

Felony Charges in Colorado: What it Means to You

Felony charges are the most serious class of criminal charges a person can face in both U.S. and Colorado state law. In Colorado, a felony charge is generally defined as any offense for which an offender can be sentenced to the penitentiary for more than one year, although there are also certain misdemeanor charges that can be classified as "aggravated" that may also carry felony-like sentences.

In Colorado, felony charges are organized and classified in six different classes with class 1 felonies being the most serious charges carrying the harshest penalties to class 6 felonies which generally carry the least harsh sentences of all felony charges. Felonies such as murder, rape, kidnapping and arson are at the top of the list in severity and punishment, being classified as Class 1 felonies. A person convicted of these kinds of felonies faces life in prison with or without parole or even the death penalty. Moving down the list of severity, class 2 felonies include manslaughter, sexual assault and some drug charges including drug trafficking. Class 3 felonies can include such charges as first degree assault or burglary and even DUI, if it is a multiple offense. Finally, some of the lesser class 3-6 felony charges involve drug crimes such as marijuana possession of less than 2 pounds, 3rd degree stalking and burglary, menacing and possession of a dangerous weapon.

Recent laws passed by the Colorado legislature now classify the selling or possessing the "date-rape drug" Rohypnol and the rave party drug known as Special K as felonies. In addition, Colorado law now classifies an adult selling drugs to a minor under the age of 15 as a felony. An experienced Colorado criminal defense attorney is going to be aware of recent changes in Colorado laws and statutes that can affect your particular situation and be able to better formulate a plan of action that gets you the most favorable results in court.

In regards to the expungement of felony convictions in Colorado, records of a criminal conviction in Colorado generally cannot be sealed unless charges were never filed, the case was dismissed or the defendant was acquitted of felony charges. One exception to this can occur if a deferred sentence was granted in a felony case, and all conditions have been satisfied, then the felony charges can be dismissed.

Regardless of the felony charges you may be facing, it is a serious matter which carries either potential or mandatory prison time. Such a threat requires a defense by an experienced felony criminal defense attorney. Plea bargaining may reduce your charges to misdemeanors or other favorable outcomes. A trial may be the only way to avoid an injustice. There is work to be done either way. Consider that the prosecution has largely prepared their case before you even start.

Facing these realities, if you are charged with a felony crime in Colorado you need to consult with a highly experienced Colorado criminal defense attorney as soon as possible. Hiring an experienced felony defense attorney will give you the best chance to save your reputation, freedom and even your life depending on the charges.

