



For Immediate Release

Harris County Criminal Courts at Law's B.A.Y.O.U. City Community Court to host sixth Fresh Start Resource Fair next month in Acres Homes

Online pre-registration for criminal record sealing opens Monday at noon with space for 230

May 12, 2023 — The Fresh Start Resource Fair is headed to Acres Homes in Northwest Houston next month and online pre-registration for criminal record sealing services opens Monday at noon.

Fresh Start is a second-chance program that helps eligible individuals get back on track after experiences with the criminal justice system by sealing their low-level, non-violent criminal records and connecting them to vital support services.

The upcoming fair is set for **Saturday, June 10, from 10 a.m. to noon, at Lincoln Community Center, 979 Greshaw St.** The fair is free and open to the public, but online pre-registration is required for access to criminal record sealing services.

Pre-registration for criminal record sealing opens at noon on Monday, May 15, at www.ccl.hctx.net/comcourt.htm. There is space for 230 people.

"A criminal record can be stigmatizing. It can keep you from getting jobs, housing, loans, professional certifications — all the things you really need to turn your life around," said Harris County Criminal Courts at Law Presiding Judge Genesis Draper. "We have a real opportunity at the misdemeanor level to help people get back on track, which stops the cycle and makes us all safer."

Fresh Start launched last spring as the first initiative offered under B.A.Y.O.U. City Community Court, the outreach arm of the Harris County Criminal Courts at Law. The June event is offered in partnership with the Harris County Public Defender's Office, Harris County Community Supervision and Corrections Department, and Harris County Commissioner Precinct 1.

In addition to criminal record sealing services, Fresh Start Resource Fair features access to a variety of support services designed to help people get back on their feet, including:

- Job training and placement services, hiring fairs, workforce scholarships, and career coaching, as well as specific career training programs for welding, machining, and manufacturing
- Education options for adults and youth, including non-traditional high school and GED programs
- Help navigating and applying for state and local benefits (CHIP, SNAP, Harris Health Financial Assistance Plan, etc.)
- Mental and physical health resources, including lead testing and COVID/Flu vaccines
- Support for individuals who were previously incarcerated and connection to second-chance employers
- Voter registration

For more information about Fresh Start or to pre-register, go to www.ccl.hctx.net/comcourt.htm. Pre-registration closes at 4 p.m. on Friday, June 2 — or sooner if spaces are full.

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