

FOR FELONY OFFENSES IN FLORIDA – CONSEQUENCES OF PLEA OR FINDING OF GUILT

1. When you were arrested, you were fingerprinted and photographed. That information was provided to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and to the FBI.
2. Your arrest record is not private or confidential.
3. Depending on the charge, the disposition of your case and your prior criminal history, you may or may not be able to seal your criminal record.
4. You will not be able to wipe clean or erase your arrest record with the FBI because the FBI does not seal or expunge arrest records.
5. A “credit time served” or “CTS” sentence does not mean that your case was dismissed or dropped. To the contrary, it means that you plead guilty or the judge found you guilty.
6. Because criminal history records are public, and many landlords obtain the criminal history record of potential renters, you may not be able to rent or lease a house or apartment.
7. Your arrest record does not disappear or go away just because the judge is withholding adjudication.
8. The judge may require you to give a sample DNA for a felony conviction or withhold.
9. You may not be able to live with or visit someone who lives in public or Section 8 housing.
10. You may have your license suspended if you are convicted of a drug charge.
11. You may not be able to serve in the military, depending on type and number of adjudications/convictions. You cannot serve in the military or become a law enforcement officer if adjudicated delinquent or found guilty of domestic violence (misdemeanor or felony).
12. If convicted, you will not be able to obtain State of Florida college financial aid (Bright Futures, Gold Seal Vocational & Academic Scholars).
13. You will not be able to obtain federal student financial aid (grant, loan, or work assistance), for a period of time, if you were convicted of possession or sale of a controlled substance while receiving the financial aid.
14. If convicted (i.e. adjudicated guilty), you will not be able to petition to seal/expunge your criminal record.
15. If convicted, you will lose your right to vote, hold public office, be a juror, own or possess a firearm or carry a concealed weapon if you are 18 years or older at the time of the conviction. In some cases, once you complete your sentence, some of these rights will be given back to you (restored). Your right to carry a firearm will not be restored.
16. You will not be eligible for food stamps if convicted of trafficking drugs.
17. You could face a mandatory prison sentence on future felony charges or a longer jail sentence on misdemeanor or felony charges. A prior felony conviction, including adjudication as a juvenile, may subject you to a longer prison term or a mandatory sentence.
18. You may not be able to obtain employment with:
 - The state or municipality if you were convicted of drug trafficking or convicted of any felony or 1st degree misdemeanor “directly related” to the job;
 - A county or municipality (if the job is critical to security or public safety);
 - Law enforcement, correctional or other agency that works with children or elderly;
 - The public school system, a seaport or airport.
19. Your felony conviction may be used against you if you testify, to undermine your credibility.

20. Your photograph may be posted on the Florida Department of Corrections website, if you are sentenced to probation or state prison.
21. You may lose your occupational or business license, e.g., certified nurse assistant, licensed practical nurse, EMT and paramedics, registered nurse, if your civil rights are not restored.
22. You may be denied an occupational or business license, e.g., certified nurse assistant, license practical nurse, EMT and paramedics, registered nurse, if your civil rights are not restored.
23. If you are not a United States citizen and do not have a green card (as permanent resident), a conviction or withhold of adjudication may prevent you from ever getting a green card. You could be deported, even if you have a green card.
24. If you are an undocumented alien, it does not matter whether you plead guilty or not, you could be removed from the United States.
25. With few exceptions, you will have to register as a sex offender or sexual predator if convicted of a sex offense. You will not be able to live anywhere you want. You will have restrictions. Your photograph, name and address will be posted on the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) website.
26. If your arrest, conviction or withhold of adjudication is for a sex-related or sexually motivated charge, it can be used against you in the future to keep you locked up for a long time even after you have finished you sentence.

THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE LEGAL ADVICE.