

The Alvarez Law Firm Warns Alexandria Immigrants: Criminal Charges Can Trigger Deportation

Alexandria law firm urges noncitizens facing criminal charges to consult both a criminal defense attorney and an immigration attorney before entering any plea.

ALEXANDRIA, VA, UNITED STATES, July 22, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A traffic stop. A shoplifting charge. A single DUI. For United States citizens, these encounters with the criminal justice

system can mean fines, license points, or probation. For noncitizens living in Alexandria and across Northern Virginia, the same charges can trigger immigration consequences that include deportation, permanent bars to reentry, and the loss of lawful permanent resident status built over years or decades.

[The Alvarez Law Firm](#), an Alexandria-based law firm handling both criminal defense and immigration matters, is raising awareness among Northern Virginia's immigrant communities about a legal reality that attorneys refer to as the "criminal-immigration intersection," where what happens in a local courthouse can determine whether a person stays in the country.

The consequences are not limited to undocumented residents. Green card holders, visa holders, asylum recipients, and DACA beneficiaries all face immigration exposure when criminal charges arise. Under federal immigration law, convictions classified as aggravated felonies or crimes involving moral turpitude can trigger mandatory removal proceedings, and in many cases no meaningful defense to deportation exists once a conviction is entered. Virginia courts are required by state law to inform noncitizen defendants that a guilty plea may affect immigration status, but that warning does not prevent the consequences from occurring.

"Most people hear 'misdemeanor' and assume the problem is small," said Sylvano Alvarez, Founder of [The Alvarez Law Firm in Alexandria, VA](#). "But under federal immigration law, a misdemeanor theft conviction or a drug possession charge can be treated as a deportable offense regardless of what the Virginia courts call it. The classification that matters is the federal



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one, and that analysis has to happen before anyone agrees to a plea."

The issue is particularly acute in Northern Virginia, where Alexandria's Hispanic population represents 18.2 percent of the city and Virginia's overall Latino population has reached 10.6 percent statewide. The Arlandria neighborhood, known locally as Chirilagua, is home to one of the most concentrated Central American communities in the region, with many residents maintaining immigration statuses that carry criminal vulnerability.

The 2010 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Padilla v. Kentucky* established that criminal defense attorneys have a constitutional obligation to advise noncitizen clients about the immigration consequences of a conviction before any plea is entered. The Alvarez Law Firm handles both practice areas in-house, allowing attorneys to evaluate criminal charges and immigration exposure simultaneously and pursue plea strategies that protect both outcomes wherever possible.

The firm handles removal defense before the Annandale Immigration Court and the Sterling Immigration Court, both of which serve Northern Virginia residents. Post-conviction relief options, including motions to vacate pleas entered without adequate immigration advisal, are also available in certain circumstances.

Noncitizens in Alexandria and Northern Virginia facing any criminal charge can reach The Alvarez Law Firm at (703) 888-0959 for a free initial consultation. The firm's office is located at 50 S Pickett St, Suite 110, Alexandria, VA 22304. All consultations are available in English and Spanish.

About The Alvarez Law Firm

[The Alvarez Law Firm, PLLC](https://alvarezlawfirm.net/) is a full-service law firm in Alexandria, Virginia providing bilingual legal representation in English and Spanish across personal injury, criminal defense, family law, immigration, and estate planning. Founded by Sylvano Alvarez, Esq., a cum laude graduate of the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law, the firm serves clients throughout Northern Virginia including Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, McLean, Reston, Springfield, and Vienna. The firm maintains a 4.9-star rating across more than 100 client reviews and handles personal injury cases on a contingency fee basis. For more information, visit <https://alvarezlawfirm.net/> or call (703) 888-0959.

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