



Office of Court Administration

**Instructions for Completing the Model
Petition for Order of Nondisclosure
Under Section 411.0735**

BEFORE BEGINNING MAKE SURE YOU ARE USING THE CORRECT MODEL PETITION FORM AND INSTRUCTIONS. THIS FORM AND INSTRUCTIONS ARE ONLY FOR PERSONS SEEKING AN ORDER OF NONDISCLOSURE UNDER SECTION 411.0735, GOVERNMENT CODE. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO COMPLETE A PETITION FOR NONDISCLOSURE WITHOUT REVIEWING THE NONDISCLOSURE OVERVIEW TO DETERMINE IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR AN ORDER OF NONDISCLOSURE AND TO IDENTIFY THE CORRECT FORM TO USE. THE NONDISCLOSURE OVERVIEW IS AVAILABLE AT THIS LINK: <http://www.txcourts.gov/rules-forms/orders-of-nondisclosure>.

NOTE: You are not eligible for an order of nondisclosure under Section 411.0735 if your offense occurred prior to September 1, 2015. If your offense occurred prior to September 1, 2015, this is not the correct form and instructions. Please go to the form and instructions for offenses which occurred prior to September 1, 2015 available at this link: <http://www.txcourts.gov/rules-forms/orders-of-nondisclosure>.

Instructions for Completing Petition

- (1) Please leave this blank. This number is not the number of your criminal case. A civil case is created when you file this petition. The clerk of the court (hereinafter "clerk") will assign a new cause number to the petition when you file it. The clerk will enter the new cause number in this space.
- (2) Please enter the name of the court in which you are filing this petition. You must file this petition in the court that convicted you of the offense for which you are requesting an order of nondisclosure. The name of the

court is shown on the top of the order that sentenced you to a period of confinement.

- (3) Please enter your name as shown on the court's order or judgment that sentenced you to a period of confinement.
- (4) Please enter the name of the county in which the court that sentenced you to confinement is situated. This will be the same county as shown on the court's order or judgment that sentenced you to a period of confinement.
- (5) Please enter your name as you did in (3) above.
- (6) Please enter the name of the offense as shown on the court's order or judgment that sentenced you to a period of confinement.
- (7) Please enter the criminal cause number as shown on the court's order or judgment that sentenced you to a period of confinement. Look for *Case No.* on that order or judgment.
- (8) Please enter the date that your period of confinement was ordered to begin as shown on the court's order or judgment that sentenced you to a period of confinement.
- (9) Please circle "is" if you are attaching a copy of the court's order or judgment that sentenced you to a period of confinement. Attaching a copy of the Court's order or judgment may expedite the process of obtaining an order of nondisclosure, but it is not required. Please circle "is not" if you are not attaching a copy of the court's order or judgment. NOTE: You are not eligible to file a Petition for Nondisclosure under Section 411.0735 until on or after the second anniversary of the date of your release from confinement.
- (10) Please enter the date that you were released from confinement.
- (11) Please circle "is" if you are attaching a copy of your release paper. The jail that released you may have given you several documents when you were released. Check those documents to see if any one of them reflects your release date. If any does, you can submit a copy of that document. Do not worry if you do not have a document showing the date of your release

from confinement. However, please remember that you cannot file a petition for nondisclosure until: (1) you have been released from confinement; and (2) at least two years have passed since your release from confinement. Please circle “is not” if you are not attaching a copy of your release paper. Lastly, if the sentence for the offense for which you are requesting an order of nondisclosure required you to serve a period of imprisonment in a state facility or prison, as opposed to confinement in the local jail, more likely than not, you were convicted of a felony offense, not a misdemeanor offense. If you were convicted of a felony offense, you are not eligible for an order of nondisclosure under Section 411.0735.

