CALIFORNIA · DUI CHECKLIST

California DUI Checklist

What to do today, this week, and before your court date. Print it. Check things off. One step at a time.

YOUR FIRST DEADLINE

10 days to act on your Administrative Per Se (APS)

10 days from receiving the notice of the order of suspension (usually served at arrest). A request made within 10 days gets a hearing before the suspension takes effect, or the suspension is stayed if DMV can't hold it in time. You can still request a hearing later, but the suspension won't be delayed.

Who: California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Driver Safety

KEY FACTS

SUSPENSION, 1ST FAILED TEST
4 months (age 21+, BAC 0.08 or more)

SUSPENSION, 1ST REFUSAL
1 year

1ST OFFENSE CHARGE
Misdemeanor

1ST OFFENSE FINE
$390 to $1,000, plus penalty assessments

1ST OFFENSE JAIL
96 hours minimum (at least 48 continuous) up to 6 months

INSURANCE FILING
SR-22 for 3 years

PRIOR OFFENSES
Priors within 10 years count

IGNITION INTERLOCK
Under the statewide ignition interlock program, a second or later DUI conviction requires an interlock to reinstate. For a first offense without injury, the court may order one for up to 6 months, or you may choose one to get a restricted license.

1 First 24 Hours

- [ ] **REQUEST YOUR DMV APS HEARING — YOU HAVE ONLY 10 DAYS FROM YOUR NOTICE OF SUSPENSION, USUALLY THE ARREST (CA DMV Driver Safety: 1-800-777-0133)**
- [ ] Keep your pink order of suspension — it works as a temporary license for 30 days from the date it was issued
- [ ] Write down everything you remember about the arrest

- [ ] Retrieve your vehicle from impound

2 First Week

- [ ] Consult with a DUI attorney before your arraignment
- [ ] Ask for a phone or in-person APS hearing when you request it (DMV holds them by phone unless you ask)
- [ ] Gather all arrest documents
- [ ] Learn the ignition interlock rules — most DUI convictions require an IID for a restricted license or to reinstate

3 First Month

- [ ] Attend the DMV APS hearing
- [ ] Apply for an IID restricted license if eligible
- [ ] File SR-22 insurance (kept for 3 years)
- [ ] Enroll in the DUI program (a 0.15+ BAC lengthens it)

4 Court & Beyond

- [ ] Attend all court dates
- [ ] Ask your attorney about a wet reckless plea — it still counts as a prior for 10 years
- [ ] Complete the DUI program
- [ ] Expect informal probation (typically 3 to 5 years) on a 1st offense

Your full California DUI guide

Deadlines, penalties, the court process, license hearings, and FAQs, with links to the official sources.

https://dui911.org/california

Official source for your license deadline:
https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/driver-education-and-safety/dmv-safety-guidelines-actions/administrative-hearings/

This checklist is educational and is not legal advice. Laws, deadlines and fees change; confirm them with the agency or a licensed California attorney before you rely on them. DUI911.org is not a law firm and is not affiliated with any law firm, interlock company or insurer.