

“How to Choose a Bail Bondsman”

If you have a friend or loved one who has been arrested and in jail, he or she might be looking to you for help. Before you hire a bail bondsman, there are many things to consider.

A bail bondsman can help you through the bail bond procedure, explaining each step of the process and making it as easy as possible. Make sure to use a trustworthy bail bondsman.

While becoming the co-signer on a bail bond comes with serious responsibility, the process of securing a bond is not hard. Do not bond out someone you have just met, someone you don't trust, someone who has a history of being untruthful, or a history of not showing up to court. Be aware that if the person you are bonding out fails to appear in court, as the co-signer, you might be responsible for paying the remainder of the bail bond. If you do not trust that your friend or family member will comply with the court process, do not bond them out. If you truly feel that the person in jail will benefit from your assistance, by all means, contact a bail bondsman and get them out of jail.

When you meet with your bail bondsman, you will be asked to put down 10% of the bail bond. Some bail bondsmen may ask you to put up collateral in the event that the person you are bailing out is a high risk client or the bond amount is large.

You will be handing over cash to a virtual stranger, so it is important to select a bail bondsman with a great reputation. A reputable bondsman will have been in business locally for a number of years. You can feel confident in choosing a bail bondsman who has an established presence in the community.

Most people who have not had experience with bail bondsmen look in the phone book or on the Internet. If you use the Internet, look for reviews from past clients.

In your search you will likely find companies that employ several bail bondsmen and also bail bondsmen operating as individuals. Either is fine as long as they are reputable. A big company does not mean shoddy service and a single bail bondsman does not always mean quality service.

Don't hesitate to ask questions. You may want to ask about licensing and fees involved, whether they are licensed to work in the court of jurisdiction that your friend or loved one will be assigned to and how long they have been in business.

If you get answers to your questions that you are not comfortable with, move on. There are many bail bondsmen to choose from and finding one you feel you can trust will prevent additional stress.