

# I was Arrested for Shoplifting in Boynton Beach. Now what?

**Date:** March 12, 2010 9:19 AM

**Author:** [Andrew Stine](#)

**Tags:** [boca raton](#), [criminal attorney](#), [criminal defense](#), [grand theft](#), [palm beach county](#)

**Permalink:** <http://bit.ly/cxANZD>

You are going to face a number of legal issues and fines as well as some painful personal embarrassment and humiliation. This is a crime that retailers from Boca Raton to Jupiter take very seriously. But an experienced [Palm Beach County criminal defense attorney](#) can save you a lot of the anguish that accompanies a shoplifting charge.

Shoplifting is the theft of goods from a retail establishment and one of the most common crimes in Palm Beach County. Most shoplifters are amateurs. There are professionals – however - in the Palm Beach County area who make their living from shoplifting. Store theft – including employees who steal from their employers - costs retailers throughout the country over \$41 billion a year, according to a study by the National Retail Federation and the University of Florida.

Florida shoplifting charges are classified as either petty or grand theft under Florida Statute 812.014 - depending on the amount you allegedly took. If the value of the merchandise is less than \$100, the defendant is charged with petty theft in the second degree, a second degree misdemeanor. If the value of the merchandise is between \$100 and \$300, the defendant is charged with petty theft in the first degree, a first degree misdemeanor. If the amount is greater than \$300 but less than \$5,000, the charge is grand theft in the third degree, and that's a third degree felony. The maximum punishment for each offense is listed below:

Petit Theft in the Second Degree (less than \$100) - punishable by a maximum of 60 days in jail.

Petit Theft in the First Degree (Less than \$300 but more than \$100) - punishable by a maximum of 364 days in the county jail.

[Grand Theft](#) in the Third Degree (More than \$300 but less than \$5,000) - punishable by a maximum of 5 years in state prison.

Even a conviction for a second degree petty theft can ruin your future. A misdemeanor shoplifting conviction will result in a permanent criminal record. In addition, one petty theft conviction can lead to another, and your third offense will be considered a felony.

Many of these charges can be resolved through a diversion program called pre-trial intervention. If your attorney gets the charges dismissed, your record can be sealed. Then when someone asks if you have ever been arrested, you can look that person in the eye and say “no.” If you did not commit the theft, a good Palm Beach County defense lawyer will aggressively defend your rights and reputation.

You may get a letter from a law firm demanding payment to resolve a civil case, if you were arrested at one of the big department stores in a Palm Beach County mall. Do not respond to the letter because it could be used as an admission of guilt. Bring it to a lawyer immediately. An experienced [criminal attorney](#) will draft a response that protects your rights and resolves the civil case.

Shoplifting is serious. If you get arrested anywhere in Palm Beach County for this crime, hire an attorney who takes it seriously, too.

[Distributed by IntelBuilder Social Media Platform](#)