New Leaf Illinois

IMPACT TO DATE

A PROJECT OF THE
ILLINOIS EQUAL JUSTICE FOUNDATION

ABOUT

New Leaf Illinois is statewide, state-funded network of 18 legal and advocacy organizations created to provide free legal help and information to people impacted by cannabis arrests and convictions.

OBJECTIVE

New Leaf Illinois was launched in November of 2020 to assist people expunge eligible cannabis records after the State of Illinois legalized adult-use cannabis.

BENEFITS

No matter where a cannabis arrest of conviction occurred, there is one starting point! Anyone can call or register online to have an answer to the question.... ***"Am I eligible to expunge my cannabis record?"***

GET STARTED TODAY!

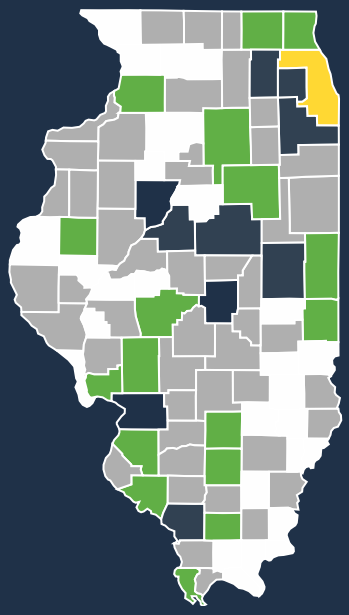
NewLeafIllinois.org

855-963-9532

Our Impact

- Registrations through New Leaf Portal | **2,437**
- Outreach Events Conducted to Share Resources | **702**
- Number of Legal Cases Opened by Grantees | **3,338**
- Cannabis Convictions Vacated & Expunged | **423**
- Pro Se Documents Provided to File throughout Illinois | **1,428**
- Non-Conviction Records Expunged or Other Cannabis Records Sealed | **262**

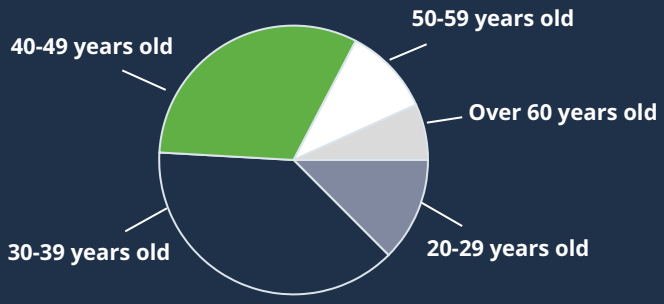
Legal Services Provided in 81 of 102 Counties



- Over 100 Cases
- 15-85 Cases
- 6-14 Cases
- 1-5 Cases

People Served

87% of clients had other arrest or conviction records that grantees helped address



81% Identify as male

African-American / Black

Caucasian / White

Hispanic / LatinX

ILLINOIS Equal Justice FOUNDATION

Frequently Asked Questions

NEW LEAF ILLINOIS

What is New Leaf Illinois?

New Leaf Illinois is a state-funded network of 20 non-profit organizations throughout the state who provide legal representation and other resources to help individuals seeking to expunge cannabis convictions from their records.

How does New Leaf Illinois work?

It starts by visiting **NewLeafIllinois.org** to register online or with a phone call to **855-963-9532** to register over the phone.

Then, a legal aid professional will evaluate your eligibility and get in touch with you about potential next steps.

How does expungement work?

The expungement process itself varies depending on the particulars of your case. If your record is eligible for expungement under the new law and you meet the income guidelines, you will be referred to one of the legal aid partners to receive free representation in court. If you do not meet the income-level requirement, but are still eligible for an expungement, you will be given specific guidance on a path forward and referrals to legal resources.

What services are available through the network?

Depending on eligibility and needs, services can include free legal information, self-help instruction, document review and preparation, legal consultation, and if available, referrals to a network of legal aid and pro bono attorneys for in court representation.

How long will the process take?

The process and timing will vary depending on details of your record. Visit **NewLeafIllinois.org** or call **855-963-9532** to register.

Why should I get my record expunged?

Your criminal record might make it *harder* to get hired, *harder* to pursue your education, *harder* to get public assistance and *harder* to rent housing. Getting your record cleared can make life easier.

A cannabis conviction doesn't define you. With New Leaf Illinois, you can expunge your eligible cannabis record (meaning your arrest, charge or criminal conviction can't be viewed by the public), and turn over a new leaf for your life.

The legal system can seem intimidating, but New Leaf is here to help each step of the way.

Won't my records be automatically expunged?

Some minor cannabis offenses will be automatically expunged (which will take some time). For other cannabis convictions, a petition will need to be filed in court. For information about your situation, fill out the **New Leaf Illinois online form**.

How much does this cost?

New Leaf's goal is to provide assistance to as many people as possible interested in expunging their cannabis convictions. We know it's important to make these services free or affordable. In many cases, New Leaf can help clear a record at no cost. Free legal services are provided to income-level qualifying individuals in every region in Illinois.

If you do not meet the income-level requirement, but are still eligible for an expungement, you will be given specific guidance on a path forward and referrals to legal resources.

Am I eligible?

Your answers to the questions from the form on the New Leaf online portal or the New Leaf hotline will help a legal aid professional determine your eligibility.

There are three possible expungement paths, two of which are automatic, and one which requires going into court. New Leaf will help you determine your next steps based on your cannabis record, and offer assistance where we can.

For individuals who are not U.S. citizens, please consult with an immigration lawyer *before* pursuing an expungement as obtaining an expungement could negatively impact pursuing immigration legal status or U.S. citizenship.

How can I learn more about the Illinois cannabis laws?

To learn more about the Illinois cannabis laws, you may visit **Illinois Legal Aid Online**.