



3. What to do in court

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There are many ways to support someone going through the court process, here are some suggestions, but the list is not definitive!

If you arrive at court and the person you are supporting **doesn't have a solicitor yet, phone one immediately** who should send someone to court, and tell the court clerk that you are waiting for a solicitor – do not use a duty solicitor if offered. [Look at our guide to finding a solicitor.](#)

When you are in the public gallery **take notes** of everything you hear, e.g. what the magistrate or solicitors say. You are usually allowed to use a lap top, and are always allowed to make written notes. It is forbidden to make sound recordings or make videos or take photos. You can share these later with the person you are supporting, or with LDMG/GBC.

A good solicitor will be happy to **explain exactly what is going on**, you can encourage your friend to ask them questions before or after the hearing.

If there are any parts of the process that aren't understood, or your friend would like advice about what to do, then [get in touch with GBC or LDMG](#). It may be possible to get immediate help/explanations by phoning the protest support line.

Have some **water and snacks**. You and your friend may consume these in the waiting areas. In the court room one is only allowed water. Your friend can ask for water in the court room, but sometimes it's better to have a bottle.

Be prepared for **lots of waiting around**. The courts sit in two sessions, one starting at 10am, the other after lunch at 2pm. All the cases for the morning or afternoon are listed for the same time. Usually your case will be listed for the morning session, but you may not be heard until mid morning, just before lunch (which is 1pm – 2pm) or even in the afternoon. The courts close at 4pm, but once a case has started may well go on until after 5pm.

However, **don't be tempted to arrive late**, the magistrates get very vexed if you aren't there when they want to hear your case?