely powerful and persuasive.

If you would like assistance reviewing, drafting, editing, or pitching an op-ed to newspapers, reach out to someone on the communications team. We are happy to help!

FORMS OF PERSUASION (USE ONE OR MORE):

- a. **Personal Experience:** The writer describes an experience he or she has had.
- b. **Expert Opinion:** The writer draws on the opinion of an expert—someone trained in a particular area, or someone who has relevant personal experience.
- c. **Example:** The writer provides an example that supports a larger idea or pattern.
- d. **Analogy:** The writer compares the situation to another similar situation.
- e. **Facts and Statistics:** The writer uses facts or numbers to prove their idea. Often this information comes from other sources, such as books, newspapers, or websites.
- f. **Logic:** The writer uses reasoning or logic to argue their point.
- g. **Emotion:** The writer makes an emotional appeal to the reader.

I. INTRODUCTION

- a. **Hook:** The beginning is your chance to capture your reader’s attention. What can you start with that will compel your audience to pay attention? Perhaps an anecdote or surprising fact?
- b. **Context:** Now back up a little bit. Explain what the issue is at hand. In a few lines, provide some background and context.
- c. **Thesis:** Finally, make an argument. Tell your reader where you stand on this issue.

- Example: When I was 22, most of my peers were graduating college. I became a convicted felon. After a sports injury, I became addicted to opioids, leading to my arrest and jail time. Although I've been sober for over 20 years, my mistakes two decades ago still affect almost every aspect of my life today.

II. FIRST BODY PARAGRAPH

- a. Evidence #1: Describe the central piece of evidence that supports your position.
- b. Tie Back: Make sure to connect this evidence back to your main argument, explaining to readers how it supports your thesis statement.
 - Example: After completing my sentence and staying sober, I applied to dozens of jobs to start my new life, and was rejected for several months before anyone would hire me.

III. SECOND BODY PARAGRAPH

- a. Evidence #2: Describe a second piece of evidence that supports your position. Try using a different type of persuasion (see list below).
- b. Tie Back: Again, make sure to connect this evidence back to your main argument, explaining to readers how it supports your thesis statement.
 - Example: I also tried to get housing, but was not able to find a landlord who would rent to me. I've lived in the same place for years — and outgrown it —because I am afraid of going through that process again.

IV. THIRD BODY PARAGRAPH

- a. Counter Argument: What would be the main argument of the opposing side?
- b. Rebuttal: What is your response to this argument? Why doesn't it apply to this situation/context?
 - Example: I, and other Kentuckians like who have complete their sentences and stayed crime-free, don't deserve to be treated like a second-class citizen. We need to pass Clean Slate laws to give people like me a fair shot at providing for

ourselves and our families.

V. CONCLUSION

- a. Summary: In just a few lines, remind your reader of the main argument and evidence.
- b. Thesis: No need to repeat your thesis word-for-word but remind readers what you're arguing and why they should care.
- c. Personal Comment, Call to Action, or Question: The last few sentences of your essay will linger in your reader's mind? What do you want to leave them with?
 - Example: A criminal record shouldn't be a life sentence to poverty. Eligible Kentuckians deserve relief through Clean Slate laws now.

SCRIPTS

CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR

- Every call counts! When you call legislators to tell them how you would like them to vote on a certain bill, they receive a physical piece of green or red paper, representing your view. Many lawmakers say they are influenced by how many green or red slips they receive. These slips are what make phone calls so effective.
- Calling the legislative message line is toll-free and only takes a few minutes. Call every day if you have the time. You don't even have to know your legislators' names but be prepared to share your address so operators can send your message to the right place.

1-800-372-7181

TELEPHONE SCRIPT

- My name is [NAME] and I am your constituent. I am calling to voice my strong opposition to/support for [BILL NUMBER], or any legislation that threatens freedom of speech and expression in Kentucky. Thank you.

EMAIL SCRIPT

- My name is [NAME] and I am your constituent. I am calling to voice my strong opposition to/support for [BILL NUMBER], or any legislation that threatens freedom of speech and expression in Kentucky. Thank you.

TESTIMONY

TELL YOUR STORY

Have you even wondered who the people are who sit in front of lawmakers in Frankfort to talk about issues affecting our communities? They're everyday Kentuckians who are passionate about making Kentucky a better place for their families, helping communities thrive, and moving Kentucky forward.

Anyone can testify at a committee hearing in Frankfort. Committee hearings are where bills are discussed and voted on, so they can move from their committee assignment to the full legislative chambers. Amendments and bill language can change all the way up to the full vote, and testimony can influence legislators' opinions on how our laws should read.

Everyone is passionate about something, and Kentucky's General Assembly conducts business in committee hearings with real-world implications for everyone who lives here. And while it may seem like a lot of work to prepare testimony, travel to Frankfort, and spend time in a hearing room waiting for lawmakers to hear from us, it is vital to our democracy.

Take record expungement, for example. Lawmakers need to hear from people who will be impacted by or benefit from Clean Slate laws. Lawmakers can only work with the information they have, and if the people of Kentucky don't talk about how bills will impact them, the legislature will write the laws governing our people without the complete picture.

If you're interested in testifying in Frankfort, let us know! We can help draft, edit, and polish your testimony and even attend the hearing with you (as long as we have available staff that day).

2024 DIGITAL TOOLKIT

Our work and our democracy depend on participation from all Kentuckians. Help protect democracy in the commonwealth and make your voice heard.

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CONTACTING YOUR LEGISLATOR

The Legislative Research Commission was created in 1948 as a fact-finding and service agency. The Commission operates as the administrative and research arm of the General Assembly.

At the LRC website, you can find out who your legislator is, see who has filed bills, read the draft of bills under consideration, view committee schedules and agendas, and more!

LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE: 1-800-372-7181

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION

<https://www.legislature.ky.gov>

LIVE LEGISLATIVE COVERAGE ON KET

Kentucky Educational Television — KET — is Kentucky's largest classroom, serving more than two million people each week via television, online, and mobile.

Most Kentuckians can't travel to Frankfort to testify or meet in person with legislators. KET live streams committee hearings and activity on the House and Senate floors for free, so anyone can watch and listen to the issues being discussed first-hand. Learn more at www.ket.org.