

CRIMINAL LAW

When you are accused of a crime, your life changes, whether you have been targeted in a criminal investigation or actually finger printed and indicted on criminal charges. Most people feel very intimidated and don't know what their rights are or how to deal with authorities. The best course of action to take is to hire a competent and experienced criminal defense attorney as soon as possible.

Criminal law covers the gamut of crimes ranging from less serious crimes such as misdemeanors to far more serious crimes such as felonies. Whatever the criminal charge, in our justice system, the prosecution bears the burden of proof, and you are innocent until proven guilty.

The following categories are some of the criminal law areas in which we represent clients:

DUI/DWI

The legal system bases a DUI (driving under the influence) or DWI (driving while intoxicated) on tests that measure blood alcohol content (BAC). In most cases, BAC has become the primary determining factor that results in a jail sentence, determines a fine or license suspension. A BAC of .08% or higher is an automatic DUI charge.

Not all BAC tests are accurate or properly done. There are approaches that your attorney can take in a DUI case that may lessen charges or penalties or even result in case dismissal.

Traffic cases

All traffic violations, whether minor or serious, fall under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system.

Traffic violations can lead to negative points on your driving record, lost driving privileges, sky-rocketing insurance rates and stiff fines. With repeated traffic violations, you may even miss work and serve jail time. Depending on your situation, future job opportunities or current employment positions may also be adversely affected.

Moving and mechanical violations are usually minor infractions, whereas reckless driving and driving without a license or insurance are more serious traffic offenses. When traffic violations result in death, vehicular manslaughter charges may be filed, which are felony charges.

Whatever penalties you face in a traffic case, you also have the right to challenge violations and be represented by an attorney. Legal advice and representation generally improve your chances of avoiding assessment of points on your driving record, fines and possible jail time.

Narcotics

Penalties vary greatly in narcotics cases, depending on whether you are being charged with a misdemeanor, felony or a state or federal crime. The quantity and type of drug as well as the activity involved with drugs often determine the severity of the crime along with corresponding penalties. For example, possession of a small amount of marijuana is a much less serious crime than possession of a large amount of marijuana or the possession, manufacture or distribution of cocaine, heroin, crystal meth and other more addictive drugs.

At the Law Offices of Dennis E. Cuomo, our attorneys sit down with you and work out the best strategy for your case. In narcotics cases there may be civil rights violations based on illegal search and seizure. Other strategies may include enrollment in drug rehabilitation programs to avoid jail or prison sentences. An attorney that is experienced in dealing with narcotics cases can often make a significant difference in the outcome of your case.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence can be devastating for families, not to mention that no one wants to live in fear for their own safety or the well-being of their children.

Under Maryland law, domestic violence is abuse that takes place between family or household members which may include attempted or actual rape or sexual offense, stalking, kidnapping or depriving freedom of movement as well as actions that place someone in fear of serious harm or actions that cause serious bodily harm. Our attorneys at the Law Offices of Dennis E. Cuomo can help you to understand your rights under domestic violence law and advise the proper legal action. We can assist you in obtaining a Domestic Violence Protective Order (DVPO) or suggest other appropriate legal measures, if needed.

Assault & Battery

The difference between assault and battery is that assault is threatened or attempted physical harm of another person, whereas battery is the physical action, touching or striking the person, regardless of whether much harm results. If there has been any physical contact, the charge will be battery. Assault and battery is based on intent. Reckless contact or negligence resulting in harm is not considered assault or battery.

As in other criminal charges, there are varying degrees of assault and battery which depend how much harm was inflicted, whether a deadly weapon was involved, and so on. If you are charged or being investigated for assault or battery, you should contact a criminal defense attorney as soon as possible. Early contact with an attorney can often avoid more serious charges or mean the difference between dropping charges as opposed to going forward with an indictment.

The sooner you retain an accomplished criminal defense attorney, the more opportunity you allow for case preparation and effective legal strategy. At the Law Offices of Dennis E. Cuomo, we are committed to providing you with the best legal advice and representation possible. Please phone us at **410-675-7900** or contact us directly online to arrange a consultation.