

Ignition Interlock Devices for DUI Offenses in Washington State

The loss of your driving privileges can be highly disruptive to your daily routine. If you've been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol in Washington State, or even if you've just been arrested for DUI, your license may be suspended or revoked.

However, your suspension or revocation does not necessarily have to keep you from driving. An ignition interlock device is a machine that prevents a motor vehicle from starting unless the driver can provide a breath sample that measures below a preset limit for alcohol. Under Washington's ignition interlock program, you may be eligible for a restricted driver license that allows you to operate vehicles equipped with such an alcohol detection device.

License Suspension Periods for Drunk Driving Offenses in Washington

When you're arrested for DUI in Washington, your driver license will be suspended starting 60 days from the date of arrest. The period of suspension

following your arrest can range from 90 days to two years, depending on your prior record and the alleged severity of the incident in question. You may request a hearing to contest this suspension as long as you do so within 20 days of your arrest. This hearing has no bearing on your DUI case in court, but will allow you to retain your driving privileges until your court case is concluded if the hearing decision is in your favor.

If you are ultimately convicted of DUI in court, your license will be suspended for 90 days to four years, although you will be credited with any suspension time already served in the aftermath of your arrest.

Stipulations of Washington's Ignition Interlock Program

An Ignition Interlock Driver License (IIL) is a type of restricted license that allows you to legally drive a vehicle equipped with an ignition interlock device during the period of your license suspension or revocation. You may apply for an IIL at any time in the process, including after your arrest or after your revocation hearing. However, if your license suspension or revocation includes a Minor in Possession or a Habitual Traffic Offender designation, you are not eligible for an IIL.

Once you've been given an IIL, you must keep an ignition interlock device in all vehicles you drive for the entirety of your license suspension. This includes

work vehicles, unless your employer signs an Employer Declaration for Ignition Interlock Exemption and the vehicle is not used by you solely for commuting to and from work. You can never drive a large commercial motor vehicle while you have an IIL.

You are responsible for paying the fees and costs associated with an ignition interlock device, including those for installation, lease of the device and removal. Low income drivers may be eligible for financial assistance, however.

Get a Washington DUI Defense Attorney to Help Avoid Conviction

In the aftermath of a DUI conviction, an ignition interlock can help get you back on the road. But, you're far better off if you can beat charges altogether. If you have been arrested for drunk driving, talk to an experienced Washington DUI defense attorney today.