

Underage Drinking Laws (from Texas Alcohol Beverage Commission)

Minors who purchase, attempt to purchase, possess, or consume alcoholic beverages, as well as minors who are intoxicated in public or misrepresent their age to obtain alcoholic beverages, face a Class C Misdemeanor punishable by:

- A fine up to \$500;
- Alcohol awareness class;
- 8 to 40 hours community service;
- 30 to 180 days loss or denial of driver's license.

If a minor is seventeen years of age or older and the violation is the third offense, the offense is punishable by a fine of \$250 to \$2,000, confinement in jail for up to 180 days or both, as well as automatic driver's license suspension.

A minor with previous alcohol-related convictions will have his or her driver's license suspended for one year if the minor does not attend alcohol awareness training that has been required by the judge.

Penalties for Providing Alcohol to a Minor

Adults and minors who give alcohol to a minor face a stiff penalty. The punishment for making alcoholic beverages available to a minor is a Class A misdemeanor punishable by:

- A fine up to \$4,000; and/or
- Confinement in jail for up to a year;
- Automatic suspension of driver's license for 180 days upon conviction.

Persons 21 or older (other than the parent or guardian) can be held liable for damages caused by intