

Type of law:

CRIMINAL LAW



The Provincial Criminal Court Process: Step-by-Step



A 2022 Alberta Guide to the Law



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GENERAL

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Student Legal Services

GOING TO PROVINCIAL COURT

1. ALLEGED INCIDENT, LAYING OF CHARGES, & RELEASE

- When the police arrest you, they are alleging that you committed one or more criminal offences.
- They have evidence and reason to believe that a crime happened and that you are responsible for it.
- You are presumed innocent until you are found guilty or plead guilty.
- After you are charged, either the police will release you, or you will have a bail hearing to determine if you can be released and on what conditions.
- You are entitled to a bail hearing within 24 hours of your arrest in the majority of cases.

2. YOUR FIRST COURT APPEARANCE

You will likely ask for an adjournment (more time until you make a decision) so that you can:

- Order Disclosure
- Request an offer from the Crown
- Try to find a lawyer or contact Legal Aid

You can speak to Duty Counsel if you do not have a lawyer for this appearance.

3. YOUR NEXT COURT APPEARANCES

- The court will ask you to come back to "check-up" on your matter as you review disclosure, review the Crown offer, and speak to a lawyer for some legal advice.
- You can ask for another adjournment if you need more time. Adjournments are more difficult to get the more history your case has.

4. DECISIONS

Option 1: plead guilty

You can only plead guilty if you do accept the elements of the offence, are doing so voluntarily, or understand the nature and consequences of pleading guilty

Option 2: plead not guilty and go to trial

Option 3: in some cases, the matter may be resolved in another way, such as if the charges are withdrawn, you enter a diversion program, a peacebond is ordered, and more.

5. PLEADING GUILTY OR GOING TO TRIAL

Option 1: If you plead guilty, you will have a hearing called a summary disposition. You will be sentenced.

Option 2: If you go to trial, the Crown will have to prove the case against you. You can be found not guilty or guilty. If you are found not guilty, you are free to go. If you are found guilty, you will be sentenced.

Sentencing: The Crown and you (or your lawyer) will make submissions to the judge to help them decide what your sentence should be. You will tell the judge about yourself, your circumstances, and your background.

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INTRODUCTION

This pamphlet provides information about the entire provincial criminal court process, from arrest to resolution. This pamphlet is a step-by-step guide outlining your rights and responsibilities when you have been charged with a criminal offence that proceeds in provincial court. It also translates “legalese” that you are likely to encounter through the process.



Lawyers and other legal professionals often seem to speak in a different language. This is sometimes known as “**legalese**”. There are all sorts of legal terms that lawyers and judges use that are not part of everyday language. You will probably encounter some of these words and phrases when you go to criminal and family court. The words and phrases in **bold** throughout this pamphlet are those you are most likely to hear when you go to court.

Please note that this pamphlet is focused on adult criminal court only. Youth matters often dealt with through the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, often have different steps, obligations, and rights associated with them.

WHAT IS PROVINCIAL COURT?

In Canada, there are different levels of court that have different powers and responsibilities. In Alberta, there is **Provincial Court**, the **Court of Queen’s Bench**, and the **Court of Appeal**. The **Supreme Court of Canada** is located in Ottawa and is the highest court in the country.



Provincial Court is located on the North side of the Edmonton courthouse. Provincial Court has 5 divisions: criminal, family, civil, traffic, and youth. There are several other provincial

courthouses in the Edmonton area, including Sherwood Park, Fort Saskatchewan, St. Albert, Morinville, and Stony Plain.

This pamphlet focuses on criminal Provincial Court. All criminal law matters start in Provincial Court. They may later move to the Court of Queen’s Bench depending on how serious the offence is. You might hear the Court of Queen’s Bench being called “**QB**”. QB is located on the South side of the Edmonton courthouse. However, most criminal matters will start and end in Provincial Court.

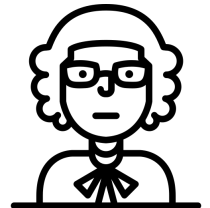
WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE CRIMINAL COURT PROCESS?

Police Officers. These are the people wearing uniforms and are most likely the people who arrested you. You will probably see them around the courthouse because police officers are often called in to be witnesses.



Justice of the Peace. You may have seen a Justice of the Peace at your bail hearing. They are similar to a judge, because they can make important decisions. They are allowed to oversee bail hearings and decide if you should be released.

Judge. This is the person sitting at the front of the room on the raised platform. Usually, you have to ask the judge permission to complete various tasks as you move your matter along in the court process.



Crown Prosecutor. This is the lawyer that is representing the government in the case against you. You can find them in the courtroom at the desk at the front where the computers are. They are called a “Crown” because when you are accused of committing a crime, the government is bringing the charge against you. In Canada, the Queen of England is involved in our government. The Crown prosecutor represents the Queen.

Defence Counsel/Defence Lawyer. These are lawyers who are representing people who have been accused of crimes. They will sit in the chairs at the front of the room. You might have a defence lawyer or you might have had one appointed for you through Legal Aid.

Duty Counsel. This is a free defence lawyer provided to a courtroom by Legal Aid that can help you with your matter for *your first court appearance, later brief appearances, and sometimes guilty pleas* - they will not become your lawyer but can help you with speaking to the judge and giving you a bit of legal advice on the date of your court appearance. They have offices outside the courtroom where you are appearing.

If it is the day of your first court appearance and you have not talked to duty counsel, go to the Case Management Office on the main floor of the Court building and they can assist you. It is also possible to contact Duty Counsel through Legal Aid the day before your Court appearance by calling 1-855-670-6149.

Keep in mind that duty counsel usually speaks to the judge after the other lawyers have gone, so if you use duty counsel it could be a long day at court. It is also important to keep in mind that duty counsel will have to see a large number of people, so they are not able to spend a long time with you to discuss your matter.

Accused. This is how the court sometimes refers to people who have been accused of crimes. The judge and lawyers however will most likely call you by your last name. For example, if you are named Joe Smith, you will likely be called Mr. Smith while in court.

Co-accused. Sometimes people are charged together if the Crown is accusing them of committing the same crime together. It is important to know if you have a co-accused as this can affect your ability to get representation and how your matter will move along through the court process.

Complainant. This is the person who was harmed by the alleged crime. For example, if you are accused of stealing a bicycle, the person who owned the bicycle would be the complainant.

Legal Aid. Legal Aid is a government organization that provides you with a lawyer if you meet certain income guidelines. They have an office at the Edmonton courthouse located near courtroom 265. You can visit this office, call them, or visit their website to see if you qualify for their services. Legal Aid is not free, you will be asked to pay for their services when you are able to.

