College Crimes of Violence and Property Crimes

With offices in both West Chester and Phoenixville, we are familiar with the types of criminal offenses college students get involved in when alcohol and social interactions are combined. While many of these occasions create fond memories, occasionally, some college students commit crimes of violence or property crimes during a night of drinking at the bars in town. It is crucial for students and their families to understand the full scale of legal consequences that a college student can face for these kinds of offenses.

Bar Fights and Crimes of Violence

Bar fights are common among the college population. Whether it be between multiple students, students and bouncers at bars in town or between students and the local police, there are significant legal consequences for college students who get into these kinds of altercations. Here are some specific crimes of violence that college students can be charged with:

- Simple Assault: Simple assault is a misdemeanor that involves causing or attempting to cause bodily injury to another person. Most assaults without serious injuries are charges as simple assaults.
- Aggravated Assault: Aggravated assault is very serious felony offense that involves causing or attempting to cause *serious* bodily injury to another person. These offenses usually call for a significant amount of prison time.
- Resisting Arrest: Resisting arrest is a misdemeanor offense that occurs when a person resists their lawful arrest by the police. Examples would include refusing to cooperate during handcuffing, running away from the police, pushing the police officer away or other types of resistance. More serious types of resistance, such as punching, kicking or using similar force against a law enforcement officer will result in charges for Aggravated Assault against a Law Enforcement Officer.
- Aggravated Assault Against a Law Enforcement Officer: This offense is a felony offense an occurs when a person causes or attempts to cause bodily injury to a law enforcement officer. The crime also applies to other people who work in a “protected class” such as teachers, doctors, fire fighters and ambulance personnel.

Property Crimes

College crimes are not restricted to crimes of violence. College students often will commit property crimes, which involve either the theft or damage of other person’s property or the unlawful entry into another person’s home. Here are some specific property offenses that college students can be charged with:

- **Theft: Theft is the unlawful taking, or stealing, or another person's property. In Pennsylvania, theft offenses vary in severity depending on the type of property taken and the value of the property.**
- **Retail Theft/Shoplifting: Just like theft, except this offense is related to thefts from stores.**
- **Criminal Mischief/Vandalism: This offense is when a person damages the property of another. These offenses vary in severity depending on the total damage to the property.**
- **Criminal Trespass: Criminal trespass occurs when an individual goes onto another person's land or into another person's home without permission. Penalties can vary from a summary offense to a felony.**
- **Burglary: Burglary is the unauthorized entry into a home or building with the intent to commit a crime inside. These are serious felony offenses.**

Legal Consequences

Crimes of violence and property crimes can have significant legal consequences for college students, including fines, probation, and jail time. Additionally, college students will face likely disciplinary actions from their college which could result in their expulsion.

Legal Support for College Students

If your college student is facing charges related to crimes of violence or property crimes it's crucial to seek legal representation from attorneys who understand the complexities of Pennsylvania's laws and how to guide them through the criminal justice process. At Unruh Turner Burke & Frees, we help college students navigate the legal system, protect their rights, and mitigate the consequences of these charges.

Understanding the specific types of offenses that college students can be charged with in Pennsylvania is essential for students and their families, but that is only the first step. If you or your college student requires legal guidance or representation, Unruh Turner Burke & Frees is here to provide quality legal advice and support. We are committed to helping college students overcome legal challenges and safeguard their future.

Don't hesitate to reach out to us for the legal assistance you need to protect your college student's rights and ensure their success. Knowledge and informed action are essential when facing these serious charges, and we're here to provide the guidance you need.