

Court Records -- A Matter of Public Trust

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Court records pertain to all the files and documentation kept by a court before, during and after legal proceedings. It is usually the task of the court reporter to keep a faithful record of what transpires during a session in court and it is from this transcript that court records come about. Along with the transcript, other documentation is also included in court documents such as legal forms, evidence, and other related files.

Different groups of people require access to court records for a variety of reasons. For instance, reporters and journalists usually request for court proceedings to get more information about a story that they are working on or to get the 'first scoop' on a recent occurrence.

The legal community is another group of people actively involved in acquiring court documents, whether it's to conduct research or build a case. For the latter, previous court records may be used against someone involved in a current court case.

Collectors and creditors are often eager to determine the outcome of a case and will need court documents to justify that their debtors need to pay them immediately according to what the law has ruled. Court proceedings become proof that they can now pursue their non-payers, especially if their settlements have been granted or if it has been recognized that the latter is financially capable of making payments.

Electronic court records, available on the Internet by request, has been met with opposition because of the threats to the personal privacy of those involved in the cases. However, most county and state courts believe that since these are matters of public record, making them available whether through actual offices or virtual offices in cyberspace do not make much of a qualitative difference. Actually, it remains of utmost importance that these court records are accessible to the general public to prove the integrity and transparency of the judicial system.

While recognizing the right of the public to information, the safety of those mentioned in court records must also be upheld. Since court documents need to be filled with accurate details, releasing them to the public should never be at the expense of the proper enforcement of the law. The danger is not only a forever tarnished reputation; it is also very likely that someone may want to seek revenge and as such 'track down' people involved in a particular case.

It is thus up to the court to decide, particularly in cases where a lot of sensitive information is involved, when access to court records should be given. It is usually limited to members of the court and parties to the litigation but if just cause is provided by a member of the public, then they may be given to them as well. Want to Know the Top Sites to Find Court Records? Read Dr. Amit Mehta's Unbiased Reviews ==> RecordsSiteReviews.com