

# WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOUR FIRST APPEARANCE AT CRIMINAL COURT

Whether you're released by police or on bail, you will get a piece of paper that gives you the date, time and location of your first court date.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOUR FIRST APPEARANCE

### 1 Get your disclosure

Your disclosure is the copy of the evidence that the Crown and police have collected.

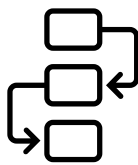
It can include:



Investigating officer notes



Witness statements



Diagrams



Photographs

The disclosure package will also have a charge screening form that tells you **whether or not the Crown will ask for a jail sentence** if you plead guilty or if you're found guilty after a trial.

**You have to ask for this in writing.** Contact the court office on your release document as soon as possible to find out to receive these materials.

### 2 Not comfortable speaking in English? Get an interpreter for free.

Call the courthouse that is listed on your release document and leave a message with:



Your full name



The language you speak



The date and time you are coming to court



The courtroom number

### 3 What to bring to court

- Any documents the police or anyone else gave you relating to your charge
- Any papers relating to your income – you may need to apply for legal aid if you can't afford a lawyer
- Anything else you think might be important to your case

## GETTING LEGAL HELP IN THE COURTROOM

If you don't have a lawyer, it's helpful to see duty counsel after you've received your disclosure.

Duty counsel can:



Give you advice and information about your rights



Tell you how the court process works



Help you with documents or represent you (in some cases)

For more information, visit [legalaids.on.ca/FAQ](https://legalaids.on.ca/FAQ).