

CONFLICT DEFENDER
BRENDA S. ASTON, ESQ.

STEUBEN COUNTY
Conflict DEFENDER
OFFICE
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July 24, 2019

(Client Name)
(Address)

Re: People vs. (Client Name)

Dear Mr./Ms. (Client Name):

I have been assigned to represent you on your pending criminal charges. **Please contact my office upon receipt of this letter and schedule an appointment.**

While these charges are pending, your cooperation is critical to the preparation of your defense. It is requested that you:

1. appear on time for all Court appearances; your failure to appear may result in the issuance of a Warrant for your Arrest;
2. comply with all conditions of your Pre-Trial Release Program including, if required, reporting to the Probation Department;
3. appear on time for all Office appointments;
4. advise my Office of any changes in your address or phone number;
5. advise my Office immediately if you receive any additional criminal charges or if you receive any communications from the District Attorney's Office or Law Enforcement officials;
6. when discussing your case with me, be honest, accurate and complete;
7. do not contact the Complainant, any witnesses, the Judge, or the District Attorney's Office;

If you fail to cooperate with my Office, I may request to be relieved from representing you on these charges.

It is strongly recommended that you do not discuss the circumstances of these charges with anyone, including friends, family and most particularly Law Enforcement officials.

Due to the nature of the attorney-client relationship, we will not discuss your case with anyone but you so please tell your family, friends, etc. not to call the Office.

You have the right to plead "not guilty" and the right to a Jury Trial. You also have the right to testify and the right to call witnesses on your behalf but you are not required to do either. If you are found guilty after Trial, you have the right to appeal your conviction and sentence.

In many cases, the District Attorney's Office will make a Plea Offer that either reduces your charges or sentence, or both, in exchange for your plea of "guilty" and your waiver of the right to Trial. At that time, you and I will discuss the evidence and testimony that will be presented at your Trial; the likelihood of a "guilty" or "not guilty" verdict after Trial; and the possible sentence and consequences if you are found guilty after Trial. Based on these considerations, I will give you my recommendation, it will be your decision to accept a Plea Offer or go to Trial. **You are never required to accept a Plea Offer.**

Please tell me of any potential witnesses or evidence that you believe can help your case or if there are any conflicts or relationships that may adversely affect your case.

My Office will keep you informed of the status of your case but you should understand that most cases take many months to resolve and therefore, unless the status of your case has changed, it is not unusual that this Office will not contact you for several weeks at a time.

Please be advised that we neither accept collect calls from the jail nor do we speak to any family or friends about your case.

Other attorneys from the Conflict Defender's Office may appear with you in Court and assist in your defense.

You have an appearance scheduled for **(Day, Month and Year of Court date)** at **(Time of Court date am/pm)** before the **Honorable (Judge assigned to case)**. You must be present.

Please schedule your appointment before your next Court appearance.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Brenda S. Aston, Esq.
Steuben County Conflict Defender

BA/em