

I've just been charged with a criminal offence. What should I do?

Seek legal advice.

Check your paperwork to establish if you are required to go to court

Essential Legal Principles

An accused person is always thought to be innocent until proven guilty. The State or the Commonwealth has the responsibility of proving that the accused is guilty. The standard of proof in criminal matters is beyond reasonable doubt.

Where can I get legal advice?

- **Pay for your own lawyer** – If you are able to pay for your own lawyer, you can call the Law Society of WA and ask for the names of legal firms who may assist you.
 - **08 9324 8600**
 - www.lawsocietywa.asn.au
- **Legal Aid WA** – Legal Aid WA provides an InfoLine and a website that gives basic legal information. You may also qualify for a grant of legal aid.
 - **1300 650 579**
 - www.legalaid.wa.gov.au
- **Aboriginal Legal Service** – The Aboriginal Legal Service of WA provides support services and legal representation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in WA.
 - **08 9265 6666**
 - www.als.org.au
- **Youth Legal Service** – The Youth Legal Service Inc of WA provides free, confidential legal services to young people up to 25 years of age including legal representation in the Children's Court and Magistrates Court.
 - **9202 1688**
 - www.youthlegalserviceinc.com.auOther specialized services for legal advice and representation can be found at the **Community Legal Centre**.
 - **08 9221 9626**
 - www.communitylaw.net
- **Duty Lawyer Service** – Duty lawyers are employed by Legal Aid WA and their role is to attend Magistrates Courts and Children's Courts to advise and represent people who are facing criminal charges in those courts. A duty lawyer can advise you on a range of criminal law issues and can also represent you in court in certain circumstances.