- (12) There is a filing fee associated with filing a petition for order of nondisclosure under Section 411.0735. The filing fee is the amount of the court’s regular civil filing fee plus an additional \$28. Typically, the total filing fee is about \$280. However, the amount varies from county to county. Please contact the clerk for the court in which you are filing the petition to obtain the correct amount of the total filing fee. **NOTE:** You do not have to pay the clerk to serve the petition on the attorney for the state (hereinafter “prosecutor”), Department of Public Safety (hereinafter “DPS”), or any other agency or entity, including any law enforcement entity. The statute requires the court, clerk, and DPS to notify the other parties of interest. See Sections 411.0745(e), 411.075(a) and 411.075(b), Government Code, respectively.

*As a general rule, you must pay the filing fee in order to file this petition. However, you may be eligible to file a **Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs** in lieu of paying the filing fee. The statement is described in Rule 145 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure 145. You may view Rule 145 online at <http://www.txcourts.gov/media/1435952/trcp-all-updated-with-amendments-effective-912016.pdf>. You can click *here* *for* *the* *form*: <http://www.txcourts.gov/media/1435953/statement-final-version.pdf>.*

Please place a check mark or an “x” on the line before the statement that applies to you. Place a check mark or “x” in front of the first statement, if you are paying the filing fee. If you are submitting a **Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs** instead, place a check mark or an “x” in front of the second statement.

- (13) Please sign above the line. If you are filing this petition electronically, you may enter “/s/” followed by your typewritten name.
- (14) Please PRINT your name.
- (15) Please enter your mailing address.
- (16) Please enter your city, state and zip code.
- (17) Please enter your telephone number.

Process After You Complete The PETITION

Assuming that you are eligible for an order of nondisclosure under Section 411.0735, the process for obtaining an order under this section is as follows:

First, make sure that you meet the waiting period requirement before you file the petition; check in advance with the clerk’s office to obtain the total amount of the filing fee (including the \$28 fee) that you will be expected to pay, unless you are submitting a *Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs* in lieu of paying the filing fee; and make sure that you complete the correct petition, namely, *Petition for Order of Nondisclosure under Section 411.0735*, according to the instructions, and after you have done so, print both the petition and the *Order of Nondisclosure*. In most courts, you will have to submit a proposed order with the petition when you file it. In this case, you want to submit the proposed *Order of Nondisclosure* provided with these materials. Ask the clerk whether you need to submit the proposed order when you file the petition or on a later date. The judge will complete the order, if the judge grants your request.

After you file the petition, the clerk will send it to the court and the court will notify the prosecutor. Again, you do not have to pay the clerk to serve notice on the prosecutor or any other party.

A hearing on the petition is not required if: the prosecutor does not request a hearing before the 45th day after the date the prosecutor receives notice from the court; and the court determines that you are entitled to file the petition and issuance of the order is in the best interest of justice.

If a hearing is scheduled, the court or clerk will notify you. If there is a hearing, the court may ask questions to establish whether you satisfy the requirements of Sections 411.074 and 411.0735, Government Code. After the hearing, if the court finds that you satisfy the requirements of the statutes and that issuance of the order of nondisclosure is in the best interest of justice, the court will grant your request for the order.

If the court does not hold a hearing, the judge will review your petition to determine whether satisfy the requirements of the statutes and whether issuance of the order of nondisclosure is in the best interest of justice. You are entitled to file the petition if you satisfy the requirements of Sections 411.074 and 411.0735, Government Code. If the court finds that you satisfy the requirements of the statutes and that issuance of the order is in the best interest of justice, the court will grant your request for the order.

The court and/or prosecutor will have access to your criminal history record information and will use it to determine if you are eligible to file the petition.

If the court grants the order of nondisclosure, not later than 15 business days after the date the order of nondisclosure issues, the clerk will send all relevant criminal history record information contained in the order or a copy of the order to DPS. Then, not later than 10 business days after the date DPS receives the relevant criminal history record information or the copy of the order, DPS will seal any criminal history record information maintained by DPS that is the subject of the order and send the relevant criminal history record information or a copy of the order to all state and federal agencies listed in 411.075(b), Government Code. See Section 411.075(b) for a complete list of agencies and entities that DPS must notify.