**What are the Felony Drug Charges in Illinois?**

If you are arrested for [drug-related crimes](http://www.ettingerandbesbekos.com/Criminal-Defense/Felony-Drug-Charge/Marijuana-Cocaine-Heroin.shtml), you are likely to face a variety of charges based on the specifics of your case under Illinois and federal drug laws. Common criminal offenses include drug possession, drug trafficking, possession with intent to distribute, drug-related conspiracy charges, and drug manufacturing. Depending on the extent of your crimes, the amount, and the type of substance you were found in possession of, you will be charged with either a felony or misdemeanor. While penalties and fines for misdemeanors are not so harsh, felony convictions entail serious charges, high fines, and lengthy prison sentences (minimum 1 year).

**Understanding Felony Drug Charges**

The rule of thumb for deciding the degree of charges is that the greater the weight of the controlled substance, the more severe the punishment will be. The penalties and fines for drug-related crimes in Illinois are laid out in [720 ILCS 570/402](http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/fulltext.asp?DocName=072005700K402). If you are convicted for the possession of cocaine or heroin of:

* Less than 1 gram quantity, you will be charged with a Class 4 felony punishable by a sentence between 1 and 3 years.
* Between 15 and 100 grams quantity, it will be punishable by a prison sentence ranging from 3 to 15 years
* Between 400 and 900 grams quantity, it will be punishable by a prison sentence ranging from 8 to 40 years
* Equal to or more than 900 grams quantity, it will be punishable by a prison sentence ranging from 10 to 50 years

In addition to these penalties, you will be charged with fines either up to $200,000 or the street value of the drugs that were found in your possession.

Similarly, conviction of cocaine or heroin for possession with intent to distribute carries harsher penalties and higher fines. You will be charged with a Class 2 felony for less than 1 gram, with a prison sentence ranging from 4 to 15 years. If the amount exceeds 900 grams, the penalty can rise up from 15 to 60 years.

**Class X Felony Drug Charges**

These charges are reserved for criminals who are convicted for intend to manufacture and distribute controlled substances. The penalties and fines are decided based on the same principle, i.e. the amount and type of drugs. Penalties for Class X felony charges may include:

* Prison sentence of 6 to 30 years if you are convicted for possession of 15 to 100 grams of a controlled substance
* Prison sentence of 9 to 40 years if you are convicted for possession of 100 to 400 grams of a controlled substance
* Prison sentence of 12 to 50 years if you are convicted for possession of 400 to 900 grams of a controlled substance
* Prison sentence of 15 to 60 years if you are convicted for possession of more than 900 grams of a controlled substance

In addition to these penalties, you will be charged with fines equal to the street value of the controlled substance.

Conviction for possession of drugs entail serious legal consequences. If you want effective legal representation for your case, you should consider retaining the services of a knowledgeable and experienced [criminal defense attorney](http://www.ettingerandbesbekos.com/Criminal-Defense.shtml). Contact the law firm of Ettinger & Besbekos, P.C., today 708-377-5426 to discuss your case.