

GREG McCOLLUM  
**COMPLETE LEGAL  
DEFENSE TEAM**

**You Can't Afford to Lose Everything: What to Know and Where to Begin When You're Facing Criminal Charges**

If you or a loved one has been arrested on criminal charges, or you have been notified that these charges have been filed against you, it is absolutely essential that you take immediate action. Even if the charges don't seem "serious", they can cause dramatic issues in your life.

People with high profile jobs, those attending college or university, and anyone with a significant income will quickly find that a criminal conviction is always a big deal - even if it's "just" a misdemeanor. Many employers and universities, for example, will not allow someone with a criminal conviction to continue working or attending the institution. Having a conviction on your record can also make it far more difficult to get a good job in the future. With this in mind, read on to learn how you should respond if you or a loved one is in this situation.

**Your Case is NOT Hopeless**

No matter what evidence the prosecutors claim to have against you, it is important to know that no case is hopeless. With the right legal team in place, you can fight any charge no matter the situation. Understand that the police and prosecutors will often over play their case to try to encourage you to plead guilty. No matter what you think of your chances, you always want to get the advice of a skilled attorney before determining your course of action.

**Never Talk to a Police Officer or DA**

When arrested or charged with a criminal offense, some people think that if they just explain themselves to the police officer or the district attorney, they can clear up the misunderstanding. This is a huge mistake. It is the job of the police officers and the district attorney to prove that you are guilty, and they will use anything you say or do to further their case.

Remember, you have the right to remain silent. Exercise that right. You should not say anything to anyone until you have spoken to an attorney. Even after you have an attorney, don't say a word about your case unless they have said that it is ok.

**Police will try to Trick You**

Police and others working with the court will try to make you think that they are on your side. No matter what they say or do, however, always remember who they are working for. It is perfectly legal for them to try to get information out of you, or encourage you to talk without an attorney. In every case, however, it is also your constitutional right to refrain from saying even one word.

Whether they are being friendly toward you, or they seem very upset, the fact of the matter is you should never speak with the police or others working with the courts. It can only hurt your case in the long run.

### **All Criminal Charges are Serious**

One tactic used by many DA's or prosecuting attorneys is to try to downplay the seriousness of a charge in an attempt to get a guilty plea. They may even offer a reduced sentence as long as you plea quickly.

They try to do this so that they can get through as many cases as they can as quickly as possible. The fact is, however, that every criminal charge is very serious. If you get a DUI, for example, you will likely be offered the option to plead guilty for just a fine and some community service. While this may sound tempting, it will also put the DUI on your record, which can cause some very significant problems.

As you likely already know, most employers ask about criminal records in your past. If you plead guilty, you will have to report that to all potential future employers. To make it worse, many employers today terminate the employment of anyone who gets a criminal record. These are all important things to keep in mind before you even consider agreeing to any deals related to a criminal charge. Instead, reach out to a skilled attorney who can give you advice on how you should proceed.

### **Prosecutors Often Adjust Charges**

Many people don't realize this, but prosecutors can almost always make adjustments to the charges filed against you. If you are criminally charged with assault, for example, the prosecutor may be willing and able to lower the charge down to a misdemeanor charge of disorderly conduct.

Most prosecutors are happy to reduce charges to misdemeanors in exchange for a guilty plea. This is because it looks good on their record (since they got the guilty plea) and it takes a lot less time than going through an entire case in court. Of course, they will only agree to this type of thing if they know you won't plead guilty to the felony criminal charges.

Having an experienced attorney fighting on your behalf can create these options much more easily than you could on your own. The prosecutors know that an experienced attorney will fight hard for their client, which often makes them much more willing to adjust the charges.

### **Contact an Attorney First**

No matter what type of criminal charge you have filed against you, the very first thing you should do is demand to see your attorney. If you don't already have an attorney on

retainer, you need to get one as quickly as possible. Greg McCollum Complete Legal Defense Team would be honored to represent you, and fight aggressively for your rights.

Whether you are already in jail, or you have just been served with papers concerning a criminal charge, please don't hesitate to give us a call. We will review your case right away, and begin providing you counsel on what your next steps should be. Remember, even minor criminal charges need to be taken seriously, and we will certainly do that.

We represent the accused who have a lot to lose, so please call us right away!