WISCONSIN · OWI CHECKLIST

Wisconsin OWI 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 review hearing (Administrative Suspension for a prohibited alcohol concentration)

10 days from the notice date on the Notice of Intent to Suspend. WisDOT counts this as 10 business days from receipt if the notice was handed to you at the stop, or 13 business days from the notice date if it was mailed. The written request must be postmarked within that window. The suspension takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on day 31.

Who: Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), Division of Motor Vehicles

KEY FACTS

SUSPENSION, 1ST FAILED TEST

6 months (administrative suspension; occupational license available right away)

SUSPENSION, 1ST REFUSAL

1 year revocation (occupational license after 30 days)

1ST OFFENSE CHARGE

Civil forfeiture (not a crime), unless a child under 16 was in the vehicle

1ST OFFENSE FINE

$150 to $300 forfeiture, plus costs and surcharges

1ST OFFENSE JAIL

No jail

INSURANCE FILING

SR-22 for 3 years

PRIOR OFFENSES

Priors within 10 years count

IGNITION INTERLOCK

Required for a first OWI with an alcohol concentration of 0.15 or more, for every repeat OWI (any prior counted, regardless of age), and after an improper refusal. The court may order a 24-7 sobriety program first, followed by an interlock.

1 First 24 Hours

- [ ] **Administrative review hearing (Administrative Suspension for a prohibited alcohol concentration): act within 10 days. 10 days from the notice date on the Notice of Intent to Suspend. WisDOT counts this as 10 business days from receipt if the notice was handed to you at the stop, or 13 business days from the notice date if it was mailed. The written request must be postmarked within that window. The suspension takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on day 31.**
- [ ] Find your Notice of Intent to Suspend — If your test showed a prohibited alcohol concentration, the officer gives you this notice and an Administrative Review Request form. The notice date starts the clock.
- [ ] Mail the Administrative Review Request within 10 days — Send it in writing to WisDOT so it is postmarked within 10 business days of receiving the notice (13 if it was mailed to you). Otherwise the 6-month suspension starts on day 31.
- [ ] If you refused, act on the 10-day refusal deadline — A refusal notice gives you 10 days to ask the circuit court for a refusal hearing by mailing or delivering a written request. Without it, a revocation of 1 year (2 or 3 years with priors) follows.
- [ ] Ask about an occupational license — After a first-offense administrative suspension you can apply for an occupational license right away. After a first refusal you wait 30 days.
- [ ] Talk to a lawyer before the hearing — The administrative review is narrow, but it is your only chance to contest the suspension. A lawyer can tell you whether a prior conviction changes how this OWI is charged.

2 Court

- [ ] Citation and notice — A first OWI starts with a traffic citation. The citation can serve as the charging document unless the court asks for a formal complaint. A 2nd or later OWI is charged as a crime in circuit court.
- [ ] Initial appearance — At your first court date you can plead guilty, no contest or not guilty.
- [ ] Ask for a jury, if you want one — In municipal court, a first-offense OWI defendant can ask within 10 days of the initial appearance to move the case to circuit court for a jury trial.
- [ ] Pretrial and trial — A not guilty plea leads to pretrial conferences, motions and, if needed, a trial before a judge or jury.
- [ ] Judgment — A first OWI ends in a forfeiture, a license revocation and an order for an alcohol and drug assessment. Repeat offenses add jail and mandatory interlock.

3 Getting Your License Back

- [ ] Intoxicated Driver Program (IDP) assessment and Driver Safety Plan: Anyone convicted of OWI must contact the approved IDP assessment agency in their county within 72 hours after conviction. The assessor writes a Driver Safety Plan of education or treatment. Your license stays suspended until you comply with the plan and pay reinstatement fees.
- [ ] Ignition interlock: Required for a first OWI with an alcohol concentration of 0.15 or more, for every repeat OWI (any prior counted, regardless of age), and after an improper refusal. The court may order a 24-7 sobriety program first, followed by an interlock.

- [ ] File SR-22 insurance and keep it 3 years.
- [ ] Ask about a Occupational license: Apply at a DMV customer service center with the Occupational Operator License Application (MV3027), an SR-22 certificate and fees. If an interlock was ordered, include the court order and proof of installation.

Your full Wisconsin OWI guide

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

https://dui911.org/wisconsin

Official source for your license deadline: https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/dmv/license-drvs/susp-or-rvkd/AdminRvHrng.aspx

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