Court Clerk. This is the person wearing a gown and who is sitting near the judge. They keep track of everything going on in the courtroom.

Sheriffs. The sheriffs are there to keep everyone safe. They usually sit in the courtroom near the prisoner box. They might ask you to take off your hat or turn off your cellphone while in the courtroom. You will also see the sheriffs when you go through security when you enter the courthouse.

Elizabeth Fry Society Volunteers. These are friendly people at the courthouse who can help you sign up to see duty counsel, fill out a disclosure form, see the Nalah Centre team (a team involved with domestic offence allegations), or give you directions. They also usually sit in the

courtroom and fill out a “court date card” that they give to you as you leave after speaking to the judge so that you can remember the date of your next court appearance. They are usually set up at a table outside each docket courtroom and are wearing purple vests. **Note: This service has been temporarily suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic.**

Interpreters. These are people who translate what is going on in court if an accused person does not speak English. They translate what the judge and lawyers are saying to the accused person into their native language, and translate what the accused person is saying into English for the judges and lawyers to hear. If you do not speak English, or you speak English poorly, you can request that an interpreter be present at your next court appearance in your native language.

COURT RULES AND ETIQUETTE

When Should I Get There? It is important that you arrive when your court date is scheduled for. If you arrive late and the court has finished for the day, there will likely be a warrant put out for your arrest and you will be charged with a Failure to Appear. This is a new criminal charge.

What Should I Wear? You are not expected to dress in suits like you will see lawyers doing. You should dress like you are going for a job interview, especially for important appearances like trials and guilty pleas. For basic docket appearances it is less important to dress like you are going to a job interview but still important to avoid wearing problem clothing like pyjamas, revealing clothing, or hats.



What Should I Keep in Mind While Sitting in Court?

- Water is the only drink you are allowed to have in the courtroom. You *cannot* have other food or drinks with you.
- You cannot wear hats in the courtroom.
- You must turn off your cellphone or turn it to silent. You cannot use your cellphone while you are sitting in court.
- A few whispers back and forth is OK, but if you need to have a conversation, please leave the courtroom and speak outside.
- You can sit anywhere in the gallery of the courtroom. Please do not sit in the black chairs at the front of the room - these are for lawyers only.
- The order that the judge calls matters is *not* alphabetical. The lawyers with the most experience are allowed to go first, then other lawyers, then articling students, then Student Legal Services, then duty counsel, and finally people who are self-represented. Keep in mind that you might have a long day at court, especially if you don't have a



lawyer. Try to eat breakfast in the morning and do not plan any other important commitments that day.

Do I Have to Bow? You will see lawyers and other court staff bowing when they enter and leave the courtroom, and when they pass to the front of the room to the lawyer chairs if the judge is in the room. This is a sign of respect for the judge. You are not expected to bow when you enter and leave the courtroom, but you can if you wish to.

When Do I Have to Stand? When court begins and ends for the day, the court clerk will say “**order in court, all rise**”. This means that you need to stand up while the judge enters or leaves the courtroom. Once the judge is seated and gives you permission, you can sit back down again. If the judge is leaving, once they have left through the back door you can sit down again. You also need to stand up anytime the judge is speaking to you or you are speaking to the judge. You do not need to stand if you are not able to for medical reasons or if you have a disability that prevents you from standing, such as being in a wheelchair.

How Do I Address the Judge? When you are speaking to the judge you can call them “Your Honour”. You can also call a male judge “Sir” or a female judge “Ma’am”.

THE CRIMINAL COURT PROCESS

Going to criminal court can be intimidating. It is important that you understand the process and what your rights are. This is a step-by-step guide of how criminal court works, along with common words and phrases that you will probably hear as you move through the process.



You will often hear the term “**matter**”. Your matter is the criminal charge or charges that you are facing. You may have several matters going on if you are charged with several different criminal offences from different incidents. It is important to keep track of which matters are grouped together as this could affect your eligibility for Legal Aid and which services you can receive to help you resolve each different matter.

STEP 1: ALLEGED INCIDENT AND ARREST

To charge you with a criminal offence, the police have to reasonably believe that a crime happened and that you are responsible for it. If they have **reasonable and probable grounds**, they can arrest you. This means that they aren’t just suspicious that you committed a crime, but they have good reasons to believe that you probably did commit the crime. They can arrest you without a warrant if they have



reasonable and probable grounds to believe that you committed the offence or that you are about to commit the offence. They can also arrest you without a warrant if they witness you committing the offence. Otherwise, the police are required to have a warrant to arrest you. An arrest **warrant** is permission from a Judge or Justice of the Peace to arrest you.

What Are My Rights When The Police Arrest Me?

There are rules that the police have to follow when they arrest you.

First, they have to tell you *why you are being arrested*.

Second, they have to tell you that *you have the right to speak to a lawyer*. The police also have to explain to you how you can get a lawyer, including how you can contact a free lawyer with **Legal Aid**. Legal Aid is a service that provides lawyers to people who cannot afford a lawyer in certain areas of law. Criminal law is one of the areas that Legal Aid can help with. The police have to make reasonable efforts to enable you to speak to your lawyer of choice.

The police are usually not allowed to start asking you questions about the offence until you have had a reasonable chance to speak to a lawyer. If a police officer does not follow these rules, you might be able to argue that they violated one or more of your **Charter rights**. Everyone in Canada has rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and police officers and other people who represent the government have to respect these rights. Talk to a lawyer if you think that the police did not follow one of these rules.

STEP 2: CHARGES LAID

If the police have enough evidence to believe that you committed a crime, they will charge you with a **criminal offence**. This process is often called **laying charges**. A criminal offence is an act that is against certain federal laws.

The ***Criminal Code*** is the document that lists most of the criminal offences in Canada. It is sometimes shortened to *CC*. Lawyers and judges will often call criminal offences by the section number where they are found in the *Criminal Code*. For example, you might hear a lawyer say, "he is charged with a 334(b)". This means that the person has been charged with the offence that is listed in section 334(b) of the *Criminal Code*. In plain language, this offence is Theft Under \$5000, which means theft of \$5000 or under. If you are found guilty of a criminal offence that is in the *Criminal Code* and are convicted, it will show up on your criminal record. A **criminal record** is a document that lists any crimes that you have been convicted of. A criminal record can affect your ability to travel or get a job.

You might also be charged under another document called the ***Controlled Drug and Substances Act*** (sometimes shortened to *CDSA*). These are also criminal offences, but they deal

mostly with drug offences. Because they are criminal offences, they will also show up on a criminal record. The most common CDSA offence is a 4(1), which is possession of a controlled substance. These charges usually happen when the police find drugs on you or on your property.

