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**Immigration Impact of Being Arrested**  
**Part 1**

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The present volatility of Immigration Law in the U.S. places an extremely high burden of responsibility upon non-immigrant and resident aliens. This “legal” burden requires such persons to practice extra diligence when it comes to situations involving arrests and/or criminal charges.

The first thing you should do when you’ve been arrested is to immediately ask to call your lawyer. Any lawyer will suffice since not everyone has a criminal attorney on call. Your lawyer will probably seek a colleague who is a criminal attorney to help you.

Principally, and regardless of guilt or innocence, one should not make any statements to the police or even store security until you have spoken to your attorney. This is even more important particularly if English is your second language. Many mistakes and miscommunication occur during the first 15 minutes of talking to the police or store security.

As mentioned previously, being a non-immigrant or resident alien (green card holder), significantly changes your circumstances. Unlike a U.S. Citizen, non-immigrants/resident aliens may be removed from the United States due to certain types of criminal convictions. Although not all crimes are grounds for removal, many of them are. For example, in many states, a simple shoplifting charge could jeopardize your immigration status.

The wisest advice for non-immigrants/resident aliens who find themselves in these situations is to enlist the help of not only a criminal defense attorney, but also an immigration attorney. This represents the “legal” burden placed upon the shoulders of non-immigrant/resident aliens.

Briefly, the immigration attorney, with his understanding of removal grounds, will work with your criminal defense attorney to determine the best plea deal you can make in order to avoid being removed by immigration. Remember the burden rests with you, the non-immigrant/resident alien to protect yourself.

Part II will discuss the various charges that could have you deported from the United States.