

Chapter Headings

What is Restricted Information?

Restricted Information Form

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Redacting Information

Let's Review

Hello. Today we are going to talk about restricted information. The first thing you need to understand is what is meant by the term. We will also discuss something called the restricted information form. This video will help you understand what the form is used for and when you may be required to complete one. Let's start with the basics: What is restricted information?

Chapter Heading: What is restricted information?

Generally, court cases are open to the public. This means that anyone can view the case file at the courthouse. Some case information is also available online. Check... [Maryland Judiciary Case Search](#) and the Maryland Electronic Courts system, also called [MDEC](#).

Sometimes part of a document, the entire document, or even the entire case is defined by law as restricted information. This information is not open to the public.

Here are a few common examples of restricted information:

- For some types of cases the entire file is restricted. Examples include adoption, Guardianship termination of parental rights, juvenile delinquency, and child in need of assistance cases also known as CINA cases. The public is not permitted to view these cases.
- Sometimes just certain documents in a court file are restricted, meaning the public may be able to see the case but not particular documents. Examples include requests to waive court fees, income tax returns, and financial statements filed in family law cases like custody, divorce, and child support.
- Lastly, there are circumstances where the public may be able to view a document but some information in that document is restricted. This is typically something like a social security number or a financial account number. The public may see the document but with the restricted information taken out or redacted.

Now let's move on to the namesake of our video, the Restricted Information Form.

Chapter - Restricted Information Form

The person filing documents with the court is responsible for letting the court know if the documents, or any of their contents, are restricted. Complete the [Restricted Information Form](#) to let the court know that you are submitting something that Maryland law requires the court to keep private.

Officially, the court calls this document, Notice Regarding Restricted Information Pursuant to Rule 20-201.1 The form number is MDJ-008. Wow that is a mouthful. You might want to write this down so you can remember the name of the form when you go to find it online.

Asking the court to restrict certain information is not the same as asking the court to keep something private that would ordinarily be open to the public. This is usually called a request to seal or shield. There is a different form and process for these requests.

Now, let's discuss when you **must** file the Restricted Information Form

Chapter When You Must file the restricted information form

Take some time to review the document before you file. It is up to you to figure out what is and is not restricted. I am sorry, we don't have time to list every situation where you should fill out the form ,but here are a few tips.

First, check any other forms you are filling out. If the Restricted Information form is required to accompany a given form, that may be stated on the form.

Next, carefully read the Restricted Information Form. It lists the most common situations where it needs to be completed.

Read more about this and find a list of common situations where the form is required at mdcourts.gov/courthelp/restrictedinfoform.

Finally, consider these free options for assistance: First, you can ask a clerk at the courthouse where you intend to file the documents for help. Also, lawyers at-Maryland Court Help Centers can answer questions. Call 410-260-1392 or visit mdcourts.gov/helpcenter for live chat and walk-in options.

You may find it easier to complete the form using something called a [Maryland Guide and File interview](#). The interview will ask you simple questions about your case and when you are done, provide you with a completed form and instructions. Go online to mdcourts.gov/guideandfile to access the interview.

Keep in mind, the restricted information form is only required by some Maryland counties. It is only required by counties that use the MDEC case filing system. At the time we are filming this video that includes almost every county in Maryland.

One more thing before we review, Let's talk about Redacting Information

Chapter Heading: Redacting Information

When submitting documents that contain restricted information, submit both a redacted and unredacted copy. Redacted means that the restricted information is not visible. For instance, you may file a motion that lists your full bank account number. The bank account number is restricted, but the rest of your motion is not. In this case, you should:

Complete the Restricted Information Form. Be sure to include the reason why the information is restricted.

File one copy of the document that is not redacted, meaning that the restricted information is visible. Include in the title of the document “unredacted--to be shielded.”

File at least one copy that is redacted, meaning that the restricted information is **not** visible. Include in the title of the document the word “redacted.”

We have covered a lot of material. Let’s Review.

Chapter Heading: Let’s Review

Most, but not all, court records are open to the public. It is your responsibility to let the court know that you are submitting a restricted document. Use the form called [Notice Regarding Restricted Information Pursuant to Rule 20-201.1](#). Seek out legal advice. It can be hard to know what is or is not restricted. If you have questions, talk to a clerk at the courthouse where you will file the form or contact a lawyer at a Maryland Court Help Center. More information and places to get help are on our website, mdcourts.gov/courthelp.

Hope this has been helpful. Thanks for watching.