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1 - Getting legal advice

Your right to a public defence counsel

If the court requests that you are held in detention, a public defence counsel will be appointed for you immediately. On the other hand, if you are not detained, you may not get a public defence counsel until criminal proceedings are started. However, you always have the right to ask for a public defence counsel to be appointed for you if you are suspected of a crime for which the minimum sentence is six months in prison. You may also have the right to a public defence counsel in other cases.

Finding a lawyer

If you want a particular lawyer, you are normally entitled to ask for this person to be appointed as your public defence counsel. The district court will otherwise appoint a public defence counsel for you. If it does so, this person will be appointed from among the lawyers who regularly take on jobs as public defence counsel at the district court in question. Each district court has a list of local lawyers who usually take on jobs as public defence counsel.

You can also search for lawyers who work on criminal cases on the website of the [Swedish Bar Association](#).

Paying for a lawyer

If a public defence counsel is appointed for you, the State will pay the lawyer's costs. If you are found guilty of the crime you are suspected of, depending on your financial circumstances, you may have to repay all or some of these costs. This will be decided by the court.

If you want a lawyer whose practice is in a part of the country other than that where the court is located, you may have to pay for the lawyer's travel expenses and travelling time yourself.

You can also choose a private defence counsel. If you do so, you will have to pay the entire cost yourself. If you are acquitted, however, it is possible for you to have the whole or part of this cost reimbursed.

Related links

[Swedish Bar Association](#)

[National Legal Aid Authority](#)

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