You may be charged with offences under other documents such as the *Traffic Safety Act* or the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*. These are **regulatory offences**. That means that the government thinks that you did something wrong, but it is not criminal. If you are found guilty of one of these offences, it will not show up on a true criminal record (although it should be noted that some record checks go beyond a true criminal record). Usually, the punishments for these offences are fines that you have to pay to the government. Some of these fines can be very expensive. More serious regulatory offences can have punishments that include time spent in prison.

The criminal offence or offences that you are charged with will be written out in a document called an **Information**. This document lists the criminal offences that you are charged with, and the approximate date that the government believes they happened, and the jurisdiction (city or town) where the government believes they happened. Informations are usually handled by lower courts, for example, the Provincial Court in Edmonton. If the matter goes to the Court of Queen's Bench, the charges will be set out in an Indictment.



An Information can have one or more “**counts**”. This means that you can be charged with several different criminal offences on one Information. For example, you could be charged with 2 counts of Theft Under \$5000 and 1 count of Possession of Stolen Property. This means that you have been charged with 3 offences on one Information. These counts are given a number (for example “Count 1: Theft Under \$5000”) so that the court can keep track of which specific criminal offence is being spoken about.

What If I’m Not Guilty?

At this point, the Crown is **alleging** that you committed a crime. This does not mean that you actually did commit the crime, but that the police or Crown have evidence that makes them think that you did. It is your right to **contest these allegations** - this means that you can go to trial to argue that you are not responsible for the crime. The government has to prove that you committed the crime **beyond a reasonable doubt**. This means that there is no other reasonable explanation except that you committed the crime. This is a very high standard. Keep in mind that this means that you do not have the responsibility of proving that you are innocent - it is the government that has the responsibility of showing that you are guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

STEP 3: RELEASE

Can the Police Release Me After I Have Been Arrested? How?

Once you have been arrested and charges have been laid, you could be released by the police without having to have a bail hearing. There are two ways that the police can release you.

1. On an Appearance Notice. This is a document that you sign, promising to come to court on a certain date. The date you need to come to court is listed on this document. You must attend court on this date. If you don't come to court you will probably be charged with a "Failure to Appear". A Failure to Appear is a new criminal charge under the Criminal Code.
2. On a **Police Undertaking**. A police undertaking is a document you sign, promising to follow certain **conditions** and to appear in court on the date written on the document. Conditions are rules that you have to follow, or you could be charged with a new criminal charge. Sometimes a separate appearance for identification at a police station will also be required and failing to comply with this notice will also result in a "Failure to Appear."

What if the Police Don't Release Me?

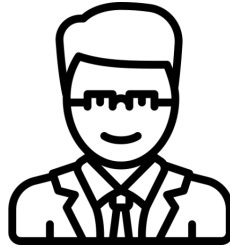
If the police do not release you, you will need to have a **bail hearing**. Sometimes these are called **show cause hearings**. This means that a Judge or Justice of the Peace needs to give permission for you to be released. Usually, the government has to show why they think you shouldn't be released. Usually, you don't have to show why you should be released but there are exceptions. There is a presumption that you should be released unless there is a good reason not to. There are 3 reasons that you can be kept in jail instead of being released – the Crown only has to raise concerns about one of the 3 possible reasons.

1. There is evidence that you won't show up to court if you are released
2. There is evidence that it would be unsafe for the public if you are released
3. That releasing you would make the public think very badly of the justice system (this reason is usually only used for very serious crimes)

There are certain situations where you have a **reverse onus**. This means that you or your lawyer must demonstrate why you should be released. This happens if you have been charged with a very serious offence, or if you have been arrested because you were already released but didn't follow one of the conditions you were required to.

If you have been arrested and the police do not give you a Promise to Appear or a Police Undertaking, you have the right to a bail hearing within 24 hours in most cases. Currently in Alberta, these first appearance bail hearings happen between 8:00 a.m. and midnight. **Duty Counsel** are available to assist you with this. These are lawyers provided by Legal Aid to

represent you at a bail hearing. You can also choose to delay the bail hearing so that it can be done by a lawyer who is able to spend more time with you and make a good case as to why you should be released. If you choose this option, a Judge (rather than a Justice of the Peace) will oversee the bail hearing, and it will be set to whatever the next court date is in the jurisdiction (or sometimes close-by jurisdictions).



How Can I Be Released on Bail?

It is also important to note that there are several different ways to be released on bail. Some of these are very strict, and others have fewer restrictions. The Justice of the Peace or Judge will consider a variety of factors when deciding how you should be released. An important consideration is if and how you have previously been released, and if you were able to comply with conditions in the past. If you are released on bail, no matter which method, you must show up to court when required to do so. Some of the ways you can be released on bail include:

- A release order with no promise to pay and without conditions. This is the least restrictive release option, and means you will not have to abide by any conditions while you are dealing with your criminal matter. It is very similar to being released on a Promise to Appear, because although you do not have any conditions, you are required to promise to attend court when required.
- An release order with no promise to pay and with conditions. This is similar to a Police Undertaking, because you will be required to abide by certain conditions, and you can be charged with a new criminal offence if you fail to follow your conditions.
- A release order with a promise to pay, with or without conditions. With a promise to pay, you will only be required to pay if you breach your conditions (or fail to appear for court, which does also relate to a condition in release orders). For example, if you are released this way, the court could set your promise to pay at \$500. You will be released, but if you breach your conditions the court could require you to pay the \$500. It is also a criminal offence to fail to comply with your release order – this is called a **breach of release order**.
- On a release order with a surety and a promised amount. Sometimes, the court will require that you have a surety before they consent to release you on bail. A **surety** is a person who agrees to supervise you and could be responsible for paying a certain amount (in addition to whatever the court may require you to pay) if you breach your



conditions, especially if they do not report your breach. You may also be placed under more onerous conditions supervised by your surety – such as a requirement that you live with them. A surety is usually a friend or family member who can be trusted to ensure that you will comply with the conditions of your release.

- On a release order with a cash deposit and no surety. This means that you will be required to pay money upfront in order to be released on your recognizance. For example, your cash deposit could be set at \$1000 and you would be required to pay that money to the court before you are released.
- On a release order with a surety and with a cash deposit. This option is only available for non-residents of Alberta or for those who live more than 200 km away from where they are being held in custody.

What Are Bail Conditions?

