First Offense DUI in Utah? Here Are 10 Things You Must Do in the First 10 Days



A first DUI arrest can leave you panicked. You may be worried about your license, your job, your family, and your future.

Take a breath. An arrest is not a conviction. You still have rights, and the decisions you make during the first 10 days can protect your defense.

If you are facing a **first offense DUI in Utah**, follow these steps carefully. The most urgent deadline is the Utah Driver License Division (DLD) hearing request. That clock may already be running.

1. Request Your DLD Hearing Within 10 Calendar Days

Do this first.

After a DUI arrest, you generally have **10 calendar days** to request an administrative hearing with the Utah Driver License Division. This hearing is separate from your criminal court case.

Missing the deadline can allow your administrative license suspension to proceed, even if you have not been convicted of DUI.

The DLD hearing deals with your driving privileges. The criminal case deals with the DUI charge in court. You must address both.

Review the notice or citation you received after your arrest. It should provide information about your temporary driving privileges and the hearing deadline.

You can learn more through the Utah Driver License Division or our Utah DUI driver's license hearing page.

Do not wait until the tenth day. Contact a **dui attorney in Salt Lake City** immediately so the request can be prepared and submitted on time.

2. Read Every Paper and Calendar Every Date

Your paperwork may list several important dates, including:

- Your DLD hearing deadline
- Your DLD hearing date
- Your first criminal court appearance
- Any required check-in date
- Conditions of release
- Testing or treatment requirements
- Instructions about your license

Put every date in your phone and on a paper calendar.

Do not assume your lawyer, spouse, or parent will receive every notice. You are responsible for making sure you know where and when you must appear.

Missing court can lead to a warrant. Missing a DLD deadline can put your driving privileges at risk. If you are unsure about a date, call the court or speak with a **Utah DUI lawyer** right away.

3. Speak With an Experienced DUI Lawyer Immediately

The sooner you speak with a lawyer, the sooner your defense can begin.

A lawyer can help you protect your DLD rights, obtain police reports, review chemical-test evidence, investigate the traffic stop, and prepare for court.

Look for an attorney who regularly handles DUI cases in Utah. A general lawyer may not know the details that matter in a DUI investigation, including breath testing procedures, blood testing, field sobriety tests, officer training, and license hearings.

At Utah Freedom Fighters, Sean B. Druyon has more than 25 years of criminal defense experience and has handled more than 4,000 cases throughout Utah. As a former prosecutor, he understands how the other side investigates and builds DUI cases.

Request a free DUI case review as soon as possible.



4. Do Not Discuss the Case With Police

Do not call the police to explain your side. Do not agree to a second interview. Do not answer questions from investigators without your attorney present.

You can be polite and say:

> "I want to remain silent, and I want to speak with an attorney."

Do not argue about the arrest at the scene or later. Your statements can be used by the prosecution, even if you believe you are simply clearing up a misunderstanding.

This does not mean you should ignore a subpoena, court order, or official legal notice. Give those documents to your lawyer immediately.

5. Write Down Everything You Remember

Your memory will fade. Write down your account while it is fresh.

Include:

- Where you were before driving
- What you ate and drank
- When you stopped drinking
- When you began driving

- Your route and destination
- Why the officer stopped you
- What the officer said
- What you said
- Whether you performed field sobriety tests
- Any medical conditions or injuries
- Any medications you were taking
- Whether you were handcuffed or searched
- Which chemical tests were given
- What happened at the station or hospital

Do not change, exaggerate, or guess. Just record what you honestly remember.

This private timeline can help your lawyer identify inconsistencies, missing details, and possible problems with the investigation.

6. Preserve Every Piece of Evidence

Do not delete anything connected to the arrest.

Save and preserve:

- Dashcam or security-camera footage
- Phone location information
- Text messages
- Ride-share records
- Restaurant or bar receipts
- Credit-card statements
- Photos of your vehicle
- Photos of injuries or medical conditions
- Witness names and contact information
- Timestamps and calendar entries
- Tow-yard and impound documents

Ask nearby businesses or homes whether they have video. Some systems erase footage quickly.

Utah's new **HB 261**, effective in 2026, generally requires police to obtain a warrant to access certain phone, location, stored, or transmitted electronic data, subject to legal exceptions. If investigators obtained phone GPS information, messages, or other electronic evidence improperly, that may create a suppression issue.

