

Illinois Criminal Defense



The Illinois Criminal Defense Survival Guide

*How to reclaim control of your life after being arrested for a
drug crime, firearms charge or other violent offense*

First Edition

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Introduction

My scars remind me that I did indeed survive my deepest wounds. That in itself is an accomplishment. And they bring to mind something else, too. They remind me that the damage life has inflicted on me has, in many places, left me stronger and more resilient. What hurt me in the past has actually made me better equipped to face the present. –Steve Goodier

Life is full of transformative moments. Some of them you seek out and relish. Others get thrust upon you and cause you pain. How we react during these times determines the course of our lives.

As someone who was just arrested, you are at a major turning point right now. You are likely **scared**, **confused** and overwhelmed. But whatever happened, happened. Dwelling on how you got here will not help you get through this. What **really** matters is what you do *next*. What will you learn from this experience? Most importantly, what steps do you need to take now?

Maybe you did, indeed, commit a crime. Perhaps **the police illegally arrested** you or charged you incorrectly. Or maybe you are completely innocent. In any case, you need to act strategically to protect your freedom, your career opportunities, your relationships and most importantly, your future.

The reality is that getting arrested is a traumatic experience that can lead to a downward spiral if it is not taken care of properly and immediately. According to the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform, our state's prison population has **grown exponentially** in the last four decades, from 6,000 inmates in 1974 to about 49,000 currently.

But just because you face difficult odds—and maybe made some bad decisions—it does not mean that your fate is sealed. By approaching your case intelligently and carefully, you can take back control of your case, and your life. This moment in time could even be a *positively* defining one.

This book will help. It's not a step-by-step recipe for clearing your name and getting your future back on track. It will, however, give you an overlook of what you can expect when dealing with a criminal case. It will answer some critical questions about your defense options.

And we are here to help. The experienced Illinois criminal defense attorneys at Abdallah Law, P.C. have worked with many clients just like you—facing serious drug charges, firearms charges and all other criminal offenses. We are standing by to give you the clarity you need. Call us at any time at 312-229-0008 for a confidential, free consultation.

What to Do Following an Arrest

It's your reaction to adversity, not adversity itself that determines how your life's story will develop. –Dieter F. Uchtdorf

The following principles can help you prevent making a bad situation worse.

Don't talk to anyone about your case, except your lawyer. Do not talk to investigators or police who “want to make it easy on you.” If you demand that your attorney be present, they cannot keep asking you questions. Be careful. Investigators are trained to get people to talk. For instance, they may talk to others in your presence to try to get you to engage in conversation. Or they may just “tell you something,” not “ask,” so you'll want to start talking again. Keep it simple. Don't say anything but “I want my lawyer.”

Obey restrictions and the terms of your release. For instance, you may be ordered to stay away from a person or location, or you may be told to avoid engaging in certain activities. If you violate these conditions, you can be arrested for violating the terms of your bond and end up in jail until the end of trial.

End your use of social media. If you are not careful, your social media posts can get you in serious trouble. For instance, if you respond to a well-meaning

friend who sends a Facebook message asking what happened. The details you tell your friend could create major problems for you and your friend. For instance, if you share information about a crime, your friend may be obligated to tell law enforcement about it or risk legal trouble of his own. Or let's say you make a sarcastic joke online about being guilty. That can be used against you at trial as an "admission against interest." A judge or jury tends to believe people who admit their roles in crimes. Be on the safe side. Unless your attorney tells you otherwise, stop all social media use until the end of your case.

Stay out of trouble. Do not drive recklessly. Do not use any drugs. Limit or refrain from drinking alcohol. Try to stay away from anybody that may bring trouble your way. If you anticipate a problem—tell your attorney about your concerns.

It's not like TV: Prepare for a longer process. On TV shows, it often seems that someone who is arrested goes to trial almost immediately. That is a false belief. You do have a constitutional right to a "speedy trial," but the legal definition of "speedy trial" is not the same as it sounds. In one study about cases in 2013, it took an average of 152 days—*five months*—for criminal cases to be resolved. And that time span ranges from the time of arrest to the ultimate resolution or disposition of the case. And the type of case you are charged with greatly impacts the length of the case. Felony cases with a drug offense tend to take 51 fewer days than other felonies. But an allegation of violence significantly lengthens the time: a felony case including a violent offense will add almost months to the process.

Retain a qualified criminal defense attorney as soon as possible; do not settle for any attorney.

