

What to know when you have an open case in Philly during the COVID-19 Pandemic

CHECK UPDATES ON THE COURT PROCESS CLOSE TO YOUR HEARING DATE



If you have been given a court date, please be in touch with your attorney in advance to find out what is required. Some hearings are happening in person and your appearance is required to avoid a warrant. Others are happening virtually. Some scheduled hearings will be rescheduled without the need for you to come to court. There are significant delays in just about all hearings due to safety measures at the courts. **This is a rapidly changing situation, so please look for updates at www.phillydefenders.org.**

STAY IN CONTACT WITH YOUR ATTORNEY



Make sure to contact your attorney's office within 3 days of your release after arrest, and continue to stay in touch throughout your case. Please touch base with your attorney at least a week prior to every hearing date, and make sure they know how to reach you. It is important that they have your updated contact information so they can reach you while working on your case and while preparing to defend you in court. You can also sign up to receive text alerts as reminders for upcoming court dates.

CONTACT THE DEFENDER OFFICE SO WE CAN DEFEND YOU



If you are represented by the Defender Association and you have not been interviewed by Defender staff, you will need an interview before your next hearing to make sure we have all the information we need to defend you. **Please call (267) 807-1157 or visit phillydefenders.org/client-interview** to schedule an interview. If you have completed an interview and need to reach us, see the list of contacts below. Please understand that our staff is working remotely from outside the office due to pandemic restrictions; if you call the office and do not leave a voicemail message, we will not know that you called. If you need any supportive services at this time, please contact us right away.

GATHER AND SUBMIT IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS TO HELP YOUR DEFENSE



If you have any information about your case or about you that would be helpful to share with us, please forward it as soon as possible to the contacts given below. Documents that can help verify employment or letters from employers can be very helpful, as well as documents and photos about your health, school, program certificates, family responsibilities, future prospects, and community work. If you have any witness information, photos, video, or other useful information about your case, please send it to us immediately.

GET COMMUNITY SUPPORT TO HELP NAVIGATE YOUR CASE



There is community support available for you and your family as you navigate your case, whether you are represented by the Defender, a court-appointed attorney, or a private attorney. Community-led Hubs can help you identify and gather documents and letters that can help with your defense. You can find a community support group online meeting at phillydefenders.org/participatorydefense.

For additional updates, call us at 215-568-3190 or go to www.phillydefenders.org



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