



# TOUSSAINT LAW FIRM

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## **Categories of Criminal Charges**

Whether one is charged for minor infractions or the most severe capital felonies, all types of criminal offenses can be quite serious. Whenever one is charged with a crime, one must be in a position to understand what type of penalties can be applied in such cases. Interacting with the legal system in the court or during the probation checkups would follow the charge. A criminal law lawyer can help to understand the charges that may be formed against the accused, the penalties that he or she might have to face and more importantly what type of legal protection can save him/her from the criminal charges. This article deals with the basic guidelines on the classification of criminal offenses. One important point to be mentioned here is that the charges and penalties differ in different states. A general explanation of each of the criminal charge is given here.

### **Felony**

Considered as one of the most serious types of crime in the United States, felony could inflict very severe punishments on the accused. There are several crimes that come under felony including murder, rape, terrorism, arson, kidnapping, and burglary. When a person gets convicted with a felony crime he/she may get 1 year or more of imprisonment, monetary fines, prohibition on voting and working in several areas. He/she may face difficulty finding a suitable job for even. Someone who is not a citizen of US may even face deportation. Most of the felons would have to serve their time in a federal prison instead of a local jail. For first time offenders the penalties are much reduced while repeating offenders are penalized to serve longer sentences in the prison. If one is charged with felony crime a criminal law lawyer must be immediately consulted for he/she can help in reducing the penalties.

### **Misdemeanor**

Misdemeanors are not as serious as felony crimes. Depending upon the severity of the crime, the misdemeanors are further classified into gross misdemeanors, regular misdemeanors, and petty misdemeanors. Most of the criminals who are charged with misdemeanor offenses, serve time in a local prison instead of a federal prison. There are some states that allow the misdemeanor offenders to serve their prison sentence on the weekends, while they can continue doing their regular job during the week. The criminal offenses that come under misdemeanor crimes include petty theft, assault, trespassing, vandalism, public intoxication, and prostitution. Possible penalties of a misdemeanor crime can be imprisonment up to one year, probation, monetary fines, and community service. With the timely involvement of the criminal law lawyer, these penalties can be completely avoided.

### **Infraction / Petty Offenses**

These are the least serious crimes in the United States, and most of the states consider infraction as civil offenses and in these cases penalties would be less severe. Most of the petty offenses are not considered criminal charges and hence they would not result in imprisonment. The crimes that come under infractions include traffic offenses, jaywalking, and littering. The penalties can range from less than a week in jail to monetary fines. An experienced criminal law lawyer can reduce the penalties to just the court order to fix the criminal situation.

For further information on the categorization of criminal charges and what all are the penalties that a matter can levy, a dedicated and experienced criminal law lawyer should be contacted.

**Source:** *"Criminal Lawyer Helping To Understand the Categorization of Criminal Charges"* published on Hasta Laws & Finance blog.

Article link: <http://www.hastaelfinconanahi.com/criminal-law-lawyer-helping-to-understand-the-categorization-of-criminal-charges.html>

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