

## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## LEGAL SERVICES OF NEW JERSEY NOW OFFERING ITS ONLINE GATEWAY TO GETTING CRIMINAL RECORDS EXPUNGED — IN SPANISH

EDISON — Legal Services of New Jersey has produced a new Spanish version of *Clearing Your Record Online*, LSNJ's online self-help program showing people how they may get their criminal records expunged.

The LSNJ website operates much like a computerized income tax program for expungement, takes individuals, step by step through the rigorous application process. It cannot guarantee whether a judge ultimately will approve a requested expungement, but smooths the rocky path to getting the application in shape to be heard. It's up to the applicants themselves to gather all the documents and official records the website suggests they will need before filing.

"Every year Legal Services gets well over a thousand requests for help with expunging records," says Akil Roper, LSNJ Chief Council for Reentry, who notes there are countless others—also likely in the thousands—who have given up, or simply don't know there is a way of getting their records cleared. "Unfortunately, Legal Services does not have the resources available to represent on an individual basis every low-income client that walks through the doors. Now, with the interactive website, we can better help people get over the hurdles."

The website includes avenues for applicants to get answers to questions they have about the process, and the interviews are fully audible. The site features a variety of instructional videos focusing on various aspects of the application process. The videos also contain links to the New Jersey courts website, links to laws and a variety of other resources.

Those who register with the site can save their responses and return to the application at a later time. Throughout the process easy-to-understand definitions of legal and related terms are provided.

More detailed information may be seen online at <http://www.lsnjlaw.org/sp/Pages/antecedentes-penales.aspx> for the Spanish version, and at [www.lsnjlaw.org/pages/expunge.aspx](http://www.lsnjlaw.org/pages/expunge.aspx) for the English version.

*Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) heads the state's Legal Services system, a network of five independent non-profit corporations and is beginning its 50th year of providing free essential legal aid in civil matters to low-income people through offices in all 21 counties. Since its inception, LSNJ has provided representation more than 2.4 million cases.*

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