

FREE GUIDE

The First 24 Hours After an Arrest

Free and confidential help in your language for people facing criminal charges in the United States.



GuardLine Defense | guardlinedefense.com

GuardLine Defense is a free attorney-matching and information service. We are not a law firm, we do not provide legal advice, and using this resource does not create an attorney-client relationship. Attorney advertising. We never charge you and are never paid a percentage of any attorney's fees. If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

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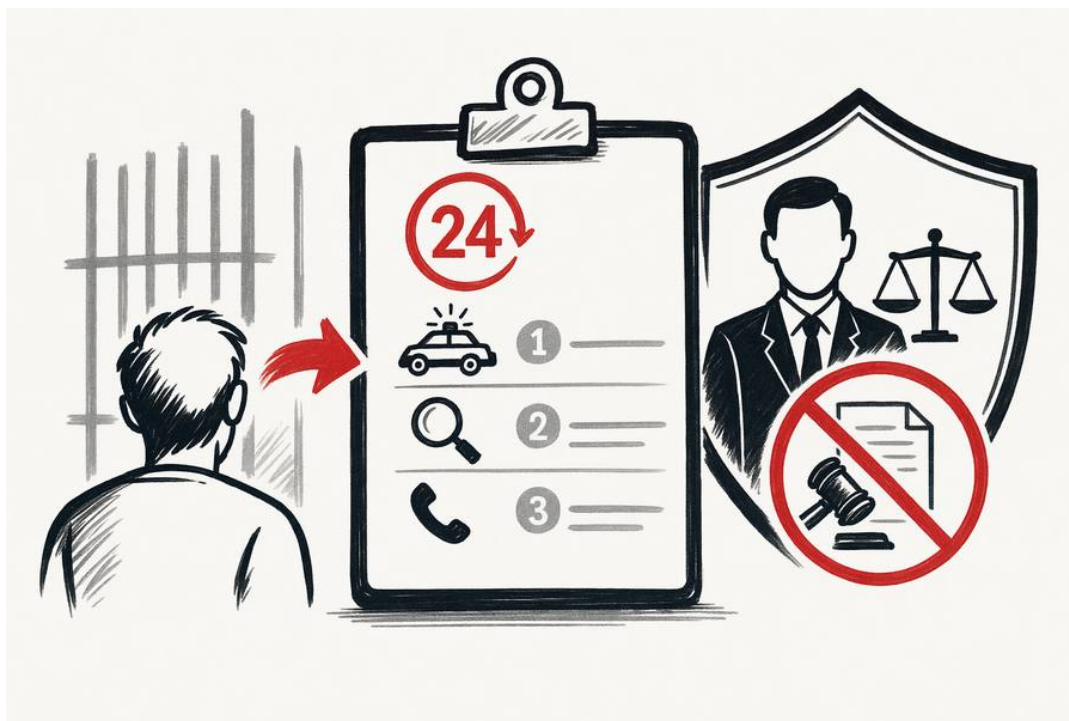
The first day after an arrest can feel fast, confusing, and frightening. This guide explains common early steps, what you can say, and how to ask for a lawyer in plain language. GuardLine Defense is a free attorney-matching service, not a law firm, and this guide is not legal advice.

WHAT TO DO RIGHT AWAY

- Stay as calm as you can and keep your hands where officers can see them.
- Do not argue, run, or resist, even if you think the arrest is wrong.
- Ask, "Am I free to leave?" If the answer is no, stay calm and say little.
- Use your right to remain silent. You can say, "I want to remain silent."
- Ask for a lawyer clearly. You can say, "I want a lawyer."
- Do not explain your immigration status, birthplace, or how you entered the country.
- Do not sign papers you do not understand. Ask to speak with a lawyer first.

WHAT TO SAY AND NOT SAY

- Say your name if required, then stop talking about the case.
- Do not guess, make up details, or try to talk your way out of it.
- Do not discuss the facts of the arrest with police, jail staff, or other people in custody.
- Do not agree to searches or hand over your phone password unless your lawyer tells you to.
- If questioned, repeat: "I want to remain silent. I want a lawyer."
- Remember: you have the right to a defense and to remain silent no matter your immigration status.



WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS IN THE FIRST DAY

- Police may search you, take your property, and write down your personal information.
- You may be taken to a station or jail for booking, fingerprints, and photographs.
- Your belongings may be stored until release. Try to remember what was taken.
- You may wait a long time before learning the next step. Delays are common.
- You may get a chance to make a phone call or ask someone to contact help for you.
- A court hearing may be set, or you may be told about release conditions.
- If immigration officers become involved, do not answer questions without a lawyer.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR CASE

- Do not talk about your case on the phone if the call may be recorded.
- Do not post online, message friends about the arrest, or ask others to delete anything.
- Keep names, badge numbers, location, and witness details in mind if you can do so safely.
- Tell your lawyer about any medical needs, mental health needs, or language needs.
- Ask for an interpreter if you do not fully understand English.
- Do not accept advice about your case from other people in jail.
- A criminal case can affect immigration status, so ask for a defense lawyer as soon as possible.



HOW GUARDLINE DEFENSE CAN HELP

- GuardLine Defense helps connect immigrants facing criminal charges with a defense lawyer.
- The service is free to use for people looking for help.
- GuardLine Defense is not a law firm and does not give legal advice.
- A lawyer can explain the charge, speak for you, and help protect your rights.

- If a family member is helping, they can gather your full name, jail location, and booking details if known.
- They can also write down your medical needs, preferred language, and a safe callback number.
- When asking for help, share only basic facts at first and avoid telling the full story until you speak with a lawyer.





You do not have to face the first day alone. Stay calm, use your right to remain silent, ask for a lawyer, and reach out to GuardLine Defense for free help finding a defense attorney.

Want a real person to help? Get matched with a criminal defense attorney for free at guardlinedefense.com — in your language, no obligation.

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