If you are released on bail, there will probably be certain conditions or rules that you have to follow. These are called **bail conditions**. It is very important to be aware of the conditions that you have to follow. If you breach your conditions, you could be charged with a new criminal offence, such as **breach of release order**. A history of breaching conditions could make it more difficult to get bail in the future, or cause more restrictions to be placed on you if you are arrested again. If you are found guilty of breaching conditions, it is not uncommon to receive jail time as a sentence. Here is a list of some common conditions:

- Keep the peace and be of good behaviour. This means that you should not commit crimes or cause trouble while you are released.
- Appear in court when required to do so. This means that you have to come to court on the date you are told. If you don't, you will get a Failure to Appear charge and a warrant will be issued - meaning that the police can arrest you.
- A no contact condition. This means that you are not allowed to contact a certain person. Unless it says otherwise, this means that you cannot contact them in any way - whether in person, by phone or text, or through a third person. Sometimes the document will list a specific way or for a specific purpose that you can contact the person - such as allowing you to communicate with them electronically but not in person.
- An attendance prohibition or "no go" condition. This means that you are not allowed to go to a certain location.
- A curfew condition. This means that you need to be at your approved address in a certain time frame each day. For example, the court could order that you need to be at home from 9pm until 7am each day.
- Other conditions. It is impossible to list all of the bail conditions that the court could require you to follow. You should carefully read and be aware of your bail conditions.

Can I Appeal My Bail Hearing?

If your bail is denied, you *might* have a chance to have this denial reviewed by a higher court. This might also be possible if you are put on conditions that you disagree with. However, you can only have your bail reviewed if the person who released you (a Justice of the Peace or a Judge) made a legal error that affected the result, if there has been a significant change since your first bail hearing, or if the original decision was clearly unreasonable. Not liking the outcome of your bail hearing is *not* a sufficient reason to appeal it. Talk to a lawyer to discuss the possibility of changing your release conditions.

Bail can be re-opened if the Crown consents. This usually applies to changing bail conditions but technically can sometimes (rarely) allow a new bail hearing.

Detention review (section 525 of the *Criminal Code*) is another way that bail denials can be reviewed. For charges other than murder, detention review hearings take place where the trial is delayed by more than 90 days from the date of the bail hearing or if a judge otherwise decides to review the order.



STEP 4: YOUR FIRST COURT APPEARANCE

Entering the Courthouse

When you enter the courthouse, you will need to go through security. It is similar to an airport, where you have to put your belongings in a bin and you must walk through a metal detector. Do not bring weapons or sharp objects to court - they will be confiscated and, depending on the nature of the weapon, might result in you being charged.

Where Do I Go?

Your first court appearance, no matter how serious the offence is, will be in a **docket courtroom** or, in larger centres, the **CMO** or **Case Management Office**. The CMO is located at the Clerks' office and involves you lining up at a counter to talk to a clerk. Docket court or CMO's are where most criminal matters start. People make their appearances here, and the court or clerk asks you to come back to "check up" on how your matter is going. At the CMO if anything other than adjourning the scheduling of your case occurs (i.e. guilty plea or if scheduling a sentencing to trial date is taking too long) you will be sent to actual docket court for a judge to determine the next step. Docket court is similar to a triage in a hospital - the court is trying to figure out how to proceed with your matter.

First of all, you need to figure out which courtroom you need to go to. This should be listed on the document that the police gave you when you were released. The adult docket courtrooms in Edmonton are CMO, 265, 267, 268, 356, and 357. You can also use a kiosk computer at the

courthouse to look up your last name to see which courtroom you are in. There is one located by the Elizabeth Fry Society desk on the main floor, very close to the CMO counter.

It is essential that you show up to court at the time you are told to. It can be a long day at court, but if they get through the list of matters quickly and you are not present, you will likely be charged with a Failure to Appear and a warrant will be put out for your arrest.

Do I Have to Attend My Court Appearance?



Yes. You must attend all of your court appearances, unless a judge, lawyer, or SLS tells you that you do not need to. When you have a court appearance it is required by law. If your court appearance is not made, a warrant could be issued for your arrest and you will be charged with a Failure to Appear. A Failure to Appear is a new criminal charge. A history of failing to appear to court can negatively affect your ability to get bail in the future. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, sometimes people are expected to appear by non-in-person methods, such as online or by telephone.

If it is impossible for you to attend court you may be able to send an **agent** to appear in court for you. This could be a friend or family member who will go to court for you and explain your absence to the judge. Agents can be used for less serious charges (summary conviction but not indictable offences). As mentioned above, if you do not appear at your court date then the Judge can issue a warrant for your arrest. If you send an agent on your behalf, the Judge has the option of not issuing the arrest warrant if they are satisfied with your excuse for not attending court (ex. hospitalization, car trouble). If you hire a lawyer, you might not have to attend your court appearance, as your lawyer will go for you. However, even if you have a lawyer the judge might still order that you attend in person.

Edmonton Provincial Courtroom Information

*This information is subject to change throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

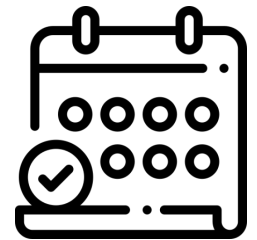
Courtroom #	What happens there?
<u>001</u> Court open 8:15 AM - 3:30 PM	This is Traffic Court. This is where you can go to pay your fines or to try to argue to get your ticket thrown out or reduced. This courtroom is located on the main floor by the east entrance of the courthouse. There will probably be a long line.
<u>CMO</u> (Case Management Office)	This is the long desk located on the main floor of the courthouse. Here, you can get in line and speak to a clerk. Make sure that you get in the “self-represented accused” line. If you are standing in a line with a bunch