Choose a *criminal* defense lawyer, not an attorney who handles other matters, like a family law lawyer or business law attorney. Most criminal attorneys—on both the prosecutorial and defense side—can focus even more narrowly.

Some lawyers focus only on white collar crimes and other focus on drugs.

Find a lawyer who has lots of experience successfully helping people defend against the *type of charges that you face*.

Find an attorney who knows the law, venue and procedure. A skilled, criminal defense attorney knows what arguments are most compelling for your case. And furthermore, your attorney may know what arguments are most compelling with your judge. Your attorney can guide you about what to expect—even when it comes to the little things, like navigating through the courthouse to get to your court room. Your lawyer will also know what happened to other people in your situation. Is your type of case typically dismissed? If not, what type of disposition is common? The attorney will assess things that fly under your radar—political pressures influencing the prosecution's office, for instance.

It is well worth your time and energy to find an attorney that is good fit for you. Speak to the attorney and make sure you feel comfortable with them and the approach they are taking on your case. A criminal defense case is not a do it yourself project; so, you should put it in the hands of the professional and set your mind at ease.

When you interview a prospective attorney, ask good questions, along the lines of the following:

- *Why do you and your team do what you do? What inspires you about this work?*
- *How did you get into criminal defense, and how long have you been practicing in this area?*
- *What are your strengths and weaknesses? How are you different from other attorneys who handle cases like mine?*
- *Based on the basic details of my case, how would you approach it?*
- *How does your fee arrangement work, and what's included with it?*
- *What are your expectations of your clients?*
- *How do you like to communicate with your clients (e.g. by phone, email, text, in person, etc.)?*
- *Assuming this is a good fit, what would the next steps be?*

Once you have chosen your lawyer, you still need to be careful.

Be forthcoming and honest with your attorney. Cooperate and be proactive. Provide relevant documents, texts and emails. Make lists of people he or she should interview. Tell your attorney the entire story of your case from beginning to end.

It may be tempting, but don't investigate your case yourself. If you have questions or suggestions regarding your case, tell your attorney immediately. Do not act on your own without consulting with your attorney because you

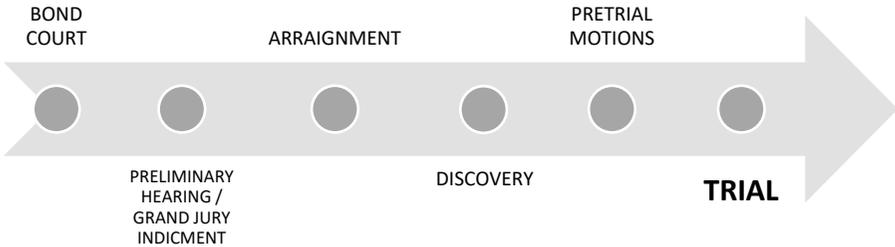
may do more harm than good. An example of that is if a witness claims you are harassing or intimidating them because you are asking them about your case. Trust your attorney and make any requests directly to your attorney.

The only person you should talk to about your case is your lawyer. It is just easier that way. If you talk to friends or family about what is going on, you can accidentally make them witnesses. If your boss or school administrator needs information, ask your lawyer what you should or should not say.

Tell the attorney beforehand if you have any travel plans, even if you are just going on an overnight get-away, because you generally cannot leave the state without the Court's permission. Your attorney can ask for permission on your behalf so you can avoid any unnecessary hassle or delays.

Give your attorney your contact information—how he or she can reach you 24/7, and include at least one or two fallback contacts who will know how to reach you, if your lawyer can not.

What Happens in Court from Bond Court to Trial



During your first hearing after arrest, your lawyer will ask for bail to be set. Understand that the judge has the discretion to set conditions on bail, meaning, for example, how much money you must pay to be released while you fight your case. Many times in Illinois, the judge will set a deposit bond otherwise known as “D bond”. With a D bond, the defendant will have to post 10% of the bond amount set by the Court. The judge can also set what is called a “C bond”. In this case, the full bond amount must be posted. A defendant can be released on his own recognizance, and that is commonly referred to as on “I bond”. That means he will not have to post any money for bond to secure his release.

Once you post the bond or sign the “I bond” you will be able to leave jail, but you must still appear at all future court dates. If you cannot afford to post bail, then your lawyer may request the Court place you on Electronic Monitoring which is also called house arrest. The Court and Sheriff must approve house arrest.

Preliminary hearing or Grand Jury Indictment the charging process.

