



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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## Press Release

### DA Morrissey holds training on new Law expunging records of old crimes

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*Attorneys and court personnel from cross Norfolk County packed the hall Dec. 13 for a seminar on the state's new law on expunging records co-hosted by District Attorney Michael Morrissey and the Quincy Bar Association. Pictured from left are Assistant District Attorney Susanne O'Neil, DA Morrissey, Probation Department Counsel Sarah Joss, ADA Peter Tilley who helped coordinate the event, Quincy Bar President Sarah Westra, and General Counsel to the District Court Zachary Hillman.*

Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey and the Quincy Bar Assoc. hosted a two-hour training for attorneys and court personnel on implementing a new law allowing people to expunge their records if they have led exemplary lives since making a criminal mistake years ago.

"The statute is narrowly drawn and specifically excludes domestic violence, gun crimes, drunk driving and certain others," District Attorney Morrissey said. "But it purposefully includes past convictions for things that have since been decriminalized. Examples would be possession of a hypodermic needle, adult possession of less than 2 ounces of marijuana, and knowingly being present where heroin is kept."

Morrissey rented a portion of the Quincy Elks Lodge on Quarry Street for the December 13 seminar. Presenters at the seminar included Assistant Norfolk District Attorney Susanne O'Neil, General Counsel for the Probation Department Sarah Joss, District Court General Counsel Zachary Hillman, Quincy Bar Assoc. President Sarah Westra, and James Kennedy, Counsel to the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Attorneys earned 2 hours of continuing legal education credits for attending.

More than 75 attended, including Stoughton District Court Presiding Judge Daniel O'Malley, Brookline District Court Presiding Judge Mary Dacey White, and representatives from the Dedham, Quincy, Wrentham and Superior Court staffs.

"We reached out to the other stake holders in the process in early November and the response has been very gratifying," Morrissey said. "As the public's elected representative within the criminal justice system, I see it as appropriate to take the initiative in paving the way for eligible citizens to remove marks from their records that may be hindering them. We uphold the law, and this is now the law."