



**CONNECTICUT
CRIMINAL
DEFENSE**

I N F O R M A T I O N

THE MADDOX LAW FIRM, INC.

Civil Litigation | Criminal Defense | Immigration | Personal Injury

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Tearing down
obstacles,
finding a
way for
you.

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WE THE PEOPLE

by Matthew Maddox, Attorney & Founder

I saw Ben* for the first time in many years last week.

“Hey Matt,” he said, reaching out to shake my hand as he was being arraigned next to a public defender.



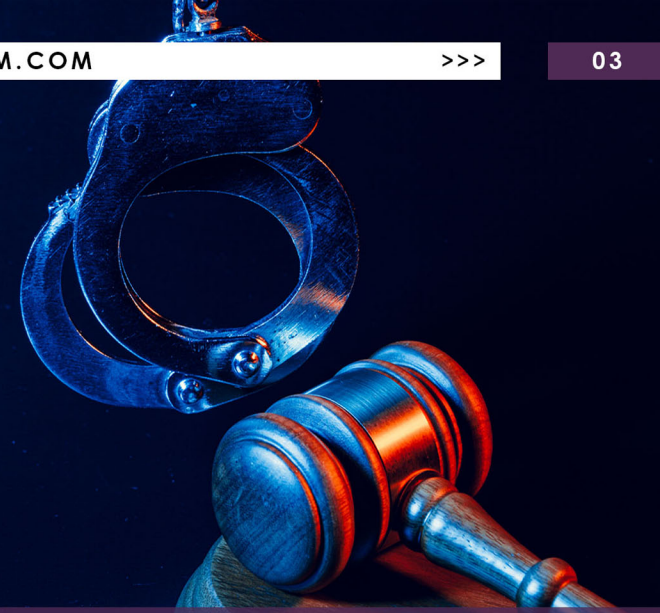
IT DISTURBED ME TO SEE BEN THERE. I NEVER WANTED TO SEE HIM AGAIN.

I met Ben approximately 28 years ago when he was in his teens. Ben broke into the criminal justice system in an unremarkable way; low-level drug possession and interfering with police.

Here he was, once again, standing in a court with which he was too familiar. Now in his forties, Ben was facing new misdemeanor charges. As I watched him face the judge, I was reminded of how I could have done more for him if I had seen him as a person and not as a “client” those many years ago.

It's not that I didn't fight hard for him and defend his charges back then. It's that I hadn't yet embarked on the mission that now drives my Firm every day – the mission to find durable solutions for people so that they won't need a criminal defense attorney again.

Our most successful people recognize they can still have a life, job, and relationship with their family. They have a right to a lawyer and deserve the most vigorous defense, no matter the allegation.



THERE IS A SECRET MANY LAWYERS DON'T TALK ABOUT, BUT WE DO.

These people are their own agents of change, and they do their best work when we advise, guide, defend and protect them as people, not as “clients.”

Our people need access to effective worthwhile solutions that last, so we must be relentless.

At The Maddox Law Firm, when we speak about change and success, we think about the resources and relationships that would best serve our people.

And that requires more than just advocacy. It requires devotion and a shared vision with our people of what they want to achieve.

We don't represent clients. We represent people.

**Pseudonym for privacy protection*

BAIL LAW & PROCEDURE

by Jessica Kordas, Attorney

Bail is not designed to punish people, but it can do that.

Bail hearings are critical and require rapid and thorough investigation and preparation that only a professionally staffed law firm can provide.

If you are held in jail, unable to make bond, and charged with misdemeanors, Connecticut Law requires that a bail hearing be conducted within 14 days of your arraignment. At subsequent bail hearings, unless the court determines the defendant is a flight risk or a danger to the community, the financial conditions to release must be removed.

PROMISE TO APPEAR (PTA)

Ideally, if you are arrested, you will be released upon a written PTA. You DON'T have to pay any money or use a bail bond agent; you promise that you will show up in court when you are scheduled.

If you are not issued a PTA, Connecticut Law provides for the ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO BAIL. You cannot be held in jail without terms or conditions permitting you to be released.

CT LAW PREVENTION

Connecticut judges are prevented from requiring money-only bail for a person charged with a misdemeanor. The exceptions to this rule are for the following individuals and allegations:

1. Family Violence
2. Flight Risk
3. Likelihood to Obstruct Justice
4. Likelihood to Harm Themselves or Others

Connecticut judges are not permitted to set a cash-only bail when a defendant must pay the total amount of the bail to be released from jail. Every defendant has the right to at least a portion of their bail set as a Surety Bond (posting bail through a bail bond agent).

Depending on the amount of bail, Connecticut bail bond agents charge a non-refundable fee between 7-10% of the total bail amount.

HOW TO SHORTEN YOUR TIME IN COURT

by Juliana Velez, Attorney

Once you are summoned to court or are arrested, whatever limitations you may have are suddenly magnified, scrutinized, and talked about by civil servants, prosecutors, clerks, and judges.

