

Violent Crimes Attorney Fort Lauderdale, FL:

Defense Options After an Arrest

Paez Defense

If you or someone you love has been arrested for a violent crime in Fort Lauderdale or Broward County, it is generally advisable to remain silent and request an attorney before answering police questions. Contact [Paez Defense](#) for a free, confidential consultation with a violent crime attorney in Fort Lauderdale.



A [violent crime](#) charge can quickly disrupt your life. Whether you are facing assault, domestic violence, robbery, or homicide allegations, the pressure to explain yourself or cooperate with police can feel overwhelming. This page is written in plain English to help you understand your situation. As a violent crime defense firm in Fort Lauderdale, Paez Defense represents people facing criminal charges and the challenges that come with the criminal justice system. Our goal is to protect your rights and help you make informed decisions throughout your case.

Call or text Paez Defense at (954) 266-8687 to schedule a free consultation.
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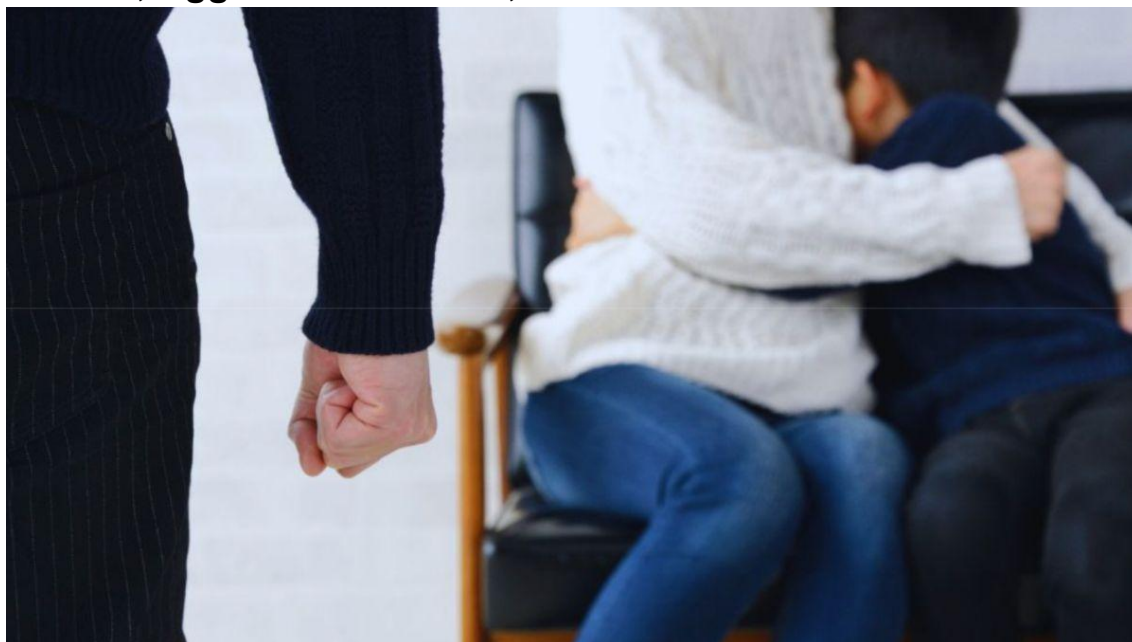
Charged With a Violent Crime in Fort Lauderdale?

In Florida, many violent offenses involve the use or threatened use of force against another person, but the exact classification depends on the statute and the facts of the case. These offenses range from misdemeanor assault to first-degree murder, and the penalties are serious. A violent felony conviction can result in serious penalties, including prison time, a felony record, and long-term collateral consequences, depending on the offense and the person's record. If you are searching for a Fort Lauderdale violent crime attorney, there are two important things to know. First, you still have rights, even after an arrest. Second, the decisions made in the first hours after an arrest can affect the direction of your case. Contact an attorney early to help protect your rights and options.

Paez Defense focuses primarily on criminal defense in Broward County and South Florida. We are not a general practice firm that handles criminal cases on the side. When you call us, you will speak with a violent crime defense attorney in Fort Lauderdale who is familiar with Broward County courts, local procedures, and Florida criminal law.

Types of Violent Crime Cases We Handle in Broward County

Assault, Aggravated Assault, and Domestic Violence



In Florida, simple assault generally involves an intentional, unlawful threat by word or act to do violence to another person, with the apparent ability to carry out the threat, creating a well-founded fear that violence is imminent. Aggravated assault involves a deadly weapon or the intent to commit a felony, and it carries significantly heavier penalties.

