

ST. FRANCOIS COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

MICHAEL BLAKE DUDLEY, PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



Prosecutors as a Resource – On-Call Guidelines

Our office always wants to be a useful resource for officers and available 24/7. Sometimes, situations arise in the field that are not quite as clear cut as usual.

Do we have enough evidence to pick up the suspect for questioning? Do we have enough to go in the house without a warrant? Can we compel the suspect to give us the password to an electronic device?

To aid in answering some of these questions, the St. Francois County Prosecuting Attorney's Office has provided all law enforcement agencies in the county with our On-Call Attorney number.

573-218-0848

This number will connect you with the attorney that is on-call for the week. The use of this resource is encouraged, and here are a few guidelines on how to use it.

1. Use Good Judgment

Getting a call at 2:00 am is perfectly fine if the situation is urgent, life is at risk, or other exigent circumstance. But please, if getting an answer to a legal question can wait for daylight hours, please follow up with us later in the investigation.

2. Be Prepared for Questions

To give you the clearest answer we can, we will ask questions about your case or situation. We are not trying to be unnecessarily difficult, but it is important to understand the context of a situation before we provide any direction on what law enforcement would and would not be able to do. We want you to make the right call.

3. We are not Civil Attorneys

As such, we cannot provide any legal advice on department policies, procedures, or other in-house business. If we identify a situation as a civil matter when you call, there is nothing that the criminal courts will do to be involved. Use your best judgment and remember – if it is civil in nature, the caller should call their personal attorney, not the police or prosecutor.

In addition, if it is a question of a civil or internal nature for officers, you should consult with your department or city attorney for legal advice.