Courts and judges need to feel that you are a safe bet. In other words, they want some confidence that you will avoid making the same or similar mistake again. Consequently, a great deal of sentencing has to do with rehabilitation.

You always have a right to trial and a Constitutional right to put the government to its burden of proof. But if you are not going to trial, help yourself and your lawyer by taking these steps to shorten your time in court.

The moment our phone rings, The Maddox Law Firm helps people begin their rehabilitation process and work toward results that allow them to no longer need our services and only come back with success stories.

“EXTREMELY EXPERIENCED AND KNOWLEDGEABLE. ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS OR GIVE A PEP TALK IF NEEDED.

Laura M.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE



Make your arrest your “rock bottom” and immediately schedule a substance abuse evaluation with a qualified clinician.

Follow the directions that are given to you for treatment. Do not wait for the court to order you into treatment.

Substance abuse is almost always a result of untreated psychological, emotional, neurological, or medical problems. It is not enough to only seek sobriety through substance abuse counseling; you must undergo the necessary therapy or other clinical treatment to identify what drove you to substance abuse.

FINANCIAL WRONGDOING

Begin setting aside money for repayment to the alleged victim. This advice stands regardless of whether you are innocent. If your law firm wins your case with an outright dismissal or acquittal after trial, you will have created a “rainy day” fund. If not, then the money you set aside demonstrates sincerity and remorse to the court and assists your law firm and the court in managing the alleged victim’s expectations.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Anger, emotion, frustration, and unresolved relationship issues frequently land people in court. It does not matter who was right or wrong in relationship disputes. Get yourself into counseling! Identify how the issue, conflict, or communication logjam got out of hand. Acquire the tools so that you can master those situations in the future. Judges want to see you have done some clinically based soul searching and have learned how to stay out of 9-1-1’s way.

“THE MADDOX LAW FIRM EXPERIENCE WAS AWESOME. THEY ARE WELCOMING AND VERY EFFICIENT. THE PROCESS WAS EFFORTLESS.”

Courtney R.

GIVING IS LIVING

Volunteer your time at a charitable organization. Volunteering makes you step outside of yourself, consider the needs of others, and hopefully see that you’ve got it good. It also allows the judges and courts to see that you are making amends by helping in your community.



FIRST-TIME OFFENDERS

To receive Accelerated Rehabilitation (AR), a judge must find two things:

1. The charges against you are not so serious as to prevent you from receiving the AR privilege;
2. You're not likely to offend in the future.

ADVANTAGES OF AR

One immediate advantage of applying for AR is that your file is sealed from public record. If you are granted AR, you can be placed under the supervision of ADULT PROBATION for up to 2 years without pleading guilty – that means no conviction. The judge may impose certain conditions upon you, such as community service or a financial contribution to a charity, counseling, or proof of paying back an alleged victim, commonly referred to as restitution.

If you receive the privilege of AR and you comply with everything that has been asked of you, your case is dismissed. Under CT Law, a dismissal permits you to state that you have never been arrested.

You can potentially receive AR twice. If your first AR was for a misdemeanor and your second arrest is ten years or more later, you can apply for the privilege again.



ACCELERATED PRETRIAL REHABILITATION (AR)

by Carol Dreznick, Attorney

If you are referred to as a C first-time offender, we know you are going through a lot right now. Chances are you are worried about your job and reputation and wondering about the quickest and best way to resolve your matter.

EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA DONT'S

by *Stephany Eastmond, Attorney*

People like to share. It's sweet.

Insert eye roll

Do you know what isn't sweet? Your personal, private data, information, and opinions are being used against you! Our people (clients) post about almost everything they do and think.



**ASSUME EVERYTHING ONLINE
WILL BE READ IN COURT
SOMEDAY.**

When you sign into Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or other social media platforms or start a Ph.D. dissertation-length email, please remember the following...

Keep it short.

Once you're sure that it's short, make it shorter. Edit, edit, edit. The more you write, the more likely you'll regret what you wrote. You may even offend someone you care about offending.

Especially regarding emails, don't include private information about your relationships or finances.

If a professional under contract with you needs personal or financial information, deliver it in person, over the phone, or at least in password-protected communication.



**SHARE POPCORN, SHARE M&M'S,
DO NOT SHARE PERSONAL
INFORMATION.**

The number of times our Firm has used opposing parties' or witnesses' social posts or emails against them in litigation is just about dizzying. And, yes, the bad guys have done the same thing to our people, whom we work so hard to protect and defend.

We can't protect you from your literary brilliance if you've written relevant things to your case.

THE COST OF SENTENCING

by Matthew Maddox, Attorney & Founder

Every time a family member calls a CT inmate, CT collects a 68% commission.

It's a penalty extracted from mothers, fathers, wives, and husbands so they and their children can speak to someone already being punished. It costs \$5 for a 15-minute call.

