



Ronnie Minnick
Bail Bond Education
1999 - Present



The Professional Bail Bondsman 2022

Professional Bail 2022

My name is Ronnie Minnick. 1968 I received my Banking & Finance degree from the University of Arkansas, my Juris Doctric Law Degree in 1968 from the same University. I have owned and operated a total of 21 title insurance companies, have been a licensed mortgage broker in several states, a licensed residential home builder and for the last 30 years have done legal liability continuing education seminars for real estate licensees and bail bond licensees under the sponsorship of the University of Arkansas, University of Oklahoma, University of Mississippi, The Oklahoma Real Estate Commission, The Mississippi Real Estate Commission, and The Arkansas Professional Bail Bond Licensing Board. I tell you this not as a braggart, but that I am educated and I am informed about the facts of which I speak.

Liberalism is a political and moral philosophy based on the rights and freedoms of the individual. While one cannot argue the merits of this endeavor, in the world of criminal justice however is a sympathetic view of criminals (as opposed to victims of crime) and a attempt to deal with the problems of criminal behavior in a more redhibitory approach rather than punishment in order to bring the individual back into being a productive unit. These policies, although well intended, historically result in a “soft on crime, catch and release” approach which in practice have devastating results and inherently dangerous to the safety of the general public. There being no deterrent to criminal conduct, crime is rampant. After all “what is going to happen to a repeat offender, going to simply be re-released and commission more crime.” Why stop ? One would ask then: “how does such a belief exist from seemly smart people ?

Problems:

1) There is massive jail overcrowding everywhere; 2) There is massive jail budget over-runs everywhere; 3) There is no money to build more jails or to continue to fund the massive jail budget deficits cause by the overcrowding and inmate costs.



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Perception

The jail population is primarily composed of our friends, neighbors, relatives, good people who simply have caught a bit of bad luck, they have families, mortgages, employment, etc that all will be lost if they don't have the money to pay the bail bond premium thus leading to jail overcrowding and budget issues. Thus the fault lies with our present criminal justice system and the traditional use of monetary bail. 1) Inmates cannot afford the bail bond premium; 2) The commercial bail system discriminates against the poor people as only the rich can afford the bail bond premium;. 3) The commercial bail system creates a debtor's prison; 4) If we were to simply release these "good people" back on the street with a promise to appear in court, they "will" appear in court.

Judicial System

The Judicial System has seemed to have bought into the bail reform message that bail bondsmen are the problem and are continually looking to alternative pre-trial release options rather than monetary bail. Some of these judicial attitudes also have been brought into play thru the perceived "lack of professionalism" of the bail bond licensee.

Mystery of the Profession

A large part of the perception (or misperception) is that the commercial bail system is somewhat mysterious, greatly misunderstood by most (other than the bail agent community) and that even includes ones within the criminal justice system, judges, et al who you would think would know, and all the general public which includes the state legislators voting for the bail reform measures. And this all works in favor of the movement toward "bail reform".



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Realities **Misplaced Benevolence**

Purpose of Bail / Appearance

The sole purpose of bail being the “appearance in court” for the individual to answer for his/her conduct and to achieve justice for the victims of crime. The failure to appear rates (FTA) associated with the bail reform “Soft on Crime / Catch & Release” is as high as seventy five (75%). Missing a court date is pricey for everyone devouring county fiscal resources. Defendants who fail to appear impose significant costs on the judicial system, rearranging and rescheduling court dates, wasted time of judges and prosecutors, and on the general public in the form of wasted tax dollars and creating a public safety issue! County residents don’t ask much of their county governments, keep roads smooth, law enforcement help if needed, put law-breakers in jail, maintain community safety and for most part residents will be satisfied

Defendants who fail to appear are four (4) times higher to commit additional crimes! Catch and release bail reform with no supervision is reckless and an inherently dangerous proposition. Law-abiding citizens expect laws to be enforced that will keep them safe and not put unsupervised criminals back on the streets within hours of arrest and at the same time costing tax payers thousands of dollars supporting the judicial system. Today’s criminal has no fear or respect of and for the judicial system. Failure to appear in court also harms victims remaining in limbo until the defendant can be relocated and returned to court for adequate justice. In this context, who goes looking for the absconding defendant ? No one ! There are “Failure To Appear arrest warrants issued by the courts but local law enforcement does not have the resources and manpower to actively pursue absconding court defendants and are given a low priority. Counties are faced with a massive stock of unserved FTA arrest warrants.



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Realities
Misplaced Benevolence

Crime is Rampant

Alternative bail reform measures without accountability and supervision have historically proved inherently dangerous to the general public. There is a backlash of public anger all over the country in cities like New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Minneapolis, Portland, Seattle, etc. where the bail-reform movement is putting the law-abiding general public at risk due to dramatic increases in the crime rates. Criminals are now running the criminal justice system under the guise of protecting the civil rights of law breaking individuals at the expense of the victims of the crime and the law abiding general public at large. Crime rates have increased by as much as fifty (50) percent. Covid is not the number one issue facing the American public today, it is rampant crime throughout our cities simply because the criminals can under the “soft on crime / catch and release” pretrial policies. We have even seen terms like “defund the police” !

History

But this happening is nothing new in our society. In 1925, Texas Governor Ma Ferguson disbanded the famed Texas Rangers law enforcement because they were “arresting too many people” and turned some 2,000 convicted felons loose from Texas prisons. Crime went thru the roof “ Every 25-30 years, we have a cycle of new liberal reformers (who were not present for the last fiasco) advancing “alternative pre-trial release reforms” for the same reasons and with the same results. Soft on crime policies with no criminal deterrent has never worked and never will work. There is a normal four (4) five (5) year period with rampant crime for the general public to come to their senses and say “This is not working”. We are in 2022 at the end of this “tribulation period”.



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Monetary Bail

For well over 300 years, the American commercial bail system has served the criminal justice system well.....and without any tax payer expense. Our system of bail started in England in 1677 when there were no jails, no money to build jails (sound familiar) and the practice at the time was to release a prisoner into the custody of some reputable individual who would vouch for the defendant to appear in court on a certain date. And soon the reputable individual learned he could collect a fee for this assurance, 10% (same as it is today). In the 20th and 21 century that reputable person became a person or company licensed and regulated by the state wherein he or she operates. Releasing a person in custody by the sheriff to a licensed bail bondsman 1) Eliminates the approximate \$50 @ day costs from the County to house the prisoner; 2) Reduces the jail population; 3) Assures the defendant will appear for his scheduled court date to answer for his criminal conduct. Defendants on monetary bail show up for court 95% of the time or better. If the defendant fails to show up for court, the bail bond licensee has to pay the amount of the bail bond to the court, so there is an incentive to have the defendant in court; 4) The released prisoner is supervised while awaiting trail, has to weekly report in to the bondsman as to his whereabouts, employment, etc....All at no tax payer expense. "If it aint broke, don't try and fix it".



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The Bail Bond Licensee / Professional

- **The commercial bail bond business is somewhat mysterious and greatly misunderstood by the general public who already have a misconception (bad one) about the bail bond business and are skeptical of an industry that continues to perpetuates its rumors and negativity. The solution is to make the bail bond agent a genuine bail bond professional.**

What is a Professional: To most people a professional means working and behaving in such a way that others think of them as competent, reliable and respectful. What are the six traits of a professional:

Appearance, Proper Dress: If you are going to be a professional, look like a professional, look the part. You are initially judged by your appearance. Looks matter ! Perception is reality. The idea that appearance might be so influential can be evidenced by the dollars spent each election year on the candidates in front of television cameras and public audiences.

I once heard a Sheriff make reference to a remark made by one of his hired minimum wage help stating that a particular “bail bond agent does not know what he was doing”. Why the Sheriff asked ? “Because of the way he was dressed, shorts and flip flops”.

Competence: “Appearance” gets you to “looking competent”. “You look like you know what you are doing.” Competence: The ability to do something successfully or efficiently. These are traits learned from proper education (knowledge) and experience (skill).

Credibility: Appearance, Competence gets you to Credibility, having the expertise and information that one can believe to be true. Credibility leads to having the ability to influence others or impact you have on others.

Appearance, Competence, Credibility, equals a person worthy of having influence on others and demanding a known and recognizable presence within the local community as an ambassador for his industry (and a change in the misperception of bail bond agents)



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Bail Bond Professionalism 2022

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Bail Agent <>Bail Agent:

Avoid conflicts and controversies with other agents in public and visible areas for others to see and hear. Do unto others as you would have them to do unto you. If you can't say something nice, say nothing at all. If you have grievances, air them to each other in private. Likewise, do not involve others in these matters or make complaints or comments about the conduct of other agents to others. "Others" in this meaning include jail personnel, etc with whom agents conduct business on a regular basis. The point: All Bail Bond Agents are Professionals

Bail agents should share with other agents, possibly not as experienced, of the ins and outs of how the bail bond business is done in particular localities. Again the point: All Bail Bond Agents are Professionals.

All bail bond agents should strive for the highest degree possible of professionalism within the industry. Sometimes it becomes necessary to police our own industry. Sometimes certain steps are necessary in alerting the proper regulatory officials of unethical business practices.

Bail bond agents should share with other agents all relevant negative information known about a particular defendant with whom the other agent is in the process of bonding out of jail.

Bail agents should make an extensive effort to support their state bail association or other organization whose goals are to promote the bail industry.
