



CITY OF TUKWILA – PUBLIC DEFENSE

City Administrator's Office
6200 Southcenter Blvd
Tukwila WA 98188
206-433-1850
publicdefense@tukwilawa.gov

CLIENT RIGHTS

As a client of the public defender you have important rights. The Washington State Supreme Court has adopted standards for the conduct of public defenders and guidelines for the provision of services provided to you by a public defender. This notice is provided to you as a client of the public defender to make you aware of your rights under these standards and advise you on actions to take if you think your rights, as outlined below, have been violated.

Your rights include:

- Confidential meetings with your attorney;
- Legal advice about your case;
- Understanding and authorizing any plea agreement in your case.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FILE A COMPLAINT

If you believe your rights have been violated you have the right to file a complaint. Many complaints can be resolved by talking directly with your public defender.

If you cannot talk with your public defender or want to file a complaint, you can file a complaint with the City of Tukwila by contacting the City Administrator's office in writing or by telephone. The City has a general comment/complaint form available online or from the municipal court. In addition to general comments or complaints the City also has a form you can complete if you believe 1) that you were denied a meeting with your public defender to discuss your case or 2) a plea agreement was entered in your case that you did not understand or authorize.

HOW THE COMPLAINT PROCESS WORKS

If you want to file a specific complaint you must do so **in writing within 15 days** of the date you were refused a meeting with the Public Defender or a plea agreement was entered in your case. Please submit all complaints to the City Administrator's office at 6200 Southcenter Blvd. Tukwila WA 98188 or by email to publicdefense@tukwilawa.gov.

Upon receipt of the written complaint, the City shall have 30 days to investigate the complaint and respond. The City is not required to respond or take any further action if you are no longer represented by the public defender during the 30 day complaint period or if you are subject to an active arrest warrant issued anywhere in the State of Washington or by the Federal Government.



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If you have been denied a meeting with your public defender, the City will schedule a time for you to meet with the public defender as soon as possible after receiving the complaint, but no later than 15 days after receiving the complaint.

If a plea agreement was entered in your case without your understanding and authorization, the City will ask the prosecutor to file a motion to vacate your plea agreement within 30 days of receipt of your complaint. The motion may not be supported by the public defender and may not be granted by the court. If the prosecutor refuses to file a motion to vacate your plea the City will forward your complaint to the Tukwila Municipal Court and the Washington State Bar Association.

By accepting and processing your complaint the City is not making any judgment that the public defender has violated your rights or done anything wrong. The City reserves the right to terminate the complaint process in any particular case if investigation reveals a client is abusing the process.

The City of Tukwila only takes complaints or concerns about public defenders appointed by the Tukwila Municipal Court. The City cannot investigate complaints against private attorneys, judges, prosecutors or attorneys in other jurisdictions. Only the defendant may file a complaint. The City does not accept complaints from family members or other third parties on behalf of the defendant. The City also does not accept anonymous complaints.

You can also file a written complaint with the Tukwila Municipal Court Judge if you believe your rights as a client of the public defender have been violated. If your complaint is about the legal strategy the public defender is using in your case or the type of legal advice you have received you should contact the Municipal Court or the Washington State Bar Association.

The Washington State Bar Association regulates attorney conduct and can investigate and discipline any attorney who violates the rules of professional conduct. You may file a complaint with the Bar Association online at www.wsba.org/licensing-and-lawyer-conduct/discipline/file-a-complaint-against-a-lawyer or by completing a grievance form and mailing it to:

Office of Disciplinary Counsel
Washington State Bar Association
1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98101-2539

The City of Tukwila is committed to providing quality representation for indigent defendants.