

Sample Declaration #6

Dear Your Honor,

1. I struggled for most of my adult life with addiction to alcohol and abuse of drugs, and in 2000 and 2002, I was convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol. In 2004, I was convicted of possession of marijuana in excess of the amount I was allowed to grow with my medical marijuana card. I did not contest any of these convictions then, and today I continue to accept full responsibility for my actions and the impact they have had on my family and others.

2. I have been 16 years conviction-free, and 18 years sober.

3. In the 16 years since my last conviction I have completely changed my life. My felony charges for possession were dismissed in 2006 after I was released early from probation. I now petition the Court to consider my motion to dismiss my misdemeanor DUI convictions and to reduce my felony possession conviction to a misdemeanor.

4. My struggles with addiction to alcohol began as a young adult. I worked as a bartender and ran with a crowd that drank and partied. During counseling in my thirties, I started to uncover memories that my grandfather had sexually abused me as a child. This threw me for a loop because my grandfather had been my hero. My own mother was physically abusive to me when I was a child. I confronted her with these memories about my grandfather, and she confirmed they were true, and that my grandfather had also abused my aunts before me when they were young. Even more than before, I drank recklessly and heavily because I didn't want to feel.

5. My drinking impacted my entire family. I have three children (a daughter and two sons), and during my years of heavy drinking, my mother took my two youngest children to live with her because I couldn't care for them. Both of my sons struggle with addiction as adults. My daughter, who does not drink, did not want to be part of my life.

6. I had tried many times to overcome my addiction to alcohol and drugs with programs like AA and NA, but my struggle with alcohol came to a head with my last DUI conviction in 2002 because it was keeping me from my family. My daughter gave birth to my first grandson in April 2002. She would not let me see my grandson because of my drinking. I had hit bottom.

7. After my last DUI in the summer of 2002, I put my family before my addiction, and after I was clean and sober for a year, my daughter let me back into her life and let me see my grandson.

8. After I was released from probation early on my marijuana possession charge, I left [REDACTED] to go and live with my mother in [REDACTED]. In [REDACTED], I [REDACTED]. I asked God to lift the obsession with drugs and alcohol from me, and with the support of my family and church, I have now been sober for 18 years.

9. In 2013, I moved back to California, and moved in with my daughter and her family. I have reconnected with my daughter, and I have a close bond with her three sons. I am actively involved in the lives of my grandchildren. I take care of my 84-year-old mother, who lives with me and relies on me for transportation. My 17-year-old grandson also lives with me because of

his father's (my son's) struggles with addiction, and his two brothers come to stay with me in the summers. I am trying to teach my grandsons how to live a better life without drugs and alcohol.

10. Until COVID, I attended the [REDACTED], but I lead a pretty limited social life, which revolves around my daughter and her family, and my grandsons' sports teams.

11. I am a 64-year-old grandmother, and I don't want my criminal background to be how my grandchildren see me. I want to be able to help my daughter by sharing the load of driving my grandsons and their teammates to games and tournaments, but I would have to be fingerprinted, and I don't want my grandchildren's schools to know about my criminal past because that is not who I am today.

12. Although my felony possession conviction was dismissed after my early completion of probation in 2006, it is still on my record as a felony, so I am also asking to reduce that conviction to a misdemeanor so that I can eventually expunge it and also so that I can be eligible for restoration of my right to own firearms.

13. For all of these reasons, I respectfully request that the Court expunge my misdemeanor convictions and reduce my felony conviction to a misdemeanor so that I can participate fully in my grandchildren's lives.