



## Defense Maps as Part of Broader Support of Public Defenders

Updated May 4, 2020

The Defense Map Team wants to collaborate in any ways that can help public defenders' work.

And one of the most promising collaborations may be this helping interested larger defense offices in developing systems for better support to attorneys, including procuring early Defense Maps for all interested attorneys.

We suggest three preliminary steps toward such systems.

1. Contacting us for a preliminary conference about working together on this.
2. Designating one person in your office to administer this effort, including by (a) serving as the contact point with us and (b) finding out which defense attorneys are interested in receiving a Defense Map at the beginning of their cases and giving them any guidance they request in the short time necessary to understand [DefenseMap.com](https://www.defensemap.com) (10 minutes on [FAQ #1](#) may be sufficient) and opening an Attorney Account from the [Register/Log In](#).

We think this could be the "Attorney-Client Liaison" (or ACL) position described in [FAQ #4](#) and in Attachment "A" here.

3. Tasking that ACL to facilitate the office's use of some version of the following four attached documents and then being in touch with us.
  - A. The Attorney-Client Liaison (ACL) Position.
  - B. Draft Information Checklist at the Appointment of the Public Defender Office (a draft of a form possible for the time of the appointment of the PD office).
  - C. Draft "5 Things You Can Do to Help Your Defense" (a draft of the form used by the ACL or other support staff person in the first client meeting).
  - D. Questionnaire Regarding an Office-wide Defense Map Plan

If your office is interested in our assistance on such a project, we suggest that your ACL gather opinions, answer the Questionnaire in Appendix B, and be in touch with us at [Info@DefenseMap.com](mailto:Info@DefenseMap.com). We can then work with you to create a **draft implementation plan**.

## Attachment A: The Attorney-Client Liaison (ACL) Position

Acknowledging that some modern-day public defenders receive some progressive support services, we think a few highly feasible changes might still dramatically help all public defender offices.

We envision that this improved assistance to public defenders revolves around affording them a staff person (we use the term Attorney-Client Liaison, or ACL) with frontline responsibility for some specific vital tasks. We think the position can be filled by a competent, highly respected member of the staff from a variety of backgrounds—office administrator, social worker, secretary, paralegal, current attorney, volunteer retired attorney, or other person.

Different offices will come to different ideas on these tasks, but we suggest these six (beginning with just the first three—and even ending there if the office so decided).

1. Advising clients on some version of [5 Things You Can Do to Help Your Defense](#) (and making sure the version being used fits the office's needs).
2. Discussing/talking up the commitment and capabilities of this PD office and defender.
3. Getting a Defense Map, ensuring its completeness, and posting it to assigned counsel's account on [DefenseMap.com](#).
4. Encouraging, tracking, and logging the client's efforts at mitigation.
5. Conducting any communication the public defender recommends with the people identified in the Defense Map's Index of Supporters (see [Thoughts for Supporters of a Charged Person](#)).
6. Generally fielding inquiries and facilitating attorney-client communication.

The public defender office obviously would (and should) make its own decision on which of these six tasks to assign to the ACL. But if they progressed well and the public defenders were interested in even higher levels of support, the following additional ACL responsibilities might be considered.

7. If the help of the Defense Map staff is being sought in this initiative to get early Maps to the defenders interested in having them, acting as the point of contact with the Defense Map staff.
8. Being able to answer any public defender questions about [DefenseMap.com](#) (basically with the information in [FAQ #1](#)).
9. As this initiative progresses, advising the office whether it should consider changes in things like (a) promoting clients' completion of their Maps (does computer access or technical or completion assistance need to be offered?, etc.) (b) the participating defenders' wish to have the ACL, a mental health professional, or another staff person read and offer a preliminary memo on each Defense Map, and (c) any other developments or necessary modifications as the initiative progresses.

10. Developing a plan for incarcerated clients' completion of a Defense Map (our FAQ on this matter and the Defense Map staff can help you with this challenging issue). ACLs and their offices may decide that the initial use of [DefenseMap.com](https://www.defensemap.com) should be with at-liberty clients, though our staff is available to discuss the progress being made in giving incarcerated clients access to the website.
11. Inviting, collecting, and sharing ongoing office feedback about this initiative.

