

## DRIVING WHILE REVOKED

A person who drives while his or her license is revoked under the OWI chapter (whether the revocation is administrative or court ordered, and whether for an OWI or for a .02 violation) commits a serious misdemeanor and must pay a fine of \$1,000. Law enforcement officers may impound vehicles if the driver's license is revoked for an OWI. If such a driver is convicted of a second or subsequent offense while driving with a revoked license, the vehicle must be seized and forfeited to the state.

The owner of a vehicle who lends the vehicle to a person whose license is revoked for an OWI commits a simple misdemeanor and is jointly liable for any damages the driver causes if the owner knew, should have known, or gave consent to the operation of the vehicle by a driver with a revoked license.

## VEHICLE IMPOUNDMENT/IMMOBILIZATION

A person arrested for a second or subsequent OWI, or for driving while a license is revoked for an OWI, may have the motor vehicle seized and impounded immediately upon arrest. The impoundment (or immobilization) continues for at least 180 days, or until the driver's license revocation is completed — whichever period is longer. If the vehicle is not impounded at the time of arrest, it must be impounded or immobilized upon conviction for the second or subsequent OWI offense. If a vehicle is operated in violation of an order of impoundment or immobilization, it shall be seized and forfeited to the state. Operation of the vehicle is a serious misdemeanor.

## REINSTATING A DRIVER'S LICENSE

If a motor vehicle license or non-resident operating privilege has been revoked for any OWI offense under chapter 321J (whether as a result of a court order or administrative action), the license or privilege may not be reinstated until the person:

- Pays a \$200 civil penalty.
- Presents proof of completion of a course for driving under the influence.
- Presents proof of completion of a substance abuse evaluation and treatment or rehabilitation services.
- Complies with financial responsibility laws, if applicable.
- Complies with ignition interlock requirements, if applicable.



**DRUNK DRIVING. OVER THE LIMIT. UNDER ARREST.**

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**Iowa's OWI Law**  
Operating a motor vehicle  
while intoxicated  
or drugged

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2003

UPDATED JULY 1, 2013

**It is unlawful to operate a motor vehicle in Iowa in any of the following conditions:**

1. While under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, other drugs or combination of such substances.
2. While having a blood/breath/urine alcohol concentration of .08 or more.
3. While having any amount of a controlled substance in one's body.

Iowa's implied consent law means that any person who operates a motor vehicle in the state agrees to have a blood, breath and/or urine test performed to determine alcohol level or presence of drugs whenever a peace officer has reasonable grounds to believe the person is operating in violation of the law.

**CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR OWI**

**First Offense** A serious misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail and a fine of \$1,250, or both. The minimum jail time is 48 hours, which may be served in an OWI program with law enforcement security. The judge may waive up to \$625 of the fine if the crime did not result in a personal injury or property damage. As an alternative to a portion or all of the fine, the court may order the person to perform unpaid community service. These offenders must also be ordered to complete a substance abuse evaluation and treatment course for drinking drivers, and in some cases, a reality education substance abuse prevention program.

**Second Offense** An aggravated misdemeanor, punishable by up to two years in prison. A minimum of seven days in jail must be served. A fine of \$1,875 to \$6,250 must be paid. These offenders must also be ordered to complete a substance abuse evaluation and treatment course for drinking drivers, and in some cases, a reality education substance abuse prevention program.

**Third or Subsequent Offense** A Class "D" felony, punishable by imprisonment up to five years and a fine of \$3,125 to \$9,375. A minimum of 30 days in jail must be served. These offenders must also be ordered to complete a substance abuse evaluation and treatment course for drinking drivers, and in some cases, a reality education substance abuse prevention program.

**NOTE:** OWI convictions and deferred judgments that occurred anywhere in the United States within the preceding 12 years will count in determining whether the offense charged is a second or third offense. Also, deferred judgments, deferred sentences or probation without service of the mandatory minimum period of incarceration may be granted in an OWI case only if the defendant:

- Has never been previously convicted or received a deferred judgment for OWI anywhere in the United States.
- At the time of arrest, agreed to take a chemical test and had a test result of no higher than .15.
- Did not cause injury to another person by driving while intoxicated.

All persons convicted must undergo a substance abuse evaluation (at the offender's expense) prior to sentencing, and the court must order the defendant to follow the recommendations of the evaluation.

Victims may receive restitution for all damages caused by a defendant. Public agencies may receive up to \$500 for costs incurred as a result of a defendant's crime.

**CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR OWI CAUSING DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY**

OWI which causes the death of another person is a Class "B" felony, punishable by up to 25 years in prison. This sentence cannot be suspended, and a defendant cannot be released on bail before sentencing, or while on appeal. There is no fine, but victim restitution of \$150,000 will be ordered. OWI which causes a serious injury to another person is a class "D" felony, punishable by up to five years in prison. This sentence cannot be suspended. A fine of \$750 to \$7,500 may be imposed, and victim restitution may be ordered.

**DRIVERS' LICENSE REVOCATIONS**

**Administrative — Test Failure:**

**First Offense** When a chemical test indicates an alcohol level of .08 or more or the presence of a controlled substance, and the person has had no OWI-related revocations in the previous 12 years..... 180 days  
*May apply for a temporary restricted license. If a crash occurred, or if the BAC level was .15 or greater, you must wait 30 days. You must install an ignition interlock device if the BAC level is .10 or greater, or if a crash occurred.*

**Second or more** One or more revocations in the previous 12 years.....1 year  
*Not eligible for temporary restricted license for 45 days. In all cases, an ignition interlock must be installed for at least a year.*

**Administrative — Test Refusal (includes refusal of a urine or blood test if the officer requests such a test after a person has submitted a breath test):**

**First Offense** When a chemical test is refused, and the person has had no OWI-related revocations in the previous 12 years ..... 1 year

*May apply for a temporary restricted license after the first 90 days if an ignition interlock device is installed on all vehicles and a plea of guilty is entered.*

**Second or more** One or more revocations in the previous 12 years ..... 2 years

*May apply for a temporary restricted license after 90 days, if ignition interlock device is installed on all vehicles. In all cases, an ignition interlock must be installed for at least one year.*

**Administrative — Driver Under 18:**

If a driver is under the age of 18 and his or her license or operating privileges are revoked administratively or by a court order, the revocation continues until the revocation expires or until the person reaches 18, whichever is later.

**Upon Conviction for OWI — If Not Otherwise Revoked Administratively:**

**First Offense** Upon conviction, if no convictions or revocations in the preceding 12 years ..... 1 year; 180 days if evidence of a test.

*May apply for a temporary restricted license. If a crash occurred, or if the BAC level was .15 or greater, you must wait 30 days. You must install an ignition interlock device if the BAC level is .10 or greater, or if a crash occurred. You must wait 90 days if you refused to test.*

**Second Offense** One or more revocations in the preceding 12 years ..... 2 years; 1 year if evidence of a test.

*May apply for a temporary restricted license after 90 days if there is no evidence of a test, if ignition interlock device is installed on all vehicles. In all cases, an ignition interlock must be installed for at least one year.*

**Deferred** If license is not otherwise revoked and court defers judgment..... 30 – 90 days

*May apply for a temporary restricted license. If a crash occurred, or if the BAC level was .15 or greater, you must wait 30 days. You must install an ignition interlock device if the BAC level is .10 or greater, or if a crash occurred. You must wait 90 days if you refused to test.*

*If under 21, you are ineligible for temporary restricted license until 60 days have passed.*

**Administrative — in Addition to Other Revocations:**

**Third Offense — Upon Conviction:** ..... 6 years

*May apply for a temporary restricted license after one year if ignition interlock device is installed on all vehicles. In all cases, an ignition interlock must be installed for at least one year.*

**Court Ordered — In Addition to Other Administrative or Court-Ordered Revocations:**

**Any level of offense involving serious injury caused by OWI**..... 1 year in addition to any other revocation.

*May apply for a temporary restricted license when otherwise permitted by other revocation; ignition interlock device must be installed on all vehicles.*

**Any level of offense involving a death caused by OWI**..... 6 years

*May apply for a temporary restricted license after two years if ignition interlock device is installed on all vehicles.*

**.02/"ZERO TOLERANCE" ADMINISTRATIVE LICENSE REVOCATIONS FOR DRIVERS UNDER 21**

The license of a person under 21 who submits to a chemical test which indicates an alcohol level of .02 or more, but less than .08, will be revoked for 60 days on a first violation and 90 days on subsequent violations. If such a person is suspected of operating with an alcohol level of .02 or more and refuses chemical testing, the license revocation will be one year on a first violation and two years on a second or subsequent violation. These revocations, .02/"zero tolerance" revocations, are administrative and are not dependent upon criminal charges being filed. If a license is revoked for a .02/"zero tolerance" violation, the driver is not eligible for a temporary restricted license at any time during the revocation.