Those 15 minutes are hardly more than a moment for someone to speak to their loved one, and many families, barely supported by minimum wage, can't afford those \$5.

On the infrequent occasion when people briefly think of someone in jail, there is certainly no thought of the many other costs and punishments that are piled upon families.

In addition to the phone calls, there is the cost of gasoline to drive to the prison, the lost time from jobs to make that drive, and the costs of depositing even meager amounts of money into an inmate's commissary.

The most severely damaging cost of incarceration to families and children is separation.

When families cannot maintain consistent, frequent contact with an incarcerated loved one, the emotional toll, especially upon children, is incalculable. And when that contact is limited because of financial constraints, especially a cost that amounts to not much more than a kickback to the State government, one of the primary goals of sentencing, which is rehabilitation, is discarded.

The prison industry and the for-profit commercial models that characterize the business of incarceration damage families. To meaningfully reduce the cycle of incarceration that has plagued our State and country for generations, we must stop making imprisonment lucrative.



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MY FATHER TAUGHT ME TO ALWAYS HIRE A PROFESSIONAL FOR A JOB I WAS UNABLE TO PERFORM. THE WHOLE FIRM HELPED TO REPRESENT ME IN MY CASE AND I COULD NOT BE ANY MORE HAPPY... HIRE THE MADDOX TEAM. THEY WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU.

Christopher L.

WRONGLY ACCUSED IN CT

by Jessica Kordas, Attorney

Imagine someone accuses you of a crime. It can be any crime, theft, or sexual assault; maybe it's as simple as you've allegedly breached the peace.

Now imagine that the accusation is false. How does it make you feel to be falsely accused? How does it feel to be arrested and compelled to appear in court?

And what about the almost inevitable article in the local news that often includes your mug shot?

It's devastating. It undermines a person's sense of identity and their sense of self-worth. Everything that we thought was concrete in life is in jeopardy: family, employment, and reputation.

Too often, law enforcement, lawyers, and judges only give passing thought to whether someone may be falsely accused and to the desperately painful repercussions of a false accusation. A false accusation and arrest plunge a lance deep into the heart of who we are and what we stand for. It decimates our trust in the police and our courts. It can undercut our faith in people everywhere.

The terrible injustice is that the damage is done even if the case is won outright through dismissal or an acquittal after trial. The suspicion and the association with the original accusation can never wholly return the accused to where they were before the accusation.

Representing someone falsely accused is a demanding and emotional experience for a conscientious attorney because the sense of unfairness and the intense desire for retribution often collide head-on with practicality and expediency.

The defense of a CT criminal case demands that a lawyer explain

the risks and costs of trial, balanced against the potential benefits of a plea bargain or applying for a diversion program that may lead to dismissal.

Not everyone can afford the financial, personal, and emotional expense of fighting a case through trial. It's our work at The Maddox Law Firm, but the marathon march toward trial heavily affects the people we represent. And when CT provides first-time offenders with statutory diversion programs such as Accelerated Pretrial Rehabilitation (A.R.), the risk of litigation and trial is often seen as irrational.

It can be a bitter pill to conclude a criminal case with a diversion program, even if it leads to dismissal. The conditions that may be required to reach dismissal inevitably pour more salt in the wound. But, when there's the certainty of dismissal and erasure, it's tough to dam the torpedoes and surge full speed ahead toward an uncertain future.

It's even more complicated when someone falsely accused feels compelled to accept a plea bargain rather than risk a conviction and a worse post-trial penalty.

Our team fights for our people through the storm of allegations, evidence, media coverage, and the seemingly overwhelming emotions that are brought about by arrest.

PROOF BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT

by Juliana Velez, Attorney

What does this phrase mean to you? How do you react when you read it? Is something ominous about it that resonates when you think about the world where it lives?

It is a grave and daunting business.

Proof beyond a reasonable doubt is not an easy concept and is widely misunderstood – even by lawyers. It is a burden of proof. In other words, it is the threshold that the State or federal government must cross for a defendant to be found guilty.

HIGHEST BURDEN OF PROOF IN OUR ENTIRE LEGAL SYSTEM

It should never be easy for a government to deprive someone of their freedom and put them behind bars.

The jury instruction written by the judges of the CT Superior Court defines “reasonable doubt” as one which “in serious affairs that concern you, you would heed; that is, such a doubt as would cause reasonable men and women to hesitate to act upon it in matters of importance.”

To put it in more relatable terms, consider your day-to-day life. When you must make an important decision that involves the health and safety of your loved ones or one that commits you to a course of action that will dramatically impact you for several years or longer, what is that thought or reason that makes you hesitate? What factor, consideration, or definable concern gives you pause? That is reasonable doubt.

IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT OF EVIDENCE

When The Maddox Law Firm builds a case for trial, even if we may not reach jury deliberations and even if we win a dismissal through a diversionary program or outright excellent lawyering, our people are always in the strongest possible position to move forward and thrive.