

# INSTRUCTIONS

## Request for Access to Confidential or Sealed Record



**NOTE: DO NOT** use these forms to request access to **adoption case records**. There are different requirements for asking the court for access to adoption records. The instructions and forms for asking for access to adoption case records are available online at [www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx?c=11&p=115](http://www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx?c=11&p=115).

### Important Notices and Resources

The Court has forms and instructions, for some types of cases, as a general guide to the court process. These instructions explain the steps in more detail and answer common questions, but are not a full guide to the law. Court employees may be able to give general information on court rules and procedures, but they cannot give legal advice.

#### Have questions about court forms or instructions?

- Visit [www.MNCourts.gov/SelfHelp](http://www.MNCourts.gov/SelfHelp)
- Call the Statewide Self-Help Center at 651-435-6535

#### Not sure what to do about a legal issue or need advice?

- Talk with a lawyer
- Visit [www.MNCourts.gov/Find-a-Lawyer.aspx](http://www.MNCourts.gov/Find-a-Lawyer.aspx)

Helpful materials may be found at your public county law library. For a directory, see <http://mn.gov/law-library/research-links/county-law-libraries.jsp>. For more information, contact court administration or call the Minnesota State Law Library at 651-297-7651.

### Forms You May Need

- *Request for Access to Confidential or Sealed Record* (CON101)

Forms are available online at [www.mncourts.gov/forms](http://www.mncourts.gov/forms) under the “Confidential Information” category or [www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx?c=11](http://www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx?c=11).

### What You Need to Do

1. Complete the *Request for Access to Confidential or Sealed Record* (CON101) following the instructions below.
2. Make copies for your records.
3. File the *Request* with the court.
4. View or request copies of the records if your request is granted by the judicial officer.

## General Information about Requesting Access to Confidential or Sealed Records

Many court records are accessible to the public but there are some court records that are confidential or sealed from public view. If you have asked court administration for a copy of a court record and were not able to get access, you can use these forms to ask a judicial officer to allow you to access the confidential or sealed record.

- DO NOT use these forms to request access to **adoption case records**. The instructions and forms for asking for access to adoption case records are available online at [www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx?c=11&p=115](http://www.mncourts.gov/GetForms.aspx?c=11&p=115).

### Step 1

#### Fill Out the *Request for Access to Confidential or Sealed Record (CON101)*

You may request access to more than one case **in the same county** on the same form. If you want access to cases in more than one county you will need to file a separate request in each county.

If you have any court documents for the cases you are trying to access, the documents will have information on it that can help you fill out this form.

### The Caption

<b>See Instructions (CON100) for help in filling out this form.</b>	
<b>State of Minnesota</b>	<b>District Court</b>
County of: _____	Court File Number: _____
Judicial District: _____	Case Type: _____
In the Matter of the Request for Records in the Following Cases:	
_____	
_____	

- Fill in the county the case is in. If there are cases in more than 1 county you need to fill out a form for each county.
- Fill in the Judicial District. There are 10 judicial districts in Minnesota. Most judicial districts have more than 1 county in them. To see a map of judicial districts, visit the court's website at [www.mncourts.gov/Find-Courts.aspx](http://www.mncourts.gov/Find-Courts.aspx).
- Fill in the court file number. If you do not know the court file number, or are trying to access records in more than one case, leave this blank.
- Fill in the case type. Some common case types are Family, Civil, Criminal, Juvenile Delinquency, Juvenile Protection (CHIPS), Civil Commitment, and Probate. There are more case types than these examples. If you do not know the case type, leave this blank.

- Fill in the name of the case you want access to. If you do not know the name of the case, list the name of at least one of the parties to the case.

## The Request

<p>1. What is your interest in this matter? (For example: I am the Defendant in this case) :</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>2. What records are you requesting access to? Be as detailed as possible. (For example: Order for Criminal Expungement) _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>3. Why do you need these records?: _____</p> <p>_____</p>

1. Briefly explain how you are involved with the case or how you are involved with the other parties in the case. For example, if you are a party in the case, explain who you are.
2. List or describe the records you are requesting access to. For example, if you are trying to access records from a criminal case that was expunged, you may want a copy of an *Order for Criminal Expungement* or a *Sentencing Order*. Be as specific as possible about what records you want access to.
3. Explain, in detail, why you need these records. This is what the judicial officer will use to decide whether to grant you access to the records so it is important to give as much information as possible about why you need these records and how they will be used.

## Signature

Date: _____	Signature: _____
County and state where signed: _____	Name: _____
	Address: _____
	City, State, Zip: _____
	Phone: _____
	Email: _____

- Date and sign the *Request for Access to Confidential or Sealed Record (CON101)*. Fill out your personal contact information under your signature. Finally, add the county and state you are in when you sign the form.

## Step 2

### Make copies for your records

You will file the original forms with the court, so it is a good idea to make copies of the forms for your own records before filing.

## Step 3

### File the forms with the court

File the *Request for Access to Confidential or Sealed Record* (CON101) with Court Administration either at the courthouse or electronically. There is no filing fee to file this request.

- **At the Courthouse** (addresses for courthouses are online at [www.mncourts.gov/Find-Courts.aspx](http://www.mncourts.gov/Find-Courts.aspx)):
  - In person; or
  - By mail.
- **Electronic Filing through the eFS System:**
  - Information about eFiling is on the MN Judicial Branch website at [www.mncourts.gov/eFile](http://www.mncourts.gov/eFile) under the “eFile and eServe Training” tab.
  - Once you choose to eFile, you will need to continue to use the eFS System for the rest of the case. See Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 14.01(b)(5)(i) ([www.revisor.mn.gov/court\\_rules/gp/id/14/](http://www.revisor.mn.gov/court_rules/gp/id/14/))

## Step 4

### Wait to see if the judicial officer grants your request

After you file the *Request for Access to Confidential or Sealed Record* (CON101) with the court, your request will be sent to a judicial officer to decide whether to grant your request.

The amount of time it takes for a judicial officer to make a decision can depend on many factors.

If the judicial officer grants your request and signs an order, court administration will send you a copy of the order.

## Step 5

### Access the records

If the judicial officer grants your request, and you haven't already submitted a copy request, you can ask court administration for a copies of records.

Information about copy requests is available on the Minnesota Judicial Branch website [www.mncourts.gov/Help-Topics/Copy-Request.aspx](http://www.mncourts.gov/Help-Topics/Copy-Request.aspx).

Go to the “**Copy Request Forms**” tab in the Help Topic to see if your county has a specific request form you can use.

**Copy Requests**

[Overview](#)   [Copy Request Forms](#)   [Ways to Request Copies](#)

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**Copy Request Forms**

You can find county-specific copy request forms and more information about requesting copies for the following counties at the links listed below. If your county is listed below, please use the form that is linked to for your county.

If your county is not listed in this tab, you can use the statewide copy request form.

- Be sure to include a copy of the order with your request.
- **NOTE:** Use of the copy request form is not required (you may contact the court in some other way, such as in person or writing a letter). But using the copy request form may help court staff process your request correctly and more quickly.

## Copy Fees for Some Court Records

There are a couple types of copies of court records that are commonly requested:

- **Uncertified copies** are plain photocopies that do not have a court seal, so they cannot be used for official purposes (for example, updating your name on a driver’s license after a name change). It is a good idea to keep plain copies of documents from your case for your own records. There is no fee for an uncertified copy.
- **Certified copies** are photocopies that have a court seal or an image of a court seal that allows them to be used for official purposes (for example, updating your name on a driver’s license after a name change). Certified copies generally cost \$14 per document, unless the judicial officer has waived your fees in the case.