Panchenko Law Firm Addresses Hit-and-Run Legal Issues

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CHARLOTTE, NC - August 25, 2026 -
Panchenko Law Firm has issued legal guidance for hit-and-run car accident victims following a documented pattern of fatal incidents investigated by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. Between April 2025 and February 2026, CMPD's Major Crash Investigation Unit documented at least four fatal hit-and-run crashes across multiple Charlotte divisions. Those cases include the April 5, 2025 death of Michael Joseph Janik, 64, on West 4th Street in the Central Division; the August 24, 2025 death of Mark Hendel, 52, on Old Pineville Road in the Westover Division; the November 29, 2025 death of Howard Charles Pomnitz III, 56, on North Tryon Street in the Metro Division; and the February 15, 2026 death of Deanna Moore, 30, on Freedom Drive.

North Carolina General Statute 20-166 requires any driver involved in a crash resulting in injury or death to immediately stop near the scene, render reasonable assistance, and provide identifying information. A driver who violates this statute commits a Class F felony when the crash causes serious injury or death, with penalties that include active prison time. In the April 2025 West 4th Street case, CMPD's Major Crash Investigation Unit filed charges of Felony Death by Vehicle and Felony Hit and Run against Sidney Deon Cain, illustrating how these cases are pursued.

When the at-fault driver in a hit-and-run cannot be identified, an injured victim's own uninsured motorist coverage can serve as a source of compensation, depending on the terms of the applicable policy and the individual circumstances of the claim. North Carolina law requires uninsured motorist coverage as a standard component of auto insurance policies, and crashes where the at-fault vehicle is never identified may qualify as uninsured motorist claims under N.C.G.S. § 20-279.21(b)(3), the state's motor vehicle financial responsibility provision. Preserving that claim generally requires prompt action.

The parallel criminal and civil claim structure means CMPD's investigation, including Real Time Crime Center camera evidence, vehicle damage analysis, and witness canvasses, can generate evidence directly relevant to a civil personal injury or wrongful death claim. North Carolina's contributory negligence rule remains a significant factor even when a driver is charged. Under that doctrine, a victim found to have contributed to a crash can generally be barred from recovering damages entirely, rather than simply having recovery reduced. Insurance defense teams therefore examine whether a victim's own conduct may have contributed to the crash, which can affect the outcome of a civil claim even when the criminal case proceeds.

"When CMPD's Real Time Crime Center cameras identify the at-fault vehicle and an arrest follows within days, the criminal investigation can produce the same evidence a civil claim requires, and retaining representation while that investigation is active helps ensure it is preserved," said Dmitriy Panchenko, Founder of Panchenko Law Firm. "Charlotte's Spanish-speaking, Russian-speaking, and Ukrainian-speaking communities can face additional barriers, because language issues may delay reporting, reduce witness cooperation, and slow an uninsured motorist claim." As a Charlotte car accident lawyer resource, the firm distinguishes between general legal information and individual case representation.

Panchenko Law Firm, PLLC is a personal injury law firm based in Charlotte and Matthews, North Carolina, representing hit-and-run accident victims, car accident clients, motorcycle riders, and other injury clients throughout Mecklenburg County, Union County, and the Charlotte metro area since 2017. According to the firm, it has reported recovering more than $20 million for clients over that period, a figure reflecting past firm-reported results that does not guarantee or predict outcomes in any individual matter. The firm provides multilingual representation in English, Spanish, Russian, and Ukrainian on a contingency fee basis.

Attorneys Dmitriy Panchenko and Andrew Deschler provide multilingual representation for hit-and-run victims and their families throughout Mecklenburg County and Union County. General information about these matters is available through the Panchenko Charlotte car accident lawyer resource on the firm's website.

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Panchenko Law Firm

Panchenko Law Firm offers exceptional legal services with a client-focused approach, prioritizing trust and advocacy in personal injury law.

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