**Appendix B: Draft Information Checklist  
at Appointment of the Public Defender Office<sup>1</sup>**

1. Client first name:	
2. Client last name:	
3. Email address:	
4. Case number and charge:	
5. Release circumstances (detained, on bond, etc.)	
6. Age and date of birth:	
7. Physical address:	
8. Telephone number(s):	
9. DefenseMap.com referral made (Yes/No)	
10. First appointment made ? (Yes, date/No):	
11. Client needs help with a Defense Map? (Yes/No) (If Yes, please explain. Computer access? Computer use? Language?)	
12. Client agrees to complete a Defense Map within 48 hours? (Yes/No)	

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<sup>1</sup> These are not necessarily all the preliminary questions a PD program may ask on first receiving an appointment. We offer these because Questions 1, 2, and 8-11 are the key ones for making an immediate referral from the “Refer a client” link on a professional account.

## Attachment C: 5 Things You Can Do to Help Your Defense<sup>2</sup>

Client: \_\_\_\_\_ Attorney/staff person: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Here are 5 very important things you can do to help your case.

- Stay connected.** Make sure [your attorney's/our] office always has your current address, email address, and phone numbers.
- Know who to speak with—and who NOT to speak with.** Your relationship with [your attorney/me] is private and confidential, so be open and honest. But don't speak with anyone else about your case unless you and [your attorney/I] agree you should, as those conversations are probably NOT confidential.
- Be responsible.** People with charges can either help or hurt themselves by the way they live during their cases. Avoid any arrests or contact with witnesses. Use your good judgment (and your **Defense Map**) to make the best decisions possible in your life now.
- As soon as possible—today or tomorrow, if possible—complete the work on [DefenseMap.com](http://DefenseMap.com).** This free confidential tool gives clients much better chances to work with their attorneys for the best results possible.
  1. This work usually takes 2-3 hours. You can use any Internet-connected computer or tablet or any smart phone, and you can log on and off as much as you want.
  2. You can open your account (a) from the link in the email we may have the website send to you or (b) at the Register/Log In link on the homepage.
  3. When you are finished, you'll be taken to a Conclusion Page—and from there, please use the simple link in Paragraph C to put your Map on our Account. If the website asks you for an email address for us, just enter this: [email address of attorney or staff person]. (Please also call or email [name and contact] immediately to say you finished.)
  4. It's a good idea to print out and read your **Defense Map** (a) to prepare for your next meeting and (b) to see if you want to log back on to add more information.
  5. Keep your **Defense Map** private/confidential—it is only for you and [your attorney/me].
- Let me know if you have any questions today or in the future.**

Attorney-Client Liaison or other staff person [Email, telephone, and date]

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<sup>2</sup> This draft "5 Things" checklist should obviously be modified to reflect the name and position of the person meeting with the client. Boxes have been used for bullets so each advisement can be confirmed and copies can be (a) given to the client and (b) placed in the file.

## Appendix D: Office Questionnaire Regarding a Defense Map Plan

*For completion by a public defender or private law office wishing help from the Defense Map Team in implementing a plan for automatic client use of the website for multiple interested attorneys..*

1. Name and location of your office.
2. Date of initial inquiry to DefenseMap.com.
3. Name/contact info of this office's ACL (or your other contact with us).
4. Names/contact info of other key people involved in possible implementation of [DefenseMap.com](http://DefenseMap.com).
5. Number of defense attorneys (a) wishing to participate and (b) declining.
6. Number of allied professionals (secretaries, administrators, MHPs, mitigation specialists, etc.).
7. Have all attorneys and allied professionals opened accounts? (Please explain.)
8. Approximate number of felony cases annually.
9. Approximate number of juvenile cases annually.
10. Level of attorney interest in use of Defense Maps (please explain your answer, including the types of cases where you envision Defense Maps will be sought, etc.).
11. Current use of Defense Maps, if any (try to include the frequency of your office's use of the site and the procedures you're using to accomplish that).
12. Goals regarding the use of DefenseMap.com (All felony cases? Plus all serious juvenile cases? Plus all serious misdemeanor cases? Other goals?).
13. Your current ideas on referring clients who ARE NOT incarcerated.
14. Your current ideas on use with incarcerated clients.
15. Your current ideas on assisting clients needing help to create a Map.
16. Your other questions and concerns at this time.
17. Any other information you think the Defense Map Team should have.