<p>Court open 8:15 AM - 2:00 PM</p>	<p>of people wearing suits, then you are in the wrong line (that is the line specifically for lawyers).</p> <p>Keep in mind that you can only keep appearing at the CMO for a limited time. After your matter has been going on too long, it will become “timed-out”. This means that your matter is taking too long and you will need to go upstairs to a courtroom and see a judge. You should also keep in mind that you cannot plead guilty at the CMO desk. In this case, the clerk will send you upstairs to a courtroom.</p> <p>If the clerk sends you upstairs to a courtroom for any reason, they will sometimes give you a piece of paper to give to duty counsel. <i>It is very important that you keep this piece of paper</i> because it explains why your file was sent up.</p>
<p><u>265</u> Court starts at 9:00 AM</p>	<p>This courtroom is mostly used for people who have court but are usually still in-custody. This means that they are still in jail and they make their appearance by CCTV video conferencing.</p>
<p><u>268</u> Court starts at 9:00 AM</p>	<p>This is a docket courtroom where most “domestic” files are dealt with. This means that the offence is related to family members. If the charge against you involves a family member, it is likely to end up in this courtroom. Assault and uttering threats are common charges that are dealt with in this courtroom.</p>
<p><u>267</u> Court starts at 9:00 AM</p>	<p>This is a docket courtroom for federal Crown matters, meaning that the Crown in this courtroom will be from the federal government. There are two types of Crown prosecutors: provincial Crowns and federal Crowns. If you have been charged under the <i>Criminal Code</i> (almost all criminal offences), the case will usually be dealt with by a provincial Crown. If you are charged under the <i>Controlled Drug and Substances Act</i> or certain other acts, a federal Crown will deal with the case. Most of the offences in this courtroom involve drug possession or trafficking. If you are charged with both <i>Criminal Code</i> and <i>Controlled Drug and Substances Act</i> offences it could be either the federal or provincial Crown that takes ownership of the matter. This means that they will decide whether the federal or provincial Crown will be dealing with your matter through the court process. Having a federal Crown deal with your matter does not necessarily mean that your matter is more serious, as many provincial Crowns handle many serious offences.</p>

<p><u>356</u> Court starts at 9:00 AM</p>	<p>This is the main docket courtroom and is often very busy. It is also where you may have to go if your matter is “timed out” at CMO.</p>
<p><u>357</u> Court starts at 9:30 AM</p>	<p>This is the Mental Health Court. This courtroom has judges that will focus more than usual on mental health issues. A mental health nurse and a psychiatrist will also be present in the courtroom.</p> <p>If you give permission, you can request to have your docket matters done in this courtroom. If you choose to request this, you must have a mental health condition and you must give the court permission to see your medical records.</p>
<p><u>444</u> Court starts at 9:30 AM</p>	<p>This is youth docket court. If you have been charged under the <i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i> because you were between the ages of 12 and 17 when the offence was committed, this is where you will appear.</p>

What Can I Do At My First Appearance?

You will most likely ask for an **adjournment** at this appearance. An adjournment is asking the court for more time because you need to take steps to deal with your matter. Usually you will receive an adjournment of 2 or 3 weeks before you have to come back to court, unless there is a special circumstance that requires a longer adjournment. You will probably hear lawyers using different words to ask for an adjournment. Often times they will say things like “can we **push this over** 2 weeks” or “can we **bump this** ahead 2 weeks”. Both of these phrases mean that they are asking for an adjournment for 2 weeks.



If you ask for an adjournment, the judge will likely want to know why. There are a few main reasons that you will be asking for an adjournment. Some common reasons are to ask for an offer, to ask for disclosure, or to find a lawyer.

Asking for an Offer

At this appearance, you can request an **offer** from the Crown. Sometimes this is called an **Early Case Resolution Offer or ECR**. This is a document made by a Crown that tells you what



punishment they would want to ask the judge for if you plead guilty. For example, if you are charged with Theft Under \$5000 and a Failure to Appear, an offer from the Crown might look like this:

GP to Theft Under (\$500 fine)

GP to Failure to Appear on April 30 (\$100 fine)

This means that the Crown wants you to plead guilty to the Theft and Failure to Appear, and the punishment they want to seek is a \$600 fine (in total). The offer will also usually have a summary of the details of how the Crown or police think that the crime happened.

It is very important that you know that *you are under no obligation to accept the offer from the Crown*. However, it can be a good tool to help you in deciding how you want to proceed with your matter. For example, it can be very important to know if you are **“in jeopardy”**. This means that the Crown would probably be seeking jail if you plead guilty or are convicted. This is very important as it affects how you can deal with your matter. For example, if you are in jeopardy you may be able to get Legal Aid, but you will not be able to use Student Legal Services, as they cannot help you if the Crown is looking for jail time.

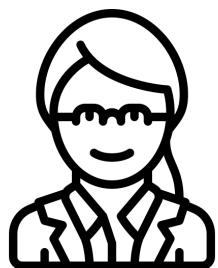
You should know that an offer usually takes 2 weeks to prepare. For example, if you request an offer on June 3, and adjourn your matter for 2 weeks, it should be ready the next time you come to court on June 17.

Asking for Disclosure

At this appearance, you can request **disclosure**. Disclosure is all of the evidence that the Crown has that they could use if you decide to go to trial – it will usually be evidence against you, but can sometimes include pieces of evidence in your favour. Usually, it contains police reports, witness statements, photos, videos, and other documents. It is your right to receive disclosure so that you can prepare the best defence possible. You can ask an Elizabeth Fry Society volunteer for a form to request disclosure and they can help you fill it out. You can then hand this form to duty counsel and they will make sure that the Crown gets it. You have to call and see if your disclosure is ready (it usually takes several weeks), and then pick it up on the 6th floor of the Brownlee Building. If you have a lawyer, they will do this for you.

Finding a Lawyer

Also at this appearance, you can begin to explore what your options are for getting a lawyer. Having a lawyer can make the criminal court process a lot easier. However, lawyers can be expensive. You can contact Legal Aid to see if they are able to help you. If the Crown isn't seeking jail, you can try contacting the Criminal Law Project at Student Legal Services to see if they can assist you. If you make too much money to qualify for Legal Aid or Student Legal Services, but hiring a lawyer is too expensive for you, you can also try contacting **articling students**. Articling students are people who have graduated law school but are doing a training year to become lawyers. They usually charge quite a bit less than lawyers do. You can call law firms that do criminal law and ask to speak to their articling student.



If you are looking for a lawyer and none of the above options has been successful, then you can reach out to the Lawyer Referral Service. The Lawyer Referral Service will be able to connect you to a lawyer that you can consult with for free for 30 minutes (if you want to consult with them for longer or hire them, then there may be fees involved). Their phone number is 1-800-661-1095 or you can find them online at lawsociety.ab.ca.

How Do I Find My Lawyer at the Courthouse?

It is possible that you have not had the chance to meet your lawyer in-person at your first court appearance. If you have a lawyer, they probably told you to meet them in a certain courtroom. You can meet with your lawyer outside the courtroom, but if court has already started, it is best to wait inside the courtroom in case your matter gets called. It is possible that your lawyer will send an **agent**. This means that they couldn't make it to the court date, so, on their behalf, they sent a different lawyer or an articling student to speak to the judge about your matter.

What If I Don't Have a Lawyer?



