**What are the Penalties for First DUI/DWI Offense in Illinois?**

Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) or Driving Under the Influence (DUI) is a serious offense in the state of Illinois, and is committed when a person drives a vehicle after consuming in excess of the safe level of drugs or alcohol. Substances that result in intoxication lead to diminished motor and mental reactions, hence reducing the ability of the driver to properly control the vehicle. Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is known to significantly increase the risk of accidents, causing severe injuries and even death.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),](https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired_driving/impaired-drv_factsheet.html) more than 28 people die in motor vehicle accidents every day in the United States due to impaired or drunk driving. In addition, motor vehicle related fatalities due to drinking and driving account for about 40-50 percent of the total number of accidents that take place annually.

**Penalties for First DUI/DWI Offense**

Considering the seriousness of this problem, Illinois DUI/DWI laws dictate serious charges against people who are caught drunk, with impaired driving. While penalties may differ from case to case, the following are the standard charges for people convicted for their first DUI offense:

*Criminal Penalties*

* First DUI offense is treated as a Class A misdemeanor. This means that you may be sentenced imprisonment for not more than 1 year.
* If the BAC level at the time of arrest was greater than 0.16, you will be required to perform community service of a mandatory minimum of 100 hours. If it was an aggravated DUI offense or there was a child of age 16 or younger in the vehicle, you will be ordered to perform community service for 25 days in a children benefitting program.
* Fines can reach up to $2,500 based on the individual circumstances of the case, with the minimum requirement for payment being $500. It is important to note that these fines are exclusive of attorney fees, court costs, and surcharges. They do not include the costs associated with serving the terms of court order, such as reinstatement process or alcohol awareness courses’ costs.

*Administrative Penalties*

* For a first DUI offense, the driver’s license will be revoked for one year. The offender may be allowed unrestricted driving privileges, if they qualify for a Monitoring Device Driving Permit (MDDP). However, this option is only available after the first 30 days have been completed of the revocation period.
* If the offender is able to acquire driving privileges during their suspension period, they will be required to install an ignition interlock in the vehicle.

In Illinois, there is no plea option that may allow you receive reduced charges for committing lesser offenses, but with the help of an experienced DUI attorney, you can obtain dismissal of charges or at least get some favorable terms. In addition, the conviction remains on your record, and if you are arrested for DUI for a second time, it will result in harsher penalties and severe consequences.

If you have been convicted of a DUI in Illinois, it is best that you consult with an experienced DUI attorney as soon as possible. [Contact](http://www.ettingerandbesbekos.com/Contact.shtml) the law firm of Ettinger & Besbekos, P.C., today 708-377-5426 to discuss your case today.