



# THREE CRUCIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR CRIMINAL CASE

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epic criminal defense &  
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## INTRODUCTION

From the moment charges are filed until a trial, guilty plea, or other disposition, criminal cases in Missouri courts follow certain procedures.

Before I can advise a client whether to choose a trial or enter a guilty plea, there are three crucial questions about their criminal case which must be answered first.



## THREE QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the evidence?
- 2 What is the offer?
- 3 What actions can my client take during the case which could help them receive a more favorable disposition?



## WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?

When I am hired, I request police reports, witness statements, videos, and any other evidence the prosecutor intends to use at trial.



After receiving and reviewing the evidence, I provide a copy to my client to review before we meet to discuss it.

I also ask my clients for the names of any witnesses whose testimony they believe could either provide a defense to the charge or mitigate (lessen) the seriousness of the offense.





## WHAT IS THE OFFER?

I also request an offer from the prosecutor. When I receive the offer, I send it to my client along with available options. Options include a jury trial, a trial before only a judge, accepting the offer, or entering an open guilty plea.

An open guilty plea is where there is no plea agreement, and the judge can give the defendant any sentence allowed by law. Therefore, I only recommend open guilty pleas when I believe the judge will likely give a better outcome than the offer.





## WHAT ACTIONS SHOULD MY CLIENT TAKE?

I understand that there are actions my clients can take during their criminal cases which could lead to more favorable dispositions.

Therefore, when I am hired, I give my clients a questionnaire about their life, substance use, treatment, and criminal history.



I also screen clients for possible substance abuse, mental health, and other criminogenic and responsivity needs.

Then, I use the results to design a sentencing mitigation action plan, or sentencing map,<sup>SM</sup> to guide my clients through their criminal cases, giving them specific steps to take which could result in better outcomes.





My sentencing map includes a list of documents to collect along with guidelines for character reference letters, community service, and other important evidence.

## CONCLUSION

Three crucial questions determine the direction of a criminal case. I design sentencing maps to guide my clients through their criminal cases, giving them specific steps to take which could result in a more favorable disposition.



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Thank you and have a great day.