RHODE ISLAND · DUI CHECKLIST

Rhode Island DUI Checklist

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

YOUR LICENSE CASE

No administrative per se suspension; court suspension on conviction, and Traffic Tribunal refusal case

Rhode Island has no DMV hearing to request after a failed test. License loss for DUI comes from the court after a conviction. A refusal is charged as a civil case at the Traffic Tribunal: your first appearance must be scheduled within 2 calendar weeks of the summons, and the judge reviews the officer's report for a possible license suspension at that appearance. You do not request it; you are summoned.

Who: Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal (refusals) and District Court (DUI); suspensions recorded by the RI DMV Adjudication Office

KEY FACTS

SUSPENSION, 1ST FAILED TEST

No administrative suspension. On a first DUI conviction: 30 to 180 days (under 0.10), 3 to 12 months (0.10 to 0.149), or 3 to 18 months (0.15 or more)

SUSPENSION, 1ST REFUSAL

6 months to 1 year (civil refusal, Traffic Tribunal)

1ST OFFENSE CHARGE

Misdemeanor

1ST OFFENSE FINE

$100 to $300 (0.08–0.099); $100 to $400 (0.10–0.149, or BAC unknown); $500 (0.15 or more, or under the influence of drugs)

1ST OFFENSE JAIL

Up to 1 year

INSURANCE FILING

No special filing required

PRIOR OFFENSES

Priors within 10 years count

IGNITION INTERLOCK

On a first DUI the judge may bar you from driving without an interlock and/or blood and urine testing, and must do so at 0.15 or more. The judge must order it on a second or later DUI and on a second or later refusal; on a first refusal it is optional. A hardship license is only granted by the sentencing court and only with interlock or blood and urine testing.

1 First 24 Hours

- [ ] **No administrative per se suspension; court suspension on conviction, and Traffic Tribunal refusal case: Rhode Island has no DMV hearing to request after a failed test. License loss for DUI comes from the court after a conviction. A refusal is charged as a civil case at the Traffic Tribunal: your first appearance must be scheduled within 2 calendar weeks of the summons, and the judge reviews the officer's report for a possible license suspension at that appearance. You do not request it; you are summoned.**
- [ ] Sort out which case you have — A DUI goes to District Court. A refusal is a separate civil summons to the Traffic Tribunal. Many people have both.
- [ ] If you refused, prepare for the Traffic Tribunal within two weeks — Your first appearance is set no later than 2 calendar weeks after the summons. The judge can suspend your license that day based on the officer's report.
- [ ] Don't wait for a DMV hearing notice — Rhode Island has no administrative suspension for a failed test. Your license is at stake in court, not at the DMV.
- [ ] Ask about a hardship license only through the court — Only the sentencing judge can grant one, and only with interlock or blood and urine testing. Bring proof of your work hours.
- [ ] Talk to a lawyer before arraignment — Your BAC tier (under 0.10, 0.10 to 0.149, or 0.15 and up) changes the fine and the suspension. Priors within 10 years make it a repeat offense.

2 Court

- [ ] Arrest and charge — A DUI is a criminal charge in District Court. A refusal is a separate civil summons to the Traffic Tribunal.
- [ ] Arraignment — District Court reads the DUI charge and you enter a plea. For a refusal, your first Traffic Tribunal appearance is within 2 weeks of the summons.
- [ ] Pretrial conference and discovery — The case is set for pretrial under the District Court Rules of Criminal Procedure. This is where plea offers and evidence are discussed.
- [ ] Plea or trial — District Court has no jury trials. A judge hears the case and decides.
- [ ] Sentencing — The judge sets the fine, suspension, community service, DWI course or treatment, and any interlock or testing. Only the sentencing judge can grant a hardship license.

3 Getting Your License Back

- [ ] Special course on driving while intoxicated (DWI school), plus alcohol or drug treatment if ordered: The sentencing judge must order a special course on driving while intoxicated and/or alcohol or drug treatment. The course has tuition of at least $25 plus a $175 fee. The court can let a servicemember or veteran complete a VA-approved counseling program instead.

- [ ] Ignition interlock: On a first DUI the judge may bar you from driving without an interlock and/or blood and urine testing, and must do so at 0.15 or more. The judge must order it on a second or later DUI and on a second or later refusal; on a first refusal it is optional. A hardship license is only granted by the sentencing court and only with interlock or blood and urine testing.
- [ ] Ask about a Hardship license: Ask the sentencing judge, or the Traffic Tribunal for a refusal. Then bring the court order to the DMV Adjudication Office to have the restriction added. DMV's hardship license instructions explain the steps.

Your full Rhode Island DUI guide

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

https://dui911.org/rhode-island

Official source for your license deadline: https://dmv.ri.gov/adjudications-suspensions/alcohol-related-license-suspensions

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