

Questions to Ask During Your Free Consultation with a Criminal Defense Attorney

The consultation may be free but it will cost you plenty down the road if you don't go into the meeting prepared. This post will help you be ready.

Make sure the attorney is experienced. You don't want someone learning on your case.

- Where did you attend law school?
- When did you graduate?
- How long have you been practicing criminal law?
- How often do you appear in the courthouse where my case will be handled?
 - Do you frequently negotiate plea agreements with the prosecutor's office?
 - How would you describe your relationship with the prosecutor's office?
- How familiar are you with the charges against me?

Make sure the attorney you are talking to will be the one handling your case.

- Will you be the primary attorney handling my case?
 - If not, can I meet the primary attorney?
- Will anyone else work on my case?
- Will you be with me in court?

Make sure the attorney can explain the process to you and will keep you informed.

You deserve to know what is going on with your case.

- How often should I expect updates from you about my case?
- How quickly can I expect a response when I contact you with questions?

Make sure the attorney explains what it will cost to represent you.

- If you charge by the hour, what is your rate?
 - Will I have to pay a retainer fee?
 - How does that work?
- If you charge a flat fee, what is it?
 - Is the fee refundable?
 - Do I have to pay the fee up front?
- Does the fee cover the whole case from start to finish?
 - If not, what does the fee cover?
 - Are there separate fees for trial?
- What other expenses does the fee not cover?
 - Can you give me an estimate for them?