

[Home](#) > ... > [Your Rights](#) > [Defendants \(criminal Proceedings\)](#) > 1 - Getting legal advice

## 1 - Getting legal advice

### Finding a lawyer

If you are in custody, and need a lawyer, Gardaí can search for a solicitor available to attend their local garda station to provide legal advice and attend interviews. If you as a detainee do not nominate your own solicitor, Gardaí can print a current, randomised list of available solicitors for their division on the day you are detained. A list of solicitors who can provide legal services to persons detained pursuant to a European Arrest Warrant is also available.

If you are not in custody, but require advice from a criminal lawyer you can contact the [Law Society of Ireland](#), who will provide you with the names of solicitors who do criminal defence work. They are not permitted to recommend any one firm.

Another way to find a lawyer specialising in this work is by word of mouth, if you know people who have been in a similar situation before. Alternatively you could try the internet, where most law firms show their areas of work that might be best for your issue.

### Paying for a lawyer

In Ireland, there is a system of legal aid which can provide the services of a lawyer to a person suspected or accused of an offence, at no cost to the person, in certain circumstances.

If you are detained for questioning under certain legislation at a Garda Station, and you are in receipt of Social Welfare payments or in employment earning less than €20,316 gross per annum, you are probably eligible to receive assistance under the [Garda Station Legal Advice Revised Scheme](#). You have to [sign a declaration form](#) for you solicitor to access this scheme, which then entitles you to the services of a solicitor free of charge.

If you have been charged with an offence, then you are entitled to apply to the judge you are in receipt of Social Welfare payments or receiving a low income, you may be entitled to apply to the judge, at the court where you appear, for free legal aid. Your solicitor will help you apply to the court. If you don't have a solicitor, the judge informs you of your right to free legal aid and it is at this stage that the [application](#) is made by you. If you are working, you may have to fill out a declaration form.

If you are charged under certain offences that involve the Criminal Assets Bureau, you may avail of the [Criminal Assets Bureau Ad-hoc Legal Aid Scheme](#). This scheme provides legal representation for people who need it but who cannot afford it, however the scheme is subject to [specific terms and eligibility criteria](#).

### Related links

[Criminal legal aid](#)

[Law Society of Ireland](#)

■ Last update: 06/08/2025

The national language version of this page is maintained by the respective Member State. The translations have been done by the European Commission service. Possible changes introduced in the original by the competent national authority may not be yet reflected in the translations. The European Commission accepts no responsibility or liability whatsoever with regard to any information or data contained or referred to in this document. Please refer to the legal notice to see copyright rules for the Member State responsible for this page.