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1 - Getting legal advice

How can I find a lawyer?

If you are suspected of a crime, you always have the right to a lawyer. The police may ask you if you need a lawyer, but by law you do not need a lawyer unless you have been apprehended, arrested or imprisoned. You usually have the right to have the lawyer you want with you when you are questioned. The police may also find you a lawyer if you think you need one but do not know where to find one.

There is no monopoly on advocacy in Finland, so anyone with a law degree may act as a lawyer (the law on this is currently being revised). You can find a criminal lawyer on the [Finnish Bar Association](#) website. In addition, the Legal Aid Offices may help you (the contact information for Legal Aid Offices can be found [here](#)).

Paying for a lawyer

The main rule is that you pay for the lawyer yourself. If your income is low, you may receive legal aid. In that case, the State will pay the lawyer's fees either fully or in part. If you are suspected of a crime for which the lowest sentence is four months of imprisonment, a defence counsel will be appointed for you if you request one. The State will pay the defence counsel's fees. However, you will have to repay the defence counsel's fees to the State if you are sentenced for the crime, unless your income is so low that you are entitled to legal aid. The sums that you must pay are determined in the same way as for legal aid.

The defence counsel can be a public legal aid attorney, an advocate or other lawyer. Usually, if you ask for a specific lawyer, he or she will be appointed as your counsel.

Related links

[Finnish Bar Association](#)

[Finnish Bar Association](#)

[Finlands Advokatförbund](#)

[Oikeusaputoimistojen yhteystiedot](#)

[Contact information of the public legal aid offices](#)

[Kontaktinformation för rättshjälpsbyråerna](#)

[Income limits for receiving legal aid](#)

[Inkomstgränser för beviljande av rättshjälp](#)

■ Last update: 12/09/2025

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