



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) is to provide superior legal representation to indigent defendants in the State of Maryland by safeguarding fundamental individual rights and ensuring access to the guaranteed protections afforded by the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Maryland Constitution and Declaration of Rights, and the laws of Maryland.

Effective representation entails not only courtroom advocacy, but the provision of a broad range of services to address both pending criminal charges and the challenges of illness and poverty that cause our clients to cycle through the criminal justice system. The Neighborhood Defenders - Northwest is designed to reverse this cycle by providing access to outside services that address and resolve issues underlying criminal justice contact, in addition to zealous courtroom advocacy.

We are an active part of the community, working from within to strengthen surrounding neighborhoods, making the constitutional promise of justice a reality for all of Baltimore's citizens.



NORTHWEST

office of the public defender

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Baltimore, MD 21202

410-333-4900 Ext. 212

www.nd-md.org



NORTHWEST

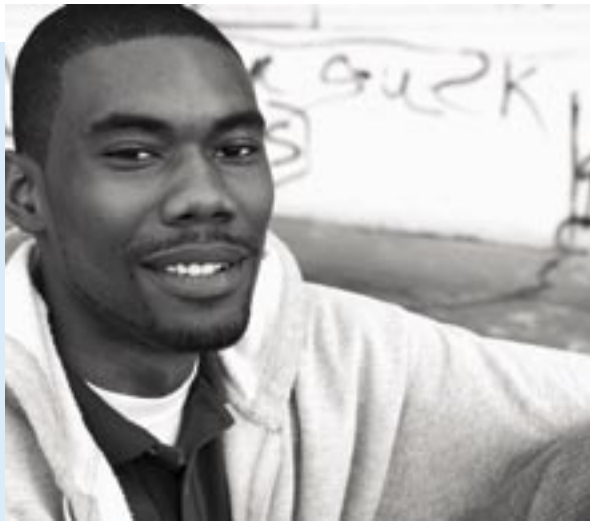
office of the public defender

Serving the Communities of Park Heights
and Greater Northwest Baltimore



HOW WE ARE DIFFERENT

- **LOCATION:** We are located in Northwest Baltimore, where our clients live and where arrests occur. We are located near existing community resources, in an environment that is both comfortable and convenient. Our placement is close to our clients rather than located in or near courthouses that are remote from the community.
- **TEAM DEFENSE:** We are a cohesive unit of attorneys, social workers, paralegals, and office staff seeking to resolve both the criminal case and its underlying causes. Team Defense combines the tools of law and social work to provide the best services possible for clients. At the core of Team Defense is our unalterable commitment to zealous advocacy for our clients in and out of the courtroom.
- **FINDING SOLUTIONS:** We recognize that a many of social, health, and economic issues often factor into one's involvement with the criminal justice system. We believe that we can assist individuals in finding options that will enable them to avoid further negative contact with law enforcement. We know by experience that the end of the case is rarely the end of the story, and we assist clients in making decisions for their future. This will benefit the entire community.
- **REFERRALS:** Effective referrals require knowing your client well enough to understand what sort of treatment environment will work as well as knowing the community's providers. We work to identify our clients' needs and utilize current services as well as bridging gaps in services for our clients.
- **EDUCATION:** We identify systemic issues that concern our clients as well as the larger community. We seek opportunities to partner with the community and other service providers to educate them about a broad spectrum of criminal and social justice issues in a manner that will both unite and support Northwest Baltimore.



WHAT WE OFFER

WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

If you are accepted for representation, you can expect:

- Zealous legal representation
- Legal counseling and referrals for your concerns
- Dedicated follow-up services even after your case has concluded

We are located in Northwest Baltimore to make it easier for you to visit our office. However, we may also schedule interviews at another Public Defender Office, if you prefer.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

You should make contact with our office as soon as possible. A lot of work can be done on your case before your next scheduled court date! In order to qualify for our services, you must meet our income guidelines and provide proof of your current income. If you have questions about what types of proof are required, please call our office.

We recognize that just being accused of a crime can cause stress on many areas of your life. Even if someone is never convicted, they may lose employment, benefits, housing or custody of a child. We are here to try to minimize the impact of your charges as much as possible. If

you are interested in services outside of your case, let your interviewer know what assistance you are looking for. We may be able to help you with:

Child Support

Child Custody

Criminal Record Expungement

Drug Treatment

Education

Employment

Housing

Immigration

Medical/Pharmacy Assistance

Mental Health Treatment

Seized Property

Social Security/Development Disabilities Benefits

While we cannot solve every problem you may be facing, we will support you in your search for the right resources.