

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, ALAMEDA COUNTY  
SELF HELP SERVICES

## General Information on Suspended Drivers License

### WHAT IS A SUSPENDED DRIVERS LICENSE?

Under certain conditions, the California Department of Motor Vehicles can suspend or revoke your driver's license. This means either the DMV or the court has decided that you are NOT allowed to operate a motor vehicle until the suspension or revocation is lifted and your license is reinstated.

### WHY WOULD YOUR LICENSE BE SUSPENDED?

Here are the main reasons your CA driver's license could be suspended:

**1. No Insurance**

If you're not insured and get in an accident, your driver's license will be suspended for four years. After one year, it may be returned if you provide proof of insurance to the DMV, and maintain it for the next three years.

**2. Failure to Report an accident**

**3. Driving under the influence (DUI) conviction**

California has some of the toughest DUI laws in the country, and your license will be suspended for six months upon your first conviction. You may petition for a restricted license in some cases (not many). A second and third may lose you your license for two to four years.

**4. Underage drinking**

You'll lose your driver's license for one year or until you turn 18, whichever is later.

**5. Failure or refusal of a drug or alcohol test**

California's implied consent laws mean that if you refuse a blood, breath, or urine test to avoid getting a DUI, your license will be suspended or revoked even if you're innocent.

**6. Excessive points on driving record**

If you have too many points, the California DMV will put you on driving probation for one year, including a license suspension for six months, or revoke your driver's license altogether.

**7. Vandalism**

Your driver's license will be suspended for one year. If you're too young to drive, your right to apply for a driver's license will be delayed by one year.

**8. Failure to appear in court for traffic ticket**

If you neither show up nor pay the fine on time, the court will report your failure to appear to the California DMV, and your license may be suspended.

**9. Failure to pay Child Support. Family Code §17520.**

### HOW CAN I GET MY LICENSE BACK?

The steps you take to get your license back depend on the reason(s) it was suspended. The following are common reasons and examples of what you might need to do.

**If you were convicted of drinking under the influence (DUI):**

- 1. Complete a Mandatory Suspension Period:** On the first conviction the court will suspend your driving privilege for six months and require you to complete a DUI program before you can be reinstated. If your Blood Alcohol Level (BAC) was .15% or higher and you already had a record of violations for other reasons OR you refused to submit to a chemical test, the court may order you to complete a nine-month or longer program. If your BAC was .20% or higher and the court refers you to an enhanced DUI treatment program, your license will be suspended for 10 months.

2. **Pay a Reissuance Fee:** Your driver license will be returned to you at the end of the suspension after you pay a \$125.00 reissue fee to the DMV and file a Proof of Financial Responsibility (**SR-22**). The reissue fee is \$100.00 if you were under age 21 at the time of violation and were suspended under the Zero Tolerance Law.
3. **DUI Treatment Program:** Show Proof of enrollment in DUI Treatment Program and a Certificate of Completion (**DL-101**) once completed.

**If you had a physical/mental condition or disorder:**

Provide a satisfactory Driver Medical Evaluation (**DS-326**) and/or other medical information indicating the condition no longer affects the ability to operate an automobile safely.

**If you had no car insurance and were involved in an accident:**

Complete the mandatory 1-year suspension and pay the reissuance fee of \$125.00. File a Proof of Financial Responsibility (**SR-22**).

**If you failed to pay a traffic citation or failed to appear in court for traffic ticket:**

1. Pay your citations or appear in court. You will be given an FTP/FTA abstract that says you fulfilled this requirement from the court.
2. Pay the standard reissuance fee of \$55.00 (in rare cases it be could as high as \$275.00) to the DMV.

**WHAT IS SR-22?**

If your license was suspended for a DUI, getting into a car accident while driving without car insurance, or other similar reasons, you may be required by state law to purchase additional insurance coverage.

**SR-22** is a form that the insurance company then files with the DMV after you purchase the additional coverage. The insurance company must be licensed by the California Department of Insurance.

**If you are unable to obtain additional insurance coverage through a licensed insurance company,** then check with your state's insurance regulator (California Department of Insurance 1-800-927-HELP) to assist you.

**HOW DO I GET A RESTRICTED LICENSE?**

Depending on the reason(s) for your suspension, you may be able to obtain a restricted license, which will allow you to drive in to limited places while your license is suspended. For DUI's, if you have a non-commercial driver license and you show proof of enrollment in a DUI treatment program, you may be able to get a restricted license after a mandatory 30-day suspension to drive to and from the DUI treatment program and/or work. If you qualify for a restricted license, you still need to meet the other requirements and pay a \$125.00 reissue fee or \$100.00 if you were under age 21 at the time of violation. You can apply for a restricted license in person at your local DMV office.

**You can contact the DMV at (800) 777-0133 during normal business hours for the location of the your local DMV and for more information about your particular situation. Please have your driver's license number and any other information sent to you from the DMV available.**

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