

## Appendix F – Public Defender Case Checklist

### PUBLIC DEFENDER CASE CHECKLIST

If you have questions about anything on this checklist or about anything else related to your cases or your professional activities, immediately contact one of the following members of the Liberian Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (LACDL). They are ready and able to assist you.

Sunifu S. Sherif, Montserrado County  
Tel. #deleted

Taweh S. Johnson, Bomi County  
Tel. #deleted

Tobey J. Raynes, Lofa County  
Tel. #deleted

#### On the first day you receive a case assignment:

- \_\_\_ Receive case assignment from sheriff or court
- \_\_\_ (If you do not already have the case file) Go to court and make copy of case file
- \_\_\_ Read and review all the documents in file.
- \_\_\_ Deliver a **paper letter** to County Attorney **requesting evidence** (discovery). Obtain proof that you delivered the letter. (Get certification of delivery or a date- stamped copy for your own records.)
- \_\_\_ File a **paper motion** requesting to **continue trial** so that you have enough time to prepare. Obtain proof that you filed the motion the letter.
- \_\_\_ Consider asking the court to admit your client to bail

#### As soon as possible after receiving assignment:

- \_\_\_ Read and review the statute which is charged in indictment
- \_\_\_ Identify any legal defenses (Self-defense, alibi, impossibility, mis-identification, false accusation, other defenses)
- \_\_\_ Go to prison to visit client
- \_\_\_ Request to meet privately with client
- \_\_\_ Explain to client who you are and what it means that you are a public defender

- \_\_\_ Explain to client what he has been charged with
- \_\_\_ Interview client (Spend enough time to fully understand the client's views)
- \_\_\_ Complete the client intake form
- \_\_\_ Take notes of client interview

**As soon as possible after interviewing client:**

- \_\_\_ Organize case file, begin trial notebook
- \_\_\_ Identify possible witnesses against and in favor of defendant
- \_\_\_ Identify documents favorable to defendant
- \_\_\_ Identify client statements and if there are Miranda issues
- \_\_\_ Identify any problems with arrest or search
- \_\_\_ If evidence was obtained illegally make **paper motion to suppress** evidence (if you do not have one, contact one of the public defender trainers for a model.)

**Conduct investigation:**

- \_\_\_ Interview witnesses
- \_\_\_ Go to observe the scene of alleged crime
- \_\_\_ Arrange with County Attorney to view any physical evidence (weapons, clothing, etc.)
- \_\_\_ Obtain authenticated documents favorable to defendant; ask court to **issue subpoenas** if necessary
- \_\_\_ Review with the defendant whatever discovery you have obtained

**Three days after receiving case assignment:**

- \_\_\_ File a **paper motion to compel discovery** if you have not received all the evidence from the county attorney.

\_\_\_\_\_ If the court denies motion to continue trial (or does not respond to your motion), file a **writ of certiorari** to Supreme Court → public defenders in interior counties should contact Public Defender Sunifu Sherif in Monrovia for assistance with filing a writ.