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Theft in the Workplace

Stealing from your employer is not an official crime in the State of Florida. However Prosecutors and Judges treat it in a more serious manner than general theft charges. Why is that? We will explore the reasons and the potential penalties facing those who get charged with theft from their employers.

Billions of dollars are lost and stolen annually from businesses, because of employee theft. Employee dishonesty and theft costs U.S. business over \$50 billion dollars annually. It is plain to see that the businesses of the United States cannot continue to function if they let employees steal from them.

Although money is the first thing that comes to mind, stealing in the workplace isn't necessarily limited to cash. Employees can steal proprietary company information and pass on confidential information to your competitors. On a smaller scale, employees can steal supplies, property and even time from the business by conducting personal matters on company time. In a small business, stealing by a single employee can have a significant negative impact on both productivity and the bottom line.

REASONS

Rarely do most employees steal from their employer because of need. [Stealing from an employer](#) usually transpires because an opportunity to do so has presented itself. It stands to reason that an employee will only steal from their employer if the chances of getting caught are low.

There are many other basic reasons why employees steal. These are the following:

1. Low morale at the workplace. This is also a major reason why businesses suffer from low production.
2. The employee feels that the business or company has wronged or mistreated them in some way.
3. The employee feels that they are underpaid [and under-appreciated] for the "hard" work they do.
4. The consequences for theft are minimal. The company has no punitive procedures or policies regarding employee theft. If there are no set consequences to employee theft then employees will continue to steal, because they think that they won't be punished.
5. Lack of control over inventory. It is easy to steal because the employer does not have preventive measures to stop them. Preventive measures are crucial to [reducing the risk of employee theft](#). If preventive measures are not existent then the opportunity to steal is very high.

The moment an employer discovers the fact of theft, he should immediately address the situation to curtail any other similar incidents in the future. The following are the recommended courses of action that employers may consider:

1. Termination and Prosecution. Setting an example to other employees that commission of a similar act will be dealt on with the fullest extent of the law in addition to losing their respective jobs.
2. Refer the matter to the police. Putting the incident to police blotters are effective means to warn others than keeping the matter inside office premises.
3. Civil and Criminal Suit. Imprisonment for the employee who breached the trust and confidence of the employer is only proper including the imposition of a heavier penalty for the crime is already considered qualified. Moreover, recovery of the amount lost from theft is a very important matter to consider.

It is important to point out that there are still many employees who are honest and loyal. The ones that steal are usually the exception to the rule. Despite the mistakes they've made, they are still human. They'd like to be given the opportunity to make up for their mistakes. It is better to prevent the occurrence of these social problems than to deal with it in the courts of law, especially against those you trusted before. If you are facing charges because of [theft in the workplace](#), please contact The Umansky Law Firm today.

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