Domestic violence-related charges arise frequently in South Florida criminal cases, and Florida law includes offenses such as battery that may be classified as domestic violence, depending on the facts of the case. These cases may arise from arguments that escalate, co-parenting

disputes, conflicting accounts, or other situations where the facts are disputed. If you are facing domestic violence or battery charges in Fort Lauderdale and are unsure about your options, consider speaking with a lawyer before discussing the situation with others.

Robbery, Armed Robbery, and Burglary

Robbery in Florida generally involves taking money or other property from another person with the intent to permanently or temporarily deprive them of it, using force, violence, assault, or putting the person in fear. Depending on the charge and the facts, armed robbery involving a firearm may expose a person to mandatory minimum penalties under Florida law. Home invasion robbery is a serious felony offense under Florida law. Burglary is generally classified as a property offense, although the presence of force, weapons, occupied structures, or accompanying charges can significantly increase exposure. If a firearm was used, carried, displayed, or discharged during certain offenses, penalties may increase under Florida law, including potential mandatory minimum sentences. Paez Defense handles armed robbery cases and understands the legal challenges they may present in Broward County.

Florida Penalties and Consequences for Violent Felonies

Prison Time, Felony Convictions, and Enhancements

Florida takes violent crimes seriously. Some violent offenses carry mandatory minimum penalties, which can limit judicial discretion in certain cases. For example, certain firearm offenses in Florida may trigger the 10-20-Life law, which can impose mandatory minimum penalties depending on how the firearm was used.

A felony conviction, even for a first-time offender, can significantly affect your life. Florida's sentencing scoresheet system can result in significant prison time based on the charge and the person's prior record. A violent crime lawyer in Broward County can review how Florida's sentencing scoresheet system may apply to your case.

Long-Term Impact on Work, Licenses, and Immigration

A violent crime conviction can have consequences that extend well beyond the courtroom. Employers run background checks. Professional licenses may be affected, suspended, or revoked, depending on the profession, charge, and licensing rules. For non-citizens, even a plea to a lesser offense may have immigration consequences, including possible removal or inadmissibility, depending on the charge and the person's immigration status. These long-term consequences are why it is important to speak with a Broward County violent crime attorney early.

The earlier Paez Defense gets involved in your case, the sooner we can review the facts, preserve evidence, and help protect your rights and options. Evidence can disappear. Witnesses' memories fade. Surveillance footage gets overwritten. Contact us as soon as

possible because timing is critical in a violent crime defense.

How a Fort Lauderdale Violent Crime Lawyer Builds Your Defense

Investigating the Facts and Challenging the Evidence

Defense work starts before the first court date. Paez Defense investigates independently by speaking with witnesses, reviewing police reports, and examining any available surveillance or bodycam footage. If law enforcement violated your constitutional rights during the investigation or arrest, your attorney may be able to file a motion to suppress to challenge the admissibility of that evidence. Witness testimony is often the cornerstone of a violent crime prosecution. We examine prior statements, identify inconsistencies, and challenge credibility where warranted. In some cases, a motion to dismiss may be appropriate when the evidence does not legally support the charge.

Self-Defense, Stand Your Ground, and Other Legal Defenses

Florida law recognizes self-defense in certain circumstances. Under Florida's Stand Your Ground law, a person may have no duty to retreat in certain circumstances if they are not engaged in criminal activity, are in a place they have a right to be, and reasonably believe force is necessary under the law. Florida law also provides related protections involving a dwelling, residence, or occupied vehicle under certain conditions (often referred to as the Castle Doctrine). These are legal defenses recognized under Florida law, and an attorney can evaluate whether they apply in your case.

Other defenses include challenging the prosecution's ability to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, identifying mistaken identity, and arguing the absence of intent. Every case is different, and what defenses are available in a violent crime case in Florida depends on the specific facts. That is why a detailed conversation with a lawyer is so important.

Negotiating Plea Deals vs. Going to Trial

Not every case goes to trial, and not every case should. In some cases, a negotiated resolution may be more favorable than taking a case to trial, depending on the evidence and the client's goals. Other times, the evidence may be weak, and challenging the charge may be the right decision. Paez Defense evaluates each case individually and explains every option clearly so you can make an informed choice.

Why Hire Paez Defense for a Violent Crime Case?

