OHIO · OVI CHECKLIST

Ohio OVI 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

30 days to act on your Administrative License Suspension (ALS)

The clock runs from your initial appearance, not the arrest. You can appeal the ALS at the initial appearance (held within five days of arrest) or within 30 days after it, in the court hearing the OVI charge. The suspension is already in effect while you wait.

Who: Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV); appeals heard by the court handling the OVI charge

KEY FACTS

SUSPENSION, 1ST FAILED TEST

90 days

SUSPENSION, 1ST REFUSAL

1 year

1ST OFFENSE CHARGE

Misdemeanor of the first degree

1ST OFFENSE FINE

$565–$1,075

1ST OFFENSE JAIL

3 days in jail or a 3-day driver intervention program (6 days for a high test), up to 6 months

INSURANCE FILING

Proof of insurance required; see your guide

PRIOR OFFENSES

Priors within 10 years count

IGNITION INTERLOCK

Required to drive with a high test (0.17 or more) when the court grants driving privileges, and on repeat offenses. A first offender can petition for unlimited driving privileges with an interlock; if granted, the court suspends the jail term.

1 First 24 Hours

- [ ] **Administrative License Suspension (ALS): act within 30 days. The clock runs from your initial appearance, not the arrest. You can appeal the ALS at the initial appearance (held within five days of arrest) or within 30 days after it, in the court hearing the OVI charge. The suspension is already in effect while you wait.**

- [ ] Know your suspension already started — Ohio's Administrative License Suspension takes effect at arrest. The officer takes your license and gives you the BMV 2255 form. Do not drive until you know your status.
- [ ] Get ready for your initial appearance — It must be held within five days of arrest. You can appeal the ALS there, or within 30 days after it, in the same court.
- [ ] Ask about limited driving privileges — The court can grant privileges for work, school, or treatment. For a first test failure, none are allowed in the first 15 days; for a refusal, none in the first 90 days.
- [ ] Write down what happened — Where you were stopped, what you drank and when, which tests you took, and what the officer read from the BMV 2255. These are the issues in an ALS appeal.
- [ ] Talk to a lawyer before the initial appearance — The ALS appeal window is short and tied to that first court date.

2 Court

- [ ] Arrest and charge — The officer files the OVI charge and starts the Administrative License Suspension on the spot. The BMV 2255 form is your notice.
- [ ] Initial appearance within five days — The court tells you the charge and your rights, and you enter a plea. You can appeal the ALS here or within 30 days after.
- [ ] Pretrial motions and discovery — This is when a lawyer can move to suppress evidence about the stop or the tests. Pretrial motions are due within 35 days after arraignment or 7 days before trial, whichever is earlier.
- [ ] Plea or trial — A guilty or no contest plea is normally taken in person in open court. A plea without appearing is allowed for OVI only with the prosecutor's consent and the court's leave. A mayor's court case can be appealed to municipal or county court for a new trial.
- [ ] Sentencing — A first OVI means 3 days in jail or a 3-day Driver Intervention Program, a fine, and a license suspension. The court decides on limited driving privileges.

3 Getting Your License Back

- [ ] Driver Intervention Program (DIP): A first offender may attend a certified 72-hour (3-day) Driver Intervention Program instead of 3 days in jail, if the court allows. Programs are certified by the Ohio Department of Behavioral Health. They include alcohol and drug education, screening, and small-group sessions, and can refer you for a full assessment.
- [ ] Ignition interlock: Required to drive with a high test (0.17 or more) when the court grants driving privileges, and on repeat offenses. A first offender can petition for unlimited driving privileges with an interlock; if granted, the court suspends the jail term.
- [ ] Get proof of insurance before you reinstate your license.
- [ ] Ask about a Limited driving privileges (or unlimited driving privileges with an ignition interlock): File a petition with the court handling your OVI. A first offender petitions for unlimited privileges with an interlock in the same court and the same way.

Your full Ohio OVI guide

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

https://dui911.org/ohio

Official source for your license deadline: https://www.bmv.ohio.gov/susp-ad-first-offense.aspx

This checklist is educational and is not legal advice. Laws, deadlines and fees change; confirm them with the agency or a licensed Ohio 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.