When pursuing felony charges against a defendant, states utilize either a “grand jury” or “preliminary hearing” system. The point of either of these systems is to make sure adequate evidence exists to formally bring criminal charges. In Illinois, we utilize the grand jury system and preliminary hearing system. Since the prosecution is the charging body, they get to choose which way they want to bring charges forward against you.

Preliminary Hearing

At the preliminary hearing, the prosecution will present witnesses that will testify to the circumstances of the crime, and your subsequent arrest. Many times, this witness will be a police officer but sometimes it can be a civilian witness. The prosecution will examine a witness, and this is known as “direct examination”. Once the prosecution finishes their examination, your attorney will cross-examine the witness. The judge then determines if there is probable cause to charge. Probable cause to charge is not to be confused with probable cause to search. Probable cause to charge means simply this: The

Prosecution has enough evidence to continue moving the case forward to the arraignment stage. It does NOT mean that you lost your case.

Grand Jury

The Grand Jury indictment is the prosecution's alternative to the preliminary hearing. Although prosecutors are obligated at trial to prove you committed a crime "beyond a reasonable doubt", they only need to show the lesser burden of "probable cause" in formally charging you with that same crime.

During the grand jury hearing, the prosecutor presents available documents, witnesses and other evidence to a group of citizens. You know the saying "There are two sides to every story?" Well, unbelievably, the defendant and defense counsel are not entitled to present the defendant's story in any regard at this hearing. And that is because the grand jury hearing is a private hearing. However, your attorney will receive a copy of the grand jury hearing proceedings afterwards.

Citizens chosen for the grand jury are hand-picked by the prosecutors, who are the same people trying to bring criminal charges against you. And because these citizens are only hearing one side of the story, in most circumstances, the grand jury will return a result of true bill of indictment.

Of course, the defendant always retains his constitutional rights, and there is plenty of opportunity for his attorney to dispute the *admissibility* of certain evidence. Prior to trial, some points the defense attorney may argue are:

- The evidence presented is irrelevant to your charges;
- Police obtained the evidence unlawfully; and
- Someone tampered with or modified the evidence.

Arraignment is the beginning of your case.

After your preliminary hearing or after you are indicted, a judge must formally describe your criminal charges to you. This hearing generally happens days after the finding of probably cause against you (through preliminary hearing or grand jury indictment). This is done to ensure that there are no unreasonable delays between your arrest and your learning about the charges.

At the hearing, the defendant will enter what is known as a *plea*. Here the defendant will and should enter a plea of not guilty.

At this stage, your attorney will make a motion for discovery to uncover the evidence against the defendant.

Discovery = uncovering the truth.

This process is probably the most important process to putting together an effective trial strategy. The defense attorney will file a motion for discovery. This motion should contain certain items requested from the prosecution to be able ascertain what evidence the prosecution has against the defendant. In return, the prosecution must provide the defendant's attorney with all evidence and reports ("discovery") that it has in its possession. The defense attorney can also send subpoenas to investigative agencies and private entities for evidence such as documents or video footage. A defense attorney can subpoena witnesses to testify in court. It is always wise to send a private investigator to interview the witness prior to having the witness testify in court.

Exculpatory evidence is evidence showing that the defendant is not guilty. It can also be evidence of wrong doing by the police agency during the investigation. If the prosecution is in possession of such material they must tender said material right away even if it was not requested, pursuant *Brady v. Maryland*.

At times, the police agency will delete video or even worse destroy evidence. A skilled defense attorney will be able to discover such conduct and will file a motion for discovery sanctions. A motion for sanctions due to a discovery violation can result in a case being dismissed or certain evidence or testimony being barred, making the prosecution's case weaker. Many times, cases are won in the discovery phase.

Trial: The fight of your life.

Trial is time to present your story (if you so choose) and to challenge the prosecution's version of events, tearing their story apart piece by piece:

- All criminal defendants have a right to a jury trial or a bench trial.
- The legal system in the U.S. presumes that you are innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law. For the prosecutor to convict the defendant of his criminal charges, he must prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.
- The defendant has the right to stay silent during the trial and his silence cannot be used against him to achieve a conviction.
- The defendant also has a right to testify during his trial.
- There are two types of trial: (1) is a jury trial, where twelve jurors will decide if the defendant is guilty or not guilty, and (2) is a bench trial where the judge will decide if the defendant is guilty or not guilty. The decision of which trial you have is solely the defendant's decision.