Local Broward County Courtroom Experience

Local familiarity can matter in a Broward County criminal case. Paez Defense is rooted in this community. We are familiar with the Broward County courthouse, local procedures, and how criminal cases generally move through the local court system. That local knowledge can be helpful when navigating local procedures and practice differences.

Whether your case is pending at the Broward County main courthouse in Fort Lauderdale or another Broward County courthouse, Paez Defense brings local criminal defense experience to your case.

Defense for First-Time Defendants and People With Families, Jobs, and Futures

Many clients who contact us have never been arrested before. They have jobs, families, and futures they are trying to protect. Being charged with a violent crime does not define who you are, and you will not be judged when you walk through our door. Your case deserves serious attention, and our firm is committed to handling it with care. We understand the fear, the confusion, and the urgency. That is why Paez Defense offers a free, confidential consultation.

Spanish-Speaking Representation

South Florida is one of the most diverse communities in the country, and language should never be a barrier to a strong defense. Paez Defense offers Spanish-language communication for clients throughout Broward County and the surrounding area. If English is not your first language, you deserve to understand your case clearly in the language most comfortable for you.

What to Do If You've Just Been Arrested in Fort Lauderdale

Use Your Right to Remain Silent

The moments after an arrest are critical. What you say, even in casual conversation, can be used against you. In general, the following steps may help protect your rights:

- Tell the police calmly, "I am invoking my right to remain silent, and I want an attorney."
- Speak with a lawyer before consenting to searches of your phone, car, or home when possible.
- Do not try to explain what happened, even if you believe you are innocent.
- Do not post anything about the incident on social media.
- Do not discuss your case on the jail phone. Those calls are recorded.

Contact a Violent Crime Attorney in Fort Lauderdale Immediately

If you were just arrested for a violent crime in Fort Lauderdale and need legal guidance, contact Paez Defense as soon as possible. Arrests are urgent, and early legal guidance can help protect your rights and options. We understand that arrests do not happen on a schedule. The earlier a Fort Lauderdale violent crime lawyer gets involved, the sooner your attorney can begin reviewing the facts and evidence. The right time to act is before your first court appearance and before key decisions are made. If you or a family member was just arrested for a violent crime in Fort Lauderdale, Paez Defense can review your situation, explain your options, and help you determine your next steps.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What Should I Do Right After Being Arrested for a Violent Crime in Fort Lauderdale?**

After being arrested for a violent crime in Fort Lauderdale, stay calm and clearly invoke your right to remain silent. Tell officers you want an attorney and do not answer any questions beyond providing basic identification. Do not post about the arrest on social media and avoid discussing it on jail phones. Call Paez Defense as soon as you are able to do so.

- **How Much Does a Violent Crime Attorney Cost in Fort Lauderdale?**

Attorney fees for violent crime cases vary based on the complexity of the charges, the anticipated time in court, and other factors specific to your case. Paez Defense offers a free, confidential initial consultation so you can understand your situation and your options before making any financial commitments. Call us to discuss your case directly.

- **Can a Violent Crime Conviction Be Sealed or Expunged in Florida?**

In Florida, eligibility for sealing or expungement is limited, and many violent felony convictions are not eligible. However, if charges were dismissed, not filed, or you were acquitted, you may have options to seek sealing or expungement if you meet the statutory requirements. The rules around sealing and expungement are highly specific to your case history. Speak with a Broward County violent crime lawyer to understand what applies to your situation.

Talk to a Violent Crime Attorney in Fort Lauderdale Today



You are not alone, and you are not out of options. Violent crime cases often involve facts, evidence, witness statements, or constitutional issues that should be carefully reviewed by a defense attorney. Evidence can be challenged. Witnesses can be cross-examined. Constitutional violations may support motions to suppress evidence, depending on the facts and the law. The early stages of a case matter, and the work done in the weeks and months that follow can affect the outcome.

Speak with a violent crime attorney in Fort Lauderdale today. At Paez Defense, we give every client honest guidance, strategic representation, and the careful attention their case deserves. Whether you are facing your first charge or something far more serious, we are ready to help.

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Engagement Notice:

An attorney–client relationship with Paez Defense begins only upon a written agreement and retainer payment, confirmed in a signed engagement letter. Do not send confidential information until such an agreement is executed.

Jurisdictional Statement:

Paez Defense practices law exclusively within the State of Florida. Representation in other jurisdictions may involve association with local counsel.

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