

Crimes Involving College Students

Understanding the Legal Landscape for College Students in Pennsylvania

With an office within walking distance of West Chester University, Unruh Turner Burke & Frees understands that college life can be a transformative experience filled with new opportunities and challenges. As parents, educators, and community members, it's essential to be informed about the legal aspects of college life, especially when it comes to the types of crimes that college students can be charged with in Pennsylvania.

Types of Crimes College Students Can Be Charged With

Pennsylvania, like any other state, has laws that apply to college students, and violations can lead to criminal charges. We've compiled a list of some of the common types of crimes that college students may face:

Underage Drinking: College students under the age of 21 may be charged with underage drinking if caught consuming or possessing alcohol. This is a common issue on college campuses.

Public Drunkenness: Acting in a disorderly or disruptive manner while intoxicated in public can lead to charges of public drunkenness.

False Identification Use: Using a fake ID to purchase alcohol or gain entry to age-restricted venues can result in charges, as well as potential legal consequences.

DUI (Driving Under the Influence): College students who operate a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs can face DUI charges, which can have severe legal consequences including jail time.

Drug Possession/Drug Dealing: Possession or dealing of illegal drugs, even in small quantities, can result in criminal charges, which can vary in severity depending on the type and amount of the substance.

Assault and Fighting: Altercations, including bar fights, can lead to assault charges, which may carry serious penalties. Additionally, getting into altercations with the police can result in charges of resisting arrest or assaulting an officer.

Property Crimes: Damaging or trespassing on property, including public or private property, can lead to vandalism charges and financial liability for the damages as well as trespassing or burglary charges.

Sexual Assault: Cases of sexual assault can vary from indecent contact to rape. The cases can be subject to serious criminal penalties and may also lead to disciplinary actions, known as Title IX proceedings, by the college or university.

Hazing: College students and member of fraternity and sororities can be subject to criminal charges for allegations of hazing during rush week.