

CASA MYRNA

Joseph Stanton, Clerk
Massachusetts Appeals Court, Room 1200
One Pemberton Square
Boston, MA 02108-1705

Re: Criminal Cases and Internet Access to Docket Entries and Court Files

Mr. Stanton:

My name is Katharine Milton and I work in the Legal Advocacy Program at Casa Myrna Vazquez, an organization that is dedicated to helping survivors of domestic violence. My program focuses on helping survivors with abuse prevention orders and family law issues such as divorce, child custody, and child support.

I oppose online access to criminal records from a trial court website. Many domestic violence survivors have meritless criminal cases filed against them by their abusers in retaliation for leaving the abusive relationship. These cases often get dismissed, but the criminal case file remains. Permitting online access to criminal cases prolongs the life of a case and if a data mining company gets information regarding the case, the case and its stigma will haunt the survivor for years. There is nothing to be gained by putting these embarrassing cases online. It does nothing to promote justice and has the potential of creating barriers to employment to survivors trying to rebuild their lives.

I can be reached at 617-521-0143 or at kmilton@casamyrna.org.

Sincerely,

Katharine Milton
Managing Attorney