

COMMISSION ON LEGAL COUNSEL FOR INDIGENTS

Complaint Procedure

The Commission on Legal Counsel for Indigents provides indigent defense services to eligible clients in North Dakota district and juvenile courts. If you have an “appointed attorney,” he or she is employed by our agency as a “public defender” or has contracted with our agency to provide representation to indigent clients. Please note, **you do NOT have the right to an appointed attorney of your own choice.** If you are dissatisfied with your appointed attorney, first let the attorney know what your objection is, and try to resolve your problem. Your attorney will remain your attorney, unless he or she withdraws as counsel, in writing, and the Commission permits the withdrawal (at the beginning of a case), or the judge orders (at any time after the attorney has made “an appearance” in the case) that the attorney is released from the case.

If you have a complaint to lodge against your attorney, there are two agencies with which you can do so. You can file a written complaint with the Commission, and/or if you believe your attorney has committed an ethical violation as defined in the North Dakota Rules of Professional Conduct, you can submit a written complaint to the Disciplinary Board of the North Dakota State Bar Association.

If you wish to lodge a complaint against your attorney with the Commission, you must file a **WRITTEN** complaint and send it to:

Commission on Legal Counsel for Indigents
PO Box 149
Valley City, ND 58072

Your complaint must include the following:

- 1) your name
- 2) your address
- 3) your phone number
- 4) your attorney’s name
- 5) the name(s) of the charge(s), and the county in which you are charged
- 6) the case number(s), if you know it/them
- 7) a detailed explanation of your complaint
- 8) a statement of what you would like done

After the Commission receives your complaint, we will contact your attorney, obtain a response, and determine what, if anything should be done in the situation.