



# Summary Offenses in Pennsylvania

## WHAT IS A SUMMARY OFFENSE?

- A summary offense is the most minor type of criminal offense in Pennsylvania, and is often called a “non-traffic citation.”
- Summary offenses can include disorderly conduct, loitering, harassment, and low-level retail theft, among others.
- A conviction for a summary offense usually results in a fine. You may have never gone to court after getting a summary citation.

## CAN A SUMMARY OFFENSE BE EXPUNGED?

- If you were not convicted of the offense, it can be expunged immediately.
- If you were under 18 at the time of the offense and are now over 18, you can get it expunged six months after paying your fine.
- If you were over 18 at the time of the offense, you must have a five-year period where you were never arrested before you can get an expungement.

## CAN AN EMPLOYER CONSIDER A SUMMARY OFFENSE?

- A conviction for a summary offense is still considered a criminal conviction, so you should report it if an employer asks whether you have any convictions.
- A summary offense may also appear on your criminal record when an employer runs a background check.
- Employers should **NEVER** consider summary offenses under Pennsylvania law. If you are rejected from a job because of a summary offense, seek legal help!



COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES  
OF PHILADELPHIA

Center City Office: 1424 Chestnut St. | Philadelphia, PA 19102-2505 | Telephone: 215-981-3700 [clsphila.org](http://clsphila.org)  
North Philadelphia Law Center: 1410 West Erie Ave. | Philadelphia, PA 19140-4136 | Telephone: 215-227-2400