Before the trial starts, your lawyer and the prosecutors engage in *voir dire* to pick jury members. During *voir dire*, the lawyers ask potential jurors questions to determine who will be unbiased prior to hearing or seeing any evidence.

Thus, determining if they are a good fit to hear your case. During a bench trial

there is no *voir dire*, since the judge decides the defendant's guilt or innocence.

At the beginning of the trial, defense counsel and the prosecutor make opening statements, summarizing their positions.

During the next phase, each side gets to present evidence via witness testimony, and each gets to challenge the other side's evidence and witness testimony. Because the prosecutor has the burden to prove his case "beyond a reasonable doubt," they will present their evidence and witnesses first. After the prosecution presents its case, the defense gets to choose whether they want to call witnesses, or if the defendant would like to testify, or rest and not call any witnesses or himself testify.

Once this phase is complete, both lawyers give closing arguments, and then the jury deliberates to figure out whether the defendant is guilty or not. In the case of the bench trial, the judge will weigh the evidence and decide if the defendant is guilty or not guilty. If the defendant is acquitted (found not guilty), prosecutors cannot try him for the same charge again. However, if they find him guilty, then the court will sentence him to a punishment, which may include jail time and/or other penalties.

FAQs about Criminal Defense Law

When we tackle obstacles, we find hidden reserves of courage and resilience we did not know we had. And it is only when we are faced with failure do we realize that these resources were always there within us. We only need to find them and move on with our lives. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

General Criminal Defense FAQs

What is a felony?

The penalty for a felony is a sentence of 365 days or more, that would be served in state or federal prison, not county jail. A misdemeanor, by contrast, is punished by *fewer* than 365 days. Misdemeanor jail time is served in the county jail.

List of criminal penalties for felonies:

Class X: 6-30 years (can be 9-45 years, in some circumstances);

Class 1: 4-15 years;

Class 2: 3-7 years;

Class 3: 2-5 years;

Class 4: 1-3 years.

What is the difference between federal and state court?

Federal courts are reserved for federal crimes, against specific federal statutes.

They tend to be for more serious crimes. For instance:

- White collar crimes;
- Serious drug charges;
- Violence with a hate crime element;
- Interstate crimes;
- Using a federal service to commit the crime (e.g. mailing drugs through the U.S. postal service).

Federal prosecutors are often more selective about the cases they bring forward. Federal prosecutors are the best and the brightest. State prosecutors are obviously skilled as well, but they often handle an overwhelming workload, and there is a higher turnover as they move into more prestigious jobs.

Penalties in federal and state courts are guided by statutes. But federal courts have what are known as “mandatory minimums.” If you are convicted, the judge *must* (by law) sentence you to these penalties. There is no wiggle room for extenuating circumstances, leniency, etc.

What is the difference between *criminal* and *civil* penalties for a crime?

Criminal means the government is bringing the charge. Civil means a person or company is making a case. So you can have both cases against you at the same time. For example, let's say you stand accused of robbing a jewelry store. The government could come after you for the crime. Also, the jewelry store owner or landlord could sue you for damages for the stolen goods or property damage.

Generally, you can get a continuance of the civil trial until the criminal case is over. That is because the civil trial can use all the evidence in the criminal case against you. Also, the burden of proof in a civil trial is a “preponderance of the evidence”. And the burden of proof in a criminal trial is a higher standard known as “beyond a reasonable doubt”.

What is “plea bargaining”?

This is the process where the prosecutor will try to get you to admit guilt in exchange for a deal. To do so, the prosecutor will offer the potential of a reduced charge or sentence. Note that the judge usually accepts the prosecutor’s recommendation, but the judge is not *required* to accept it.

What if more than one person was involved in the crime? How does that affect guilt or innocence?

It depends on the specific crime, but you can be charged with the entire crime even if you only were involved in a small part of it. For example, in a bank robbery, the person driving the getaway car can be responsible for the death of anyone in the bank, even if the driver never got out of the car. Also, “accessory” sounds like a less severe charge. You didn’t do it—you just helped the person who did. But the punishment for accessory can be the same as for the person who did everything.

What if someone committed a crime, but he had no choice?

Self-defense is an excuse, but only to the extent that you had to act reasonably under those circumstances. If someone attacked you, you could defend yourself to stop the attack, but you can only use a reasonable amount of force and must stop once the threat is over.

If someone threatened you into a crime, you could possibly use that to mitigate any wrongdoing you may have done.