“Suppression” means asking the court to block unlawfully obtained evidence from being used. It does not happen automatically. Your attorney must review how the evidence was obtained and whether an exception applies.

7. Obtain Medical and Testing Records

Medical information may matter if a health condition affected your driving, appearance, balance, speech, eyes, or ability to perform field sobriety tests.

Request relevant records involving:

- Injuries
- Neurological or balance conditions
- Vision problems
- Prescriptions
- Recent surgery
- Diabetes or other medical conditions
- Emergency-room treatment
- Blood or medical testing

If you had an independent blood test or medical evaluation, preserve those records too.

Do not assume a medical issue will automatically defeat a DUI charge. But your lawyer needs the records early to determine whether they support your defense.

8. Do Not Drive on a Suspended License

If your license is suspended, do not drive. Arrange a ride, use public transportation, or ask family members for help.

Driving on a suspended license can create a new criminal problem and make your existing case more difficult.

Ask your lawyer whether you currently have valid driving privileges and whether an ignition-interlock-restricted license or another lawful option applies. Do not rely only on what a friend or online post tells you.

The Utah DLD DUI information page provides official license information, but your specific status should be confirmed.

9. Stay Off Social Media

Do not post about:

- The arrest

- Your drinking
- The traffic stop
- Police officers
- Your court case
- Your lawyer
- Potential witnesses
- Your version of events

Do not send angry messages about the case. Do not ask friends to post for you. Do not delete old posts after your arrest.

Social-media content can be misunderstood, taken out of context, or used as evidence. Set your accounts to private, but understand that privacy settings do not guarantee privacy.

The safest approach is simple: do not discuss your case online.

10. Do Not Plead Guilty or Pay the Ticket Before Legal Advice

Your first court appearance may feel routine. It is not.

Do not plead guilty, accept a plea offer, or pay a citation before a lawyer reviews your case. Paying a ticket or entering a plea can have consequences for your record, license, insurance, employment, and future legal options.

Your lawyer can explain:

- The charge filed against you
- The evidence the prosecution has
- Possible defenses
- Whether a motion to suppress may apply
- Whether negotiation is appropriate
- Whether trial preparation is necessary
- The separate DLD and criminal consequences

You deserve to make an informed decision. Do not let pressure or fear force you into a decision you do not understand.

Understand Utah’s 2026 Extreme DUI Law

Utah’s new **Extreme DUI law, HB 437**, took effect January 1, 2026.

A blood or breath alcohol concentration of **0.16 or higher** can qualify as an extreme DUI. Certain cases involving a BAC of **0.05 or higher together with measurable drugs** can also qualify under the law.

A qualifying conviction can lead to serious additional consequences, including **interdicted-person status** and ignition-interlock requirements. Interdicted-person status can restrict the person's ability to purchase alcohol and can require an identification notation.

This law does not mean that every first DUI arrest automatically becomes an extreme DUI. The specific evidence, charge, and court outcome matter.

If your BAC was near or above these levels, contact a lawyer immediately. Do not assume the reported result is accurate or legally admissible without reviewing how the test was administered, maintained, and obtained.

Do You Need a DUI Attorney in Salt Lake City?

Yes, you should speak with experienced counsel as soon as possible.

A DUI case involves two separate tracks: the criminal court case and the administrative license process. The first 10 days are especially important because evidence can disappear and the DLD deadline can pass quickly.

Utah Freedom Fighters serves clients in Salt Lake City and throughout Utah. Sean B. Druyon brings more than 25 years of criminal defense experience, more than 4,000 handled cases, and former-prosecutor insight to every defense strategy.

Our firm has a 95% client satisfaction rate and has won cases at every level of Utah's court system, including the Utah Supreme Court. We provide focused, aggressive representation while keeping legal help accessible.

Do not wait for the deadline. **Contact Sean B. Druyon at Utah Freedom Fighters for a free consultation about your DUI.**

Speak with a Salt Lake City DUI attorney today, or call **(801) 397-2223**.

This article provides general information and is not legal advice. DUI deadlines and consequences depend on the facts of your case. Speak with a qualified Utah criminal defense attorney about your situation.