



**OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER
4th JUDICIAL DISTRICT
123 NORTH COLLEGE AVE
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Chris Birch
Deputy Public Defender
(479) 444-1595

Clients of the Public Defender's Office:

I am the District Court Public Defender for Washington County. If the Judge has approved your request for a Public Defender, I am now your attorney. Please keep the following points in mind:

- **Verify that you have been approved.** Some offenses may not qualify for the representation of a Public Defender. Additionally, the Judge may deny your application if the Judge determines you make too much money or have been repeatedly appointed a Public Defender and Fail to Appear (FTA) at your subsequent court dates. Check with the Court Clerk to determine how you can verify that you have been approved.
- **You are the client.** I cannot discuss the facts of your case with anyone but you without your express permission. This includes friends or family members.
- **Contact my office.** Please allow one to two weeks after completing your application to contact my office. It takes time for the Judge to review your application and time for my office to receive the notice of appointment and begin preparing a file.
- **Call to schedule an appointment.** I would like to speak with you to discuss your case. I know that this can be a scary time, and you probably have many questions. We will only have a few minutes to discuss your case on your court date. Therefore, I highly recommend meeting with you at my office prior to your court date. Please call my office at (479) 444-1595 to schedule an appointment. Please tell the Legal Assistants that I am your attorney, your legal name, and that you would like to schedule an appointment.

- **Bring all relevant documents.** When you arrive at my office for your scheduled appointment, please bring all documents and/or other information that you believe may be useful in your defense. Depending on your charges, this may include medical records, prescription drug information, court documents, insurance records, substance abuse classes / rehab certificates, etc.

- **It is your responsibility to contact me.** You are facing criminal charges. It is my duty to advise you of your legal rights and to formulate any applicable defense to your criminal charges. I cannot adequately defend you if you do not assist me by maintaining good contact and meeting with me prior to your court date. If I have not met with you to discuss your case prior to your court date, and/or you have not had any contact with me, the Judge may revoke your bond and place you in jail until your next court date. If you wait until the last minute to contact me, I may not have time to meet with you before your scheduled court date.

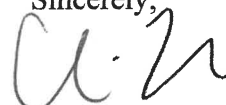
- **It is a crime to miss your court date.** If you are not present in court on your scheduled court date, you may face an additional charge of Failure to Appear. This offense may subject you to additional fines, fees, and penalties, including the possibility of jail. If you do not know your court date, contact the court clerk's office of the district in which you are charged.

- **Do not discuss your case with anyone else.** Unfortunately, there is little you can do to help your case until we meet. You should refrain from discussing your case with anyone until we have met – this includes posting to social media accounts.

I strongly encourage you to take this process seriously. Depending on your charges, the potential punishment you face can be severe. You have asked this Court and the State of Arkansas to provide you with legal representation, and it has been provided. It is up to you – and you alone – to take advantage of this process. For your own benefit, I urge you to make every effort to promptly address your pending charges and allow me to provide the legal guidance you have requested.

I look forward to working with you over the coming weeks. During our first meeting we will discuss the facts of your case, your goals and objectives, and the best course of action to achieve those goals. We have various options – including setting your case for trial, or accepting a negotiated settlement from the prosecution in exchange for a guilty plea. The specific facts of your case and the availability of any valid defenses will assist in determining how to resolve your case in a manner that is most beneficial to you. Without your help, I will not be able to best advise you of your options. Until then, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Chris Birch