If you have a docket court appearance and you don't have a lawyer, you can speak to Duty Counsel to help you *for that day only*. Duty Counsel is a lawyer that is provided by the government in every docket courtroom. They will speak to the judge for you about what you need to deal with that day. They also can provide you with brief legal advice. Most of the time, Duty Counsel will help you with asking for an adjournment because you need more time to review the Crown offer, referring you to Legal Aid, setting trial dates, or requesting disclosure or an offer for you. Sometimes, Duty Counsel can represent you for a guilty plea for you that day, but it depends on how busy the courtroom is and whether or not you have already received an offer. Duty Counsel may also refer you to Legal Aid or Student Legal Services, depending on your situation.

What Does the Crown Have to Do at This Appearance?

At this appearance, the Crown prosecutor will probably be required to make a Crown **election**. This means that the Crown has to decide how they are going to proceed with your matter. They need to make a decision because there are 3 types of criminal offences in the *Criminal Code*.

1. **Summary Conviction Offences.** These are offences that are less serious and typically have less harsh punishments. The process for summary conviction offences is also simpler than for indictable offences.
2. **Indictable Offences.** These are more serious offences and usually have harsher punishments. The process for indictable offences is also more complicated than for summary conviction offences. If you are charged with an indictable offence, you usually have the option of having your trial heard by just a Judge or by a Judge and a Jury

3. **Hybrid Offences.** Almost all criminal offences in the *Criminal Code* are hybrid offences. This means that the Crown can choose whether they want the case to move forward as a summary conviction offence, or as an indictable offence. Whether the Crown chooses summary conviction or indictable offences depends on a lot of factors, but the most important ones are how serious the offence is, and your criminal history. If it is a hybrid offence, the Crown has to tell you which way they choose so that you can be fully prepared in dealing with your matter.

How Do I Change My Release Conditions?

It is important that you are aware of your release conditions because it is a criminal offence to **breach** these conditions. A breach means that you don't follow the rule that you are required to.

Still, you might want to ask that one of your release conditions be changed. If the condition is from a police-issued undertaking, a judge can alter or replace this, potentially with different conditions.

If the conditions are from a release order (issued by a justice of the peace or judge, rather than by police), you can ask whether they can be changed, but there are limitations. The Crown has to approve of the change, because the judge does not have **jurisdiction** to make a decision. This means that the judge in provincial court doesn't have the power or authority to change bail conditions unless the Crown agrees. As such, if the Crown refuses the change, you would need to seek a bail review by making an application to the Court of Queen's Bench.

If you are using duty counsel, you can ask them to speak with the Crown about changing a condition. You might have to provide evidence about a condition you want to change. For example, if you have a condition not to go to your home, but the home is in your name, you could bring a copy of your lease or mortgage.



How Do I Change Release Conditions for Domestic Matters?

If your matter is domestic and your court dates are in courtroom 268, the complainant can see the Nalah Centre team to explain how they feel about changing release conditions. Usually, this involves release conditions that say you cannot have contact with the complainant or that you are not allowed to go to a certain location (usually a residence). The complainant can speak to the Nalah Centre team (composed of social workers, police officers, and Crown-associated workers) about the situation and which conditions they may want to be changed or dropped. The team will then make a recommendation to the Crown about changing the bail condition.

The team can make several different types of recommendations. For example, if you originally have a strict no contact, they may recommend that you can have contact by telephone or text

messages, but not in person. Or they may recommend that you can have contact for a specific purpose, such as to arrange childcare. They may also recommend that no changes take place and that the conditions stay the same. The team is primarily concerned with the safety of the complainant.

It is important that you *do not breach* a no contact condition to communicate with a complainant in order to instruct them to come to court on your court date to speak to the team.

STEP 5: YOUR NEXT COURT APPEARANCES

Your next court appearances are to “check-in” on how your matter is going. You may have to come back to docket court two, three, four, or more times.

Maybe disclosure wasn’t ready yet, so you need more time. Or perhaps you’ve had some trouble getting in touch with Legal Aid and need a few more weeks. These are a normal part of the process. You do still however have a responsibility to keep track of your matter and make efforts that things are moving along at a reasonable pace.

Once your matter has been going on for quite a long time, the judge might warn you that you need to make efforts to move your matter along. The judge might make an order for “**no further adjournments**” or say that your next court appearance is “**peremptory**”. This means that at your next appearance, you will have to decide whether you are going to plead guilty or have a trial.

STEP 6: MAKING A DECISION

After you have received an offer from the Crown, have your disclosure, have spoken with a lawyer if you can, and had time to think about your options, it is time to make a decision about your matter.



If you didn’t commit the offence, or if you have a **defence** (a valid explanation according to law for why you did it), then you cannot plead guilty. If you try to plead guilty and the judge thinks that you aren’t responsible for the offence, they will **strike your plea**. This means that they won’t allow you to plead guilty, and will make you set a date for your trial. You also can’t plead guilty if you are not doing it by your own choice, or if you don’t understand that you are giving up the right to a trial, that you will have to admit the elements of the offence(s), that you will receive a criminal record, or that it is the judge that makes the final decision about sentence (even if you have a ‘deal’ with the Crown). You might hear a judge ask “has **section 606(1.1)** been complied with?”. This means they are asking the lawyer if they have gone over a

section of the *Criminal Code* with you that sets out requirements for guilty pleas. This section must be followed or the judge will not accept your guilty plea.

You might hear lawyers use the term “**set dates**”. This means that they need to schedule a day either for you to plead guilty, or for you to have a trial. Setting a date for a guilty plea or for a trial can be done at the CMO desk. If you set a date to plead guilty, you will ask for a **summary disposition** date. A summary disposition is a hearing where you will plead guilty. You will also usually be sentenced at that hearing, although sometimes sentencing can be delayed for certain reasons.

Once the CMO clerk schedules your summary disposition date, they will give you 3 copies of a piece of paper with the date of your disposition. One is for you, one is for the Crown and one is for the court. You will have to go back up to a courtroom and have the date confirmed by a judge. If you plead not guilty, you will set a trial date. A trial is a more complicated process, and the Crown will have to prove their case against you. If you book a trial date, it will be several months away.

STEP 7: RESOLVING YOUR MATTER AND SENTENCING

Going to Trial

You have a right to a trial. If you choose this option, you will have to find a trial date by going to the CMO Desk and asking for a date for a trial. The clerk at the CMO desk will give you 3 sheets of paper. One is for the court, one is for the Crown, and one is for you. You will have to go back up to the courtroom to have the judge approve your trial date. This is the same process as setting and confirming a summary disposition date.

The judge might also want to have a “**confirmation date**”. On that day, the judge will check in to see if you still want to proceed with the trial and if you will be ready to do so. They may make an order that your trial will proceed “**with or without counsel**”. This means that if you go to trial, it will happen whether you have a lawyer or not. A person should very carefully consider before they tell a judge they want to do a trial without a lawyer or Student Legal Services, since trials can often be very difficult to navigate.

