

Our

# 10 Top Tips

if you are

# Accused of an

# Offence

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## Accused of an offence

There is one unavoidable truth about criminal law. It is, that unless you know your way around the process and the technicalities, you can quickly find yourself making your situation worse.

Here are our top tips for anyone who has been accused of an offence.

**“You’re bound to feel anxious, worried and probably daunted. Call us.”**

01

### What should I do if I am arrested or accused of an offence?

Easier said than done, we know. Whether this is your first brush with the law, or you have been in trouble before, you’re bound to feel anxious, worried and probably daunted. Call us. We are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week – even on Christmas day.

We have a team of specialist criminal lawyers who will help you from the moment you are first accused of an offence, through to representing you at court if things get that far. We are experts in cases involving investigations by the police, HM Revenue and Customs, the Health and Safety Executive, the RSPCA and private prosecutions (those brought against you by another individual). So we know what we’re talking about, and we are sure you will feel better having us on your side.



02

### What should I do if the police ask me to sign something?

Do not be tempted to reply to letters, or return forms to the police without first getting legal advice. The police often demand forms are returned within seven or 14 days, but if you complete them incorrectly it can affect your case when it goes to court.



03

## What evidence can be used against me?

You might be told in a letter that an allegation has been made against you. Or you could be contacted by phone. If someone calls, resist the temptation to become involved in a conversation. You may inadvertently implicate yourself by giving a clumsy explanation for something, or by getting your facts wrong. Those conversations can be used against you later on, no matter how innocent they may seem at the time.

04

## How much will legal representation cost?

When most people think of contacting a solicitor, they think it will kick-start an expensive process. But it needn't. We offer free initial interviews for anyone arrested or charged with an offence. We also offer fixed fee motoring advice appointments (or phone calls). And we won't charge for attending any interview under caution by the police, even if that takes place at your home.

05

## Can I have a lawyer present when I am being interviewed?

The police station can be a lonely place. If you have to be there for an interview under caution then tell us straightaway.

We will go along with you free of charge, any time of day or night. And even if you are in a police station which is out of our area, call us; we can arrange for you to be represented by solicitors we know and trust.

**“We will go along with you free of charge.”**



06

## What evidence will I need to prove my innocence?

You are innocent until proven guilty. But in reality, you will need to gather evidence to support your case. If you didn't do what you have been accused of then you will need to show it. Start thinking about how you will do that. Where were you? What were you doing? Who were you with? Could there be CCTV footage? Could bank card transactions or receipts prove your whereabouts?

Consider if expert evidence could help you. We have worked with some of the best experts in the country and we know that the earlier they are involved the more help they can often offer. Text messages can be saved and even those you have deleted can be retrieved. Phone cell site evidence could show where you were when a call or text was made. DNA, fingerprint, handwriting, or road traffic experts can all be instructed early to help build your defence.

The sort of evidence you will need will depend on the accusation against you. We will help you pull together the facts and the hard evidence you need.

07

## What evidence do I need to supply to my lawyer?

Gather all important documents and bring them to us. We will keep them safely for you. These could be accounts, letters, photos, birthday cards - anything that could turn out to be important later on. Don't delete text messages, and do try to print off any Facebook, Twitter or other social media chat that could help you.

08

## What if I cannot provide the required evidence?

We can help find and collate evidence to support your defence. We can preserve CCTV and other electronic recordings. We trace and interview witnesses. And we look for the pieces of information which could help clear your name.

Remember, it's a case of the sooner the better. As time passes, memories fade and evidence becomes compromised or lost. So let us know quickly if our team could be of use and they will get to work straightaway.

09

## Should I approach my accuser?

If you have been accused of crime, it is a bad idea to approach, talk to or write to the person or people who have made allegations against you.

This could be misinterpreted as an attempt to intimidate them or to otherwise persuade them to change their story. Leave everything to us; as the process moves on, you will get the opportunity to put your case forward and to challenge the evidence against you.



10

## What should I do if I discover additional evidence?

As your solicitors, we will encourage you to contact us whenever you need to – especially to let us know about something that has sprung to mind. We have a 24-hour telephone number you can call, and you can email us at any time. If you wake up in the early hours with an idea about your case, that's the time to pop it in an email.

Never hold anything back in the belief that it is irrelevant. We would far rather you tell us everything, ask the questions that are on your mind, and give us your thoughts on how things are progressing. Everything is potentially useful, and could make all the difference to your defence.

**“Never hold anything back in the belief that it is irrelevant.”**

## Funding

We offer the following types of funding, should you be accused of an offence:

- 01 Free police station advice and attendance
- 02 Free initial office interview if you have been arrested or charged with an offence (not applicable for motoring offences)
- 03 Fixed fee motoring offences packages
- 04 £99 +VAT fixed fee interview either in the office or on the phone for any motoring offence

If you are to be interviewed by other agencies then funding will need to be discussed when you call.

You may be entitled to Legal Aid, but this depends on the facts of your case; we'll discuss this with you at your initial free interview. Be aware that our Investigation Service is outside the scope of Legal Aid.

It's a good idea to check your home insurance policy. It may provide legal expenses cover.



Talk to one of our advisors to find out more:

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