

Have You Ever Been Arrested? Posted Bail? **You May Owe Money to the Court and Not Know It.**

Bad things could happen if you do not get on a payment plan you can afford before your case goes to collections. Deal with it, do not wait!

_____ **You are currently on probation or parole.** You could violate your probation or parole for not being current with a payment plan. Consult your defense attorney for further information. Be aware that probation and parole violations can cause you to lose your public benefits (see below).

_____ **You receive public benefits** (any benefits administered by the County Assistance Office, such as cash assistance (GA or TANF), Food Stamps, and Medical Assistance. **Your GA, TANF, and GA-related Medical Assistance could be denied or cut off.** You could lose your Social Security, SSI, or Medical Assistance benefits if you violate probation or parole because you are not current on payment of your fines and costs. **Community Legal Services or Philadelphia Legal Assistance may be able to help.**

_____ **You have any income from wages.** Your wages could be garnished (which means a percentage of your wages could be taken automatically from every paycheck before you get it). You might be able to negotiate a lower payment plan if you don't wait to be garnished.

_____ **You own a home, house, or other property.** The courts could get a lien on your property. Your property could be taken to Sheriff's Sale, or you might have to sell it. There are certain protections for some homeowners. **If you get papers about a Sheriff's Sale, immediately go to Community Legal Services or Philadelphia Legal Assistance for possible assistance.**

_____ **You have your name on any bank account.** Any bank account with your name on it (even if other people's names are on it, too, and even if it is not your money in it) could be frozen and the money could be taken if you don't object.

_____ **You want to try to get your criminal record expunged.** You might be eligible for an expungement in cases where: you were not convicted; you were convicted of a summary offense like retail theft at least 5 years ago; you had ARD; or you had a juvenile offense. The courts may deny an expungement unless you pay all of your fines and costs. You want to keep the amount that you owe down by avoiding collection fees.

_____ **You want to try to get your criminal record pardoned.** You might be eligible for a pardon if you have convictions that are old and/or minor. But the Board of Pardons will not consider you for a pardon if you owe any fines and costs. You want to keep the amount that you owe down by avoiding collection fees.

Go to the payment center in the basement of the CJC or call 215-683-1482 before your case goes into collections to get into a payment plan you can afford!