



The  
**Legal Aid Society**  
of Cleveland  
*Since 1905*

# What You Can Do If Your Driver's License Is Suspended

There are many different types of suspensions that the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) can put on your driver's license and registration. Different suspensions are imposed for different reasons and have different requirements. You may need to work with both the BMV and with the court where your case is assigned to resolve the problem. The following info will help you get started with this process.

## STEP 1

### Look up your driving record

Visit the Ohio BMV's website ([bmv.ohio.gov](http://bmv.ohio.gov)), click on "My BMV Profile" and login as a guest to review your Driving Record. Your Driving Record should list the number and type of suspensions you have. Then, look for "Reinstatement Requirements," to learn what you need to do to get your driver's license and registration back for each suspension.

## STEP 2

### Figure out what you owe and how to pay

Almost all suspensions require you to pay money to courts and to the BMV. If you are not able to afford the amount owed, you can ask for a payment plan. If you owe money to different courts and the BMV, you will need to go to the different courts separately, and then to the BMV, to set up the payment plans. If you miss a payment, your license will be suspended again. You may also qualify for Ohio's Fee Reduction and Amnesty Program. Learn more at [bmv.ohio.gov/susp-fees-amnesty.aspx](http://bmv.ohio.gov/susp-fees-amnesty.aspx).

## STEP 3

### Request driving privileges

Ohio law allows you to request driving privileges in some, but not all, cases. Courts may grant driving privileges for limited purposes. To request driving privileges from the Court, you must file a Motion for Limited Driving Privileges. In Cleveland, you can find this on the Cleveland Municipal Court's website ([clevelandmunicipalcourt.org](http://clevelandmunicipalcourt.org)) under "Forms." In other courts, ask the clerk if there is a form to use to request driving privileges.

## STEP 4

### Get insurance

You will have to show proof of financial responsibility, or auto insurance, before a court will give you driving privileges or before the BMV will reinstate your license. You may be required to obtain a special certificate of insurance (called an "SR-22") and file it with the BMV for a period of years.

**IMPORTANT:** If you continue driving while your license is suspended, you are at risk of more penalties like more suspensions and fees.

# Other Information About Driver's License Suspensions

## Administrative hearings



In most cases, before the BMV suspends your driver's license, a notice will be sent to you with information about how you can avoid the suspension or request a hearing to challenge the suspension. Be sure to pay attention to the deadlines listed in the notice. If you request a hearing on a proposed noncompliance or security suspension, your suspension should not take effect until after the hearing if the decision is not in your favor.

## Length of suspensions



Some types of suspensions require the BMV to suspend a person's license for a specific length of time, even if all other reinstatement requirements are met. For example, if you get a second non-compliance suspension (for driving without insurance) in a one-year period, your license will be suspended for one year even if you pay what you owe.

## Warrant blocks



If you have a warrant block, you will have to appear in court for the case in which the warrant was issued. In Cleveland Municipal Court, you can request help from the Public Defender by calling 216.443.2190 or applying online at [clevelandmunicipalcourt.org/home/public-defender-intake-form](https://www.clevelandmunicipalcourt.org/home/public-defender-intake-form). For other courts, call the clerk's office to ask how you can resolve the outstanding warrant.

## BMV information



The Ohio BMV provides information online at [bmv.ohio.gov](https://bmv.ohio.gov). You can also chat or email with customer service from the BMV website (see [bmv.ohio.gov/about-contact.aspx](https://bmv.ohio.gov/about-contact.aspx)). Or call 844.644.6268 for information about suspensions and reinstatements.

## Legal assistance



You can bring your driving record to a Legal Aid Brief Advice Clinic to talk with an attorney for advice on how to get your license reinstated. Find Legal Aid clinic dates and locations online. Visit [lasclev.org](https://lasclev.org), click "Events" then "Clinics."

In limited circumstances, Legal Aid may be able to help you with your driver's license suspensions (NOT OVIs). Apply for legal services at [lasclev.org](https://lasclev.org).