So, if there is a reason you did something, tell your attorney. Keeping silent with your attorney does not make you a hero.

What if there is evidence that proves I am innocent?

Pursuant to *Brady v. Maryland*, prosecutors are required to turn over any evidence that exonerates you. You are also allowed to present any and all evidence that you have to help maintain you are innocent.

Can I trust my attorney with the truth about what really happened? Should I really tell him or her everything?

Attorney client privilege is a real thing. Your attorney cannot share any information without your permission, with one big exception: privilege does not cover if someone was going to be hurt in the future. Then the attorney has a duty to warn.

Defense attorneys will ask you the information they need to know. If you confess to a crime, that limits their ability to present evidence in court, because they can't knowingly present false evidence. Be up front with your attorney and let him fully do his job: defend you zealously.

If I'm held in jail before trial, can that impact the facts of my case?

NO! It cannot be used against you that you are in jail while you are fighting your case. Being in jail while fighting your case does not make your case stronger or weaker.

Unlawful Firearms and Firearm Ammunitions FAQs

What category of crime does unlawful possession of firearms fall under?

- Unlawful Possession of Firearms can be a class A misdemeanor if you have a firearm owner identification card, or if the firearm was not loaded. In most other circumstances, it will be a Class 4 felony if you have no background.
- Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon does not mean you shot a firearm. It means possession of a weapon or firearm, and that firearm was uncased, loaded, and immediately accessible. This charge will be brought against you if those elements are present, and you do not have a FOID card or CCL card.
- Unlawful Use of a Weapon by Felon is possession of a firearm by a felon. Depending on the previous felony, Unlawful Use of a Weapon is categorized as either a class 2 or a class 3 felony.
- Armed Habitual Criminal is when a person receives, sells, possesses, or transfers any firearm after having been convicted a total of 2 or more times of any combination of the certain offenses. Armed Habitual Criminal is a class X felony.

I was in a mental institution last year. Can I have firearms and firearm ammunitions?

No. If you have been a patient in a mental institution within the past five years, it is unlawful for you to have any firearms or firearm ammunition in your possession.

Illinois Drug Crime FAQs

What is deferred prosecution?

Deferred prosecution is available at times for first-time offenders. Defense counsel can negotiate with the prosecution to allow the defendant to take part in court-appointed programs or community service in exchange for dismissal of the charges against the defendant.

What are the minimum and maximum penalties for possession of cocaine, morphine, methamphetamine or LSD?

If you're caught with 15-100 grams of cocaine, morphine, methamphetamine, or LSD, this felony comes with a fine of up to \$200,000 and/or 4-15 years in prison. If you have more than 900 grams, this felony carries up to a \$200,000 fine or street value and/or 10-50 years in prison.

Illinois Violent Crime FAQs

What is considered a violent crime?

A violent crime occurs when the defendant uses force or threat of force against the victim. This umbrella category includes but is not limited to battery, robbery, homicide and sexual assault.

What type of punishment is given for such crimes?

Punishment can range from 30 days in a county jail to much more serious penalties. In severe circumstances, you can face life in prison.

What is the Fourth Amendment, and why is it important?

The Fourth Amendment to the Constitution protects people from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government. It does not guarantee protection against all searches and seizures, but only those that are deemed unreasonable under the law.

What type of search *is* reasonable under the law? According to the United States Courts, the Court needs to balance an individual's Fourth Amendment rights against legitimate government interests, like public safety. This balance depends, in part, on the location of the search or seizure.

General FAQs

What should I do after my arrest?

Whether an officer caught you smoking marijuana with friends, or an intense investigation culminated in violent crime allegations, never forget that you retain *substantial rights*.

For instance, police must inform you of your “Miranda Rights”—the rights to avoid self-incrimination. Also, you have the right to a defense lawyer.

After your arrest and processing at the police station, you will go before a judge, who will read and explain your criminal charges to you. If you cannot pay for an attorney, you will be provided an attorney free of charge (a public defender).

The lessons here are simple:

- Be civil.
- Avoid making self-incriminating statements.
- Speak with a qualified lawyer as soon as possible to protect your rights.

Following the arrest, you will be given opportunity to “post bail.” This means that you pay a certain amount of money to leave police custody. In return, you guarantee your appearance at all hearings regarding your criminal charges.

How do I know whether the police search was legal and Constitutional?

