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## 1 - Getting legal advice

### Finding a lawyer

If you think that you need a lawyer but do not know any, you can choose among lawyers working with the district court in the area where you live. You can also find contact details of the 27 Bar Associations in Bulgaria on the [Supreme Bar Council](#) website. If you are arrested, you are entitled to see a lawyer from the moment of your arrest. As, after the arrest, you also have the right to contact a relative or a friend, you can ask them to hire a lawyer for you.

### Paying for a lawyer

If you choose your lawyer, you pay for the services under a written agreement signed between you and the lawyer.

If you cannot afford, but wish to have a lawyer, and the interests of justice require this, you are entitled to free legal aid. It can be provided either at your request or by virtue of the law if you must have defence. Depending on the stage of the process (see [Factsheet 1](#)), that decision is made either by the prosecutor (pre-trial) or by the court (during trial) following an assessment of your property status.

If you need to have legal advice, the prosecutor or the court promptly send their decision to the Council of the respective Bar Association to allocate a lawyer for you. Please note that if you are convicted you must refund the sum paid to the lawyer allocated to you.

### Related links

[The Bar Act](#)

[Legal Aid Act](#)

[Criminal Procedure Code](#)

[National Legal Service Authority](#)

[Supreme Bar Council](#)

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