If you go to trial and the judge does not think you are guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, you will be **acquitted**. This means that you are not guilty. This offence will not appear on your criminal record and you will be free to go.

If you go to trial but the judge thinks that you are guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, you will be **found guilty**. If you are found guilty, the Judge has the option of whether to **convict** you or not. A **conviction** is not the only option that is open to a Judge.

A summary of different types of outcomes is found below. The common results will be described in more detail below

Criminal Conviction	Non-conviction: Finding of Guilt	Non-conviction: No finding of guilty
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-intermittent custodial sentence - Intermittent custodial sentence - Suspended sentence with probation - Conditional sentence order - Fine or forfeiture - Combination of some of the above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absolute discharge - Conditional discharge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charges withdrawn (occurs before the trial starts) - Alternative measures (occurs before the trial starts) - Acquittal at trial - Stay of proceedings (could be a prosecutorial stay or a judicial stay, which are different).

Sentencing Submissions

If you are found guilty after a trial, or if you plead guilty, you will be **sentenced** by the judge. Your sentence is the punishment you will receive for committing the criminal offence. There are many different types of sentences and what sentence you will receive depends on each individual person and each individual offence.



When you are sentenced, both the Crown and your lawyer (or Duty Counsel, or yourself) will make **submissions** to the court. This means that they will explain why they think you should get the sentence they are suggesting. If both the Crown and your lawyer agree on the sentence, this is usually called a **joint submission**. For example, if the Crown suggests that your sentence should be a \$500 fine, and you and your lawyer agree to that, you will both suggest to the judge that your sentence should be a \$500 fine. The judge will usually accept a joint submission, unless they think it is very inappropriate in the circumstances. It is important to remember that the judge is the one that sentences you - not the Crown. It is likely that judges will accept joint submissions, but it is not a guarantee.

The submissions that the Crown and defence make can also be **contested**. This means that the Crown and defence (you and your lawyer) don't agree about the sentence you should receive, so they suggest different ideas for the judge to consider. For example, the Crown might suggest that you receive 18 months of probation, but your defence lawyer suggests that you receive 12

months of probation. It will then be up to the judge to hear the submissions and decide what sentence they will give you.

What Types of Submissions Can be Made?

When you, your defence lawyer, or the duty counsel you are using that day make submissions, it is a chance to tell the court a bit about yourself. It is an opportunity to explain who you are, what some of your background is, and why those factors may have had an effect on the criminal offence. It is a way to explain who you are and why the offence may have happened.

Here is a list of possible submissions that you could tell the judge so that they can learn more about you and your situation:

- Your age.
- Where you grew up and who raised you.
- Your family circumstances (where your parents live, whether you have any brothers or sisters, what other family supports you may have).
- Your marital status (whether you are married, common law, single, divorced, or widowed).
- Whether you have any dependents (such as a partner and/or children).
- What you do for work or any income support you may be receiving (such as AISH). If you are not employed, you can explain why.
- Any physical health conditions you may have.
- Any mental health conditions you may have, including addictions.
- What steps you have taken to make sure that the offence doesn't happen again, such as attending counselling.
- Any volunteering work or ties to the community you may have.

If you identify as Indigenous, meaning that you are First Nations, Metis or Inuit, the judge *must* consider **Gladue factors** during sentencing. *Gladue* factors are a way of recognizing the trauma that Indigenous people have experienced due to colonization and the many harms that have flowed from that. This recognizes the intergenerational trauma that Indigenous people have experienced, especially due to assimilation and residential schools.

You can also request that a **Gladue report** be made. If you choose this option, a *Gladue* report writer will interview you about your background and why *Gladue* factors have had an impact on your life. *Gladue* reports do however take about 2 months to complete, so most people choose to simply have a lawyer or duty counsel speak about *Gladue* factors during a regular sentencing. It is important to note that only the accused person can waive their rights to the consideration of *Gladue* factors. If the accused person does not waive these rights and the Judge does not consider *Gladue* factors, this is an error of law and may allow the accused person to appeal their sentence.

A **FACS (Forensic Assessment and Community Services)** report is made by psychiatrists and psychologists from Alberta Health Services. These assessments are ordered by the courts to provide more insight into an offender's mental state to assist the judge in coming to an appropriate sentence. Please note that AHS has reduced these services and the wait time can be long to get one of these assessments.

A **pre-sentence report (PSR)** also helps the court make a sentencing decision. Probation officers will interview offenders, family members, employers, teachers, and more to provide insight into the offender as a person and their willingness to change. This information helps the judge decide what an appropriate sentence should be.

The judge will also consider **mitigating factors** and **aggravating factors** of the circumstances of the offence you are guilty of. Mitigating factors are any factors that may lead to a reduced sentence. This could for example include a guilty plea, because it saves the court time and resources it would have spent on a trial. Aggravating factors are any factors that may lead to an increased sentence. For example, if a violent offence occurred in a domestic relationship, that will be aggravating.

What Types of Sentences Can I Receive?

There are several different sentences that you could receive. It depends on many factors, including how serious the criminal offence is and how much responsibility you have for it.

Incarceration. This means that the judge sentences you to spend time in jail. For example, you could be sentenced to 30 days in jail. You might hear a judge or lawyer mention, "**time-served**" or "we are in a time-served situation". This means that you won't go to jail after you are sentenced because you already spent enough time in jail when you were arrested. If you are kept in jail before pleading guilty or being convicted, you are usually given credit at a rate of 1.5 days towards your sentence for each day spent in jail before you are sentenced. For example, if you spent 10 days in jail before you are sentenced, you would get credit as if you served 15 days. The judge can also give you an **intermittent sentence** - this means that you can serve your prison sentence on the weekends (or another schedule) so that you are still able to work during the week. Usually, the judge will order a certain time that you will have to report to jail and what time you will be able to leave. For example, the judge could order that you have to report to prison at 8pm on Friday and you can leave at 6pm on Sunday, until you have served your complete sentence. Intermittent sentences are only possible if your jail sentence is 90 days or less.

Conditional Sentence Order

A conditional sentence order is a jail sentence, but instead of having to serve it in jail, the person can serve their sentence in the community. Often, this sentence is served in their house, which is why this order is sometimes called “house arrest”. The person will be under other strict conditions as well, which may include a curfew, an order to attend counselling, or others. In order for a jail sentence to be served in the community, certain conditions must be met. The community must not be in danger if the sentence is served in the community, there must no minimum term of imprisonment, the offence must not be an indictable offence for which the maximum term is 14 years or life, the offence must not be a terrorism or criminal organization offence being prosecuted by indictment, the offence must not be an offence where the maximum term of imprisonment is 10 years and the offence resulted in bodily harm, involved trafficking or the production of drugs, or involved the use of a weapon.

