

# CLEAN SLATE IN RHODE ISLAND



## THE PROBLEM

One out of every three adults in Rhode Island have an arrest or conviction record that creates barriers to employment, housing, and education.

Research shows that **94% of employers, 90% of landlords, and 72% of colleges and universities** nationwide conduct background checks to screen applicants.

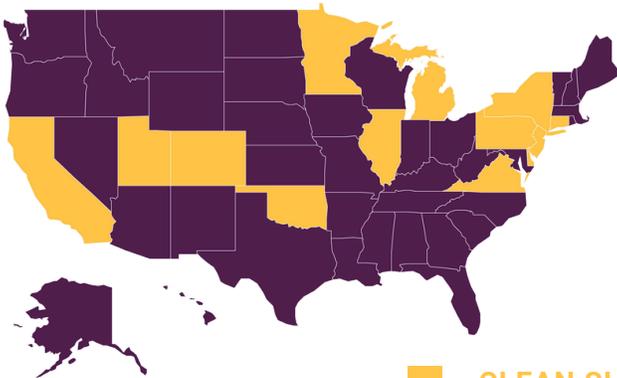
## THE SOLUTION

In 2023, Rhode Island started using an automated process to seal arrest and non-conviction records. In 2024, decriminalized marijuana offenses were sealed through a court-initiated process.

**Clean Slate legislation is an opportunity to build on these successes.** Expanding the government-initiated and automated processes to include eligible **misdemeanors and low-level first-time felony convictions** would increase efficiency and make second chances more accessible.

To date, **13 states and Washington, D.C., have passed Clean Slate laws, making more than 18 million people eligible** for full or partial record sealing across America.

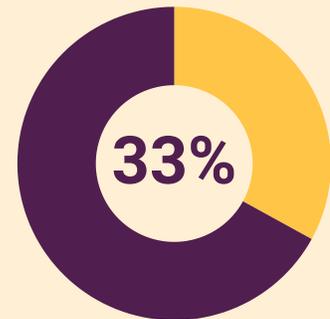
Clean Slate isn't about erasing the past. **It's about ensuring people who've completed their sentence and remained crime-free aren't permanently held back by it.**



 = CLEAN SLATE STATE

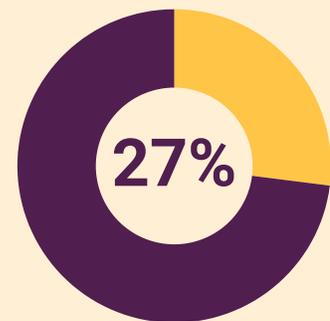
### 300,000

adults (33%) in Rhode Island have an arrest or conviction record.



### 77,000

adults with a record in Rhode Island (27%) could become eligible to have their record fully sealed with Clean Slate legislation.



 The stats above are estimated by The Clean Slate Initiative (CSI).

Learn more about the data and methodology by visiting CSI's Data Dashboard at [cleanslateinitiative.org/data](https://cleanslateinitiative.org/data).

# CLEAN SLATE IS A WIN FOR RHODE ISLAND

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**Cuts Red Tape:** Clean Slate legislation streamlines the process by reducing bureaucracy and making the system work more efficiently for everyone.

**Improves Public Safety:** Clean Slate is far from a free pass – it's about making sure those who have taken responsibility for past mistakes can move forward after doing all that's been asked of them. Automated processes are rigorously tested, monitored, and supplemented with human oversight. Although sealed records are not publicly available, they remain visible to law enforcement and courts.

**Strengthens Our Economy:** Clean Slate laws expand the workforce, helping businesses find the best employees and creating opportunities for workers to earn higher wages. This puts more money in the pockets of American families and reduces dependence on government assistance.

## ABOUT HB 7508

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**HB 7508**, The Rhode Island Clean Slate Act, is designed to modernize the state's justice system by automating the expungement of old, eligible conviction records.

- **First-Time Misdemeanor Convictions:** Would be sealed after a 5 year conviction-free waiting period.
- **Multiple Misdemeanor Convictions:** Records for people with 2 to 5 non-violent misdemeanor convictions would be sealed after a 10 year conviction-free waiting period.
- **First-Time Low-Level Felonies:** Would be sealed after a 10 year conviction-free waiting period from when sentence is completed.

## EXCLUSIONS & LIMITATIONS

- **Does not apply to violent crimes:** Serious crimes of violence, sex offenses, and crimes against children remain permanently public.
- **Does not erase records:** Records are sealed from public view but remain accessible to law enforcement and courts.
- **Does not restore gun rights:** Federal and state firearms restrictions remain in effect.

This information was prepared by The Clean Slate Initiative (CSI).

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