

Important Definitions

Adjudication: a formal court judgement in a juvenile delinquency case. It is like being guilty in an adult case.

Arrest: when the police take a person into custody.

Conviction: a final judgement of guilt by the court; used in adult court.

Charges: these are the crimes that the police are saying a person did.

Denial/Denied: this means that the Court has rejected or is not allowing something.

Dismissal: when the charges against a person have been thrown out; there is no finding of guilt or innocence.

Disposition: the final order of the court on your case; the outcome of the case and a disposition include when a case is dismissed.

Diversion: when you are arrested for a crime but you do not have to go to court to take care of the case.

Expunge: to physically destroy records or to return the records to the petitioner, and to remove the petitioner's name from any official index or public record.

Felony: a crime that may be punished by imprisonment for more than one year in a state prison. It is more serious than a misdemeanor.

IDJJ: acronym for the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, juvenile prison system

Indigent: poor; a poor person

Misdemeanor: a crime that may be punished by less than one year in jail.

Objection: related to expungements, this is a protest made by the State against your petition. It means that the State does not want your record expunged or sealed. The State has 45 days to object to a Petition to Expunge. An objection is not the same as denial.

Petition: a written request to the court.

Petitioner: a person who makes a written request to the court.

Station Adjustment: when a person has been arrested but the police decide not to refer the charges to court. This is one type of diversion. Even though the person does not go to court, the police do keep a record of the arrest

Supervision: when a person agrees in court to the crime or the court finds the person committed the crime but there is no conviction or adjudication on his/her criminal history. The police and Circuit Clerk do still keep records of the case.