

Missouri law allows several types of bonds for pretrial release. The most common is a cash bond, where the full amount set by the court must be paid upfront. If the defendant complies with court requirements, the amount is refunded minus any fees or fines. Courts decide whether a cash bond is appropriate based on the severity of charges and the defendant's history.

A surety bond, facilitated by a bail bondsman, requires the defendant to pay a non-refundable percentage—typically 10%—of the total bond. The bondsman guarantees the full amount to the court. Bail bond agents must be licensed, and if a defendant fails to appear, the bondsman may employ bounty hunters to apprehend them.

A property bond allows defendants to pledge real estate as collateral. The court places a lien on the property, and if the defendant fails to appear, foreclosure proceedings can begin. The property's equity must meet or exceed the bond amount, and all owners must consent to the lien.

A recognizance bond, or own recognizance (O.R.) release, does not require upfront payment. Instead, the defendant promises to return for court proceedings. Judges typically grant this for low-level offenses or defendants with strong community ties. Failure to appear can result in additional charges and a higher bond.