According to the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution, police may not engage in illegal searches and seizures. To make a lawful arrest, police officers in many cases must first obtain what’s known as a *search warrant* before they investigate a suspect, car, apartment or property.

However, if police have *reasonable cause* to believe you committed a crime, they may engage in search and seizure.

The legal complexities regarding Fourth Amendment questions are profound, and they could fill an entire book. Here’s the bottom line: if your attorney can prove that the search and seizure was unlawful or unconstitutional, the prosecution will be barred from using whatever evidence recovered. Therefore, the prosecution may drop its case against you, even in the face of compelling evidence that you did something wrong.

In particularly egregious cases, you can even take legal action against authorities for violating your rights.

What if I've been arrested or convicted for prior offenses?

The truth is that having “priors” on your record can substantially cost you in some ways.

However, your priors are just one piece of the puzzle. The effect will depend on many factors, including:

- The nature of your past offenses. For instance, were you convicted of a misdemeanor or felony?
- The relevance of those past offenses to current charges.
- Whether prior convictions were expunged or sealed.
- When your convictions occurred.

A qualified criminal defense attorney can examine your current charges and history to develop a strategic plan.

What is a warrant, and how should I respond to one?

A warrant is a court order that sanctions police officers to arrest you. To approve this order, the court must believe that there is *probable cause* that you committed a crime.

This burden of proof is not nearly as strong as what prosecutors must meet at trial, when they must demonstrate your guilt “beyond a reasonable doubt.”

Police might seek an arrest warrant after receiving a tip or doing an investigation into a criminal allegation.

In addition to writing arrest warrants, judges can issue *bench warrants* to punish both civil and criminal defendants for missing court dates.

How will a criminal conviction impact my job and career prospects?

Depending on the nature and circumstances of your crime, a conviction may haunt you for the rest of your life, since felonies are generally not something that can be expunged. Additionally, you could face problems like professional license suspension, or loss of prestige in your office or even losing your job. Finding employment with a criminal record is extremely difficult, even though you may be qualified. Protecting your future is one of the many reasons why it is crucial to have skilled, criminal defense counsel on your side.

What can I do to reset and rebuild my life, relationships, and career prospects?

Even if you mount a vigorous, principled defense, there are no guarantees you will succeed. The U.S. criminal justice system, while full of checks and balances, does make mistakes. It is an imperfect system, but that is why you need skilled defense counsel on your side.

That said, your life will go on. What happens after you have served your punishment (and what it will take to bounce back and rebuild) will determine on many interrelated factors, such as:

- The seriousness of the crime (e.g. misdemeanor or felony);
- The length of your jail sentence (if any);
- The terms of your probation or parole;
- Your education, age, health, and financial stability;
- The strength of your social network and willingness of family and friends to help you out; and
- Your goals and ambitions.

Conclusion

The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall. Nelson Mandela

Many challenges await you in the days and months ahead. However, you have also made progress towards protecting your freedom and your future. By taking the time to read this short book, you've equipped yourself with essential knowledge. Hopefully you have a better understanding of the criminal justice system. Additionally, you should have a better idea of what to do if you or a loved one is charged with a crime.

Whether police arrested you on simple drug possession charges or you face more complex criminal counts, you need the right assistance on your side. The experienced team at Abdallah Law will help.

We would love to learn more about your case and strategize intelligently to get you to a great outcome. Call to schedule a private consultation with us at (312) 229-0008, or learn more at <https://www.chicago-criminal.com/>.

Resources for Illinois Criminal Defendants

We will either find a way, or make one. Anibal Barca

ACLU Illinois works to protect people's constitutional rights.

A Safe Haven works with those with court mandated diversion, pre-trial and ex-offenders.

City of Chicago provides services for those transitioning in their life.

Cure Illinois is an organization that educates people about the criminal justice system.

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is a state agency that strives to improve the administration of criminal justice.

Illinois Legal Aid Society is an organization that connects people to resources to help resolve legal problems when they can't afford a lawyer.

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois provides a variety of social services for the local community.

MacArthur Justice Center advocates for human rights and social justice.

Safer Foundation is a not-for-profit provider of services designed for people with criminal records.

St. Leonard's Ministries & Grace House offers a program designed for women who are entering the prison system.

The John Howard Association of Illinois independently monitors correctional facilities, policies and practices, and advances reforms needed to achieve a fair, humane and effective criminal justice system in Illinois.

Thresholds offers services for people with mental health and substance use challenges.

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CHICAGO CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEYS

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