Suspended Sentences & Probation. This means that you will be supervised in the community and will have to report to a **probation officer**. A probation officer is the person you have to report to in the community and who may give you instructions about completing the conditions of your probation. Your probation will have conditions, which will be determined by the court. For example, you may be required to attend treatment or counselling. Your probation officer will direct you to a professional or organization where you can complete this treatment. It is important that you follow your probation conditions because it is a criminal offence to breach your probation.

Fines. This means that you have to pay a fine to the court. The Judge will ask you for “**time to pay**”. This means they want to know approximately how long it will take you to pay off the fine, and they will then give you a deadline to make all of your payments. You do not need to pay your fine all at once - you can pay in instalments. If you are making efforts to make payments and your deadline is coming up, you can apply for an extension. If you don’t have money to pay a fine, you can use the **fine options** program. With this program, you do community service and earn minimum wage to pay off your fine.



Discharges. Sometimes, if you meet certain requirements, you may get an **absolute discharge** or a **conditional discharge**. With an absolute discharge, you will not have any conditions and the discharge will not show up on your criminal record after 1 year. A conditional discharge has conditions and you will be placed on probation for a certain period of time. After you have completed the probation, the offence will not show up on your criminal record after 3 years as long as the discharge is not revoked (which could happen if you are convicted of breaching your conditions or new offences during the period of probation). The 1-year period for an absolute discharge starts from the date of sentencing. The 3-year period for a conditional discharge appears that it should start from the date of sentencing as well, although there has

been some debate about this (some have argued that it starts after completion of the probationary period). You should be aware that while discharges are supposed to be automatically removed, police departments sometimes fail to do so. It is always a good idea for you to ensure this has been done by contacting police at the appropriate time.

Ancillary Orders. Sometimes, the court may order that you are not allowed to do a certain activity - such as own certain weapons for a specified period of time. Another common type of ancillary order is where the court orders that a sample of your DNA be taken, to be stored in a police database for future investigations. There are a wide variety of other ancillary orders the court can impose, depending on the nature of the case.

Restitution. The court may order you to pay for property that you stole or damaged. For example, if you broke someone's cell phone, the court may make a restitution order for you to pay to replace the cellphone. The amount of restitution you have to pay should be about equal to the cost to repair or replace the damaged or stolen property. Restitution can either be ordered as a probation condition, or as a standalone order (which is a type of ancillary order) that can ultimately be pursued like a civil court judgement.

Other Outcomes

Withdrawal. This is not a sentence, but it is a way that a criminal matter can be resolved. If a Crown withdraws a charge, it means they won't be proceeding with the matter because the charge has been dropped. This can happen for a wide variety of reasons, but generally it is because either the Crown does not think a conviction is likely, or it is not in the public interest to continue with the charge.

Peace Bonds. Peace bonds are often used in domestic matters. Obtaining a peace bond does not require an admission of guilt. The two most common types of peace bonds are section 810 peace bonds and common law peace bonds. The main difference is that section 810 peace bonds are usually focused more upon fear for safety of people or property, while common law peace bonds are more concerned with the prospect of future breaches of the peace. The type of peace bond depends on the circumstances of your matter. If the Crown offers to resolve a case with a peace bond and you agree to that, the criminal charge against you will be dropped when you enter into the peace bond. However, you will likely have to follow conditions, such as a no contact order, and there can be consequences for breaching these conditions. A criminal charge can only be resolved by a peace bond if the Crown agrees, and this requirement cannot be overridden by the judge.

Diversion Programs

In certain circumstances, you may be able to participate in a **Diversion Program**. If you complete one of these programs, the Crown will withdraw the charge and the offence will not go on your criminal record.

The first is the **Alternative Measures Program**. You will probably hear this being called **AMP**. If you don't have a criminal record, and you are charged with a minor offence, you might qualify for this program. You also have to accept that you are responsible for the criminal offence - but this is not the same as pleading guilty. If the Crown approves you for AMP, you will often be directed to do community service, or make a charitable donation. The court will adjourn your matter for several months so that you can complete the program. If you are successful, the Crown will withdraw the charge against you at that court date. Please keep in mind that if you have done AMP before, you most likely will not be able to do the program a second time.

The second program is **Mental Health Diversion**. If you are charged with a minor offence, and you have a mental health condition, you might qualify for this program. You will meet with a mental health professional who will look at your situation and suggest goals for you to achieve and programming for you to attend. If you are successful, the mental health professional will recommend for the Crown to withdraw the charge.

WHO CAN I CALL FOR MORE HELP OR INFORMATION?

Student Legal Services – Criminal Law Project #100, 9924 106 Street, Edmonton AB	Ph: 780-425-3356 Website: www.slsedmonton.com
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Law students who provide assistance with most criminal law matters that do not involve jail time.

Legal Aid Alberta 10320 102 Avenue, Edmonton AB	Ph: 1-866-845-3425 Website: legaid.ab.ca
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If you meet the income guidelines, they may be able to provide you with a lawyer to represent you for a reduced rate.

Lawyer Referral Service	Ph: 1-800-661-1095
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They will give you the name and phone numbers of 3 lawyers who are willing to speak with you for 30 minutes, free of charge.

Elizabeth Fry Society #900 10242-105 Street, Edmonton AB	Ph: 780-421-1175 Website: www.efrynorthernalberta.com
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Court workers explain court procedure and terminology, provide legal referrals, and offer practical assistance and support to those appearing in court.

Native Counseling Services 14904 121A Avenue, Edmonton AB	Ph: 780-451-4002 Website: www.ncsa.ca
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Court workers provide information on the nature of the criminal charge, rights, and court procedure. Assistance and support with the necessary documents, Legal Aid applications, and other help.

Crown Prosecutor (Edmonton) 6 th Floor, Brownlee Building 10365 97 Street, Edmonton AB	Ph: 780-422-1111 E-mail: edmontonprosecutions@gov.ab.ca
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The lawyers representing the government during criminal prosecutions – you can contact them if you have questions about your matter.

Provincial Court Clerks (Edmonton)	Criminal Division Ph: 780-427-7868 Traffic Division Ph: 780-638-4242
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You can call the clerks for information about your matter – including your court dates and which courtroom you need to appear in.

NOTES:
