



BailBeacon

A free, multilingual guide for families

Bail Cost Worksheet

Estimate the bail premium, down payment, and total cost before you call an agent — so there are no surprises.



BailBeacon is a free matching service, not a bail agent, bondsman, attorney, or law firm. This guide is general information, not legal advice. Bail rules and the bail premium are set by each state and county. Always work with a licensed bail agent, verify the license yourself, confirm every cost in writing before you pay, and consult a licensed attorney for legal advice.

- **Start with the bail amount**

The court sets a bail amount based on the charge and the jurisdiction. Write that number down first — everything else is calculated from it.

If bail has not been set yet, you can often estimate it from your county's bail schedule for the charge.



- **Estimate the premium**

The bail premium is what you pay a licensed bail agent to post a surety bond. It is a state-regulated percentage of the bail amount — often around 10%, but it varies by state.

Premium estimate = bail amount x your state's rate. This premium is usually NON-refundable, even if the case is dismissed. Confirm the exact rate with a licensed agent.



- **Plan the down payment and any payment plan**

Some licensed agents accept a down payment and a payment plan for the rest of the premium. Ask what down payment is required and what the schedule looks like — in writing.

Write down: down payment, number of payments, amount per payment, and the due dates.



- **Account for collateral and fees**

For larger bonds, an agent may ask for collateral (such as property) to secure the bond. Note what is being asked for and when it is returned.

Ask about any additional fees and get the full total in writing before you sign anything.



• **Your worksheet**

Bail amount: _____ | State premium rate: _____% | Premium estimate: _____

Down payment: _____ | Payments: _____ x _____ | Collateral: _____

Total cost to you: _____ | Refundable? _____ | Everything in writing? Yes

