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BEXAR COUNTY CLIENT WORKSHEET

Know Your Right to Counsel

A short reference on the right to a lawyer in Texas, with space to record requests for appointed counsel and the dates that matter.

The right to a lawyer

The Sixth Amendment guarantees the assistance of counsel in a criminal case,^[1] and the Supreme Court held in *Gideon v. Wainwright* that this right applies in state courts.^[2] Texas law confirms the right to be represented by counsel.^[3]

After an arrest, a magistrate must give warnings, including the right to counsel and the right to request appointed counsel.^[4] A person who cannot afford a lawyer may ask the court to appoint one, and the court decides eligibility.^[5]

Record your requests

If a request for appointed counsel is made, write down when and to whom, and keep any paperwork. The Texas Indigent Defense Commission explains these rights in plain language.^[6]

DATE YOU ASKED FOR A LAWYER, AND TO WHOM

DATE ANY APPOINTMENT PAPERWORK WAS SUBMITTED

NEXT COURT DATE

NAME OF ANY LAWYER ASSIGNED OR RETAINED

Questions to ask

Write the questions to be answered about counsel and the next steps.

Verify and confirm

Any Texas attorney's license and standing can be confirmed through the State Bar of Texas.^[7]

Sources

1. U.S. Const. amend. VI (right to the assistance of counsel) [\[source\]](#)
2. Gideon v. Wainwright, 372 U.S. 335 (1963) [\[source\]](#)
3. Tex. Code Crim. Proc. art. 1.051 (right to representation by counsel) [\[source\]](#)
4. Tex. Code Crim. Proc. art. 15.17 (magistrate's warnings after arrest) [\[source\]](#)
5. Tex. Code Crim. Proc. art. 26.04 (appointment of counsel; procedures for determining indigence) [\[source\]](#)
6. Texas Indigent Defense Commission, Know Your Rights [\[source\]](#)
7. State Bar of Texas, Find a Lawyer (verify an attorney's license and standing) [\[source\]](#)

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