



## IMPORTANT

If the District Court Commissioner determines that you are eligible to be represented by the Public Defender at trial, you will receive a **FINAL QUALIFICATION** in writing. The Public Defender will contact you regarding your case. Once you have received your Final Qualification, all questions should be directed to the Public Defender's Office.

**IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A LAWYER ON THE TRIAL DATE, YOU MAY HAVE TO GO TO TRIAL WITHOUT THE ASSISTANCE OF A LAWYER.**

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For more information about the Maryland Judiciary and the District Court visit:

[www.mdcourts.gov](http://www.mdcourts.gov)

*The mission of the District Court of Maryland is to provide equal and exact justice for all who are involved in litigation before the court.*

This brochure is intended to inform the public. It is NOT legal advice. This brochure is subject to unscheduled and unannounced revisions. Any reproduction of this material must be authorized by the Office of the Chief Clerk of the District Court of Maryland.

DC-099BR (Rev. 11/2017)



Public Defender Eligibility

How to  
Apply  
for a  
Public  
Defender

How to Apply for Public Defender website:  
[mdcourts.gov/district/pdinfo.html](http://mdcourts.gov/district/pdinfo.html)

## **WHEN TO APPLY WITH A DISTRICT COURT COMMISSIONER**

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A District Court Commissioner will determine whether you qualify to be represented by the Public Defender for District Court or Circuit Court criminal cases that carry a penalty of incarceration.

You will be interviewed by a District Court Commissioner and complete a written application, Form DC-099, available at: [mdcourts.gov/district/forms/general/dc099.pdf](http://mdcourts.gov/district/forms/general/dc099.pdf). You will need to provide information about your income, expenses, and assets.

Bring the following papers, along with the DC-099 Application for Representation, if you have completed it ahead of time:

1. Court charging documents/traffic tickets. (Statement of Charges/all documents issued to you by the Court.)
2. Trial date notices from the Court. (You may apply even if you haven't received your trial date notice.)
3. If you are employed: written proof of salary, pay stubs, or other written verification of income for the last two (2) pay periods.
4. If you are unemployed: proof of public assistance, medical assistance, Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or other assistance you are receiving.

## **HOW TO APPLY AT DISTRICT COURT COMMISSIONER LOCATIONS**

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Information regarding how to apply may be found at: [mdcourts.gov/district/pdinfo.html](http://mdcourts.gov/district/pdinfo.html)

Commissioner locations can be found at: [mdcourts.gov/district/directories/commissionermap.html](http://mdcourts.gov/district/directories/commissionermap.html)

You may also call 1-833-453-9799 for location information.

## **TO CHECK YOUR QUALIFICATION STATUS**

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The District Court commissioner will notify you by mail and e-mail (if an e-mail address was provided) of your qualification status. Please allow at least one (1) week before contacting the District Court commissioner regarding the status of your application.

**You may apply at any District Court Commissioner's Office, not just in the county where you go to court.**

## **WHEN TO APPLY DIRECTLY WITH THE PUBLIC DEFENDER**

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- Child in Need of Assistance (CINA).
- Juvenile Court cases.
- Appellate Court cases.
- Any case that holds no penalty of incarceration, but has a fine over \$500.

Visit the Office of the Public Defender website for District / County Offices at:

[www.opd.state.md.us](http://www.opd.state.md.us)

or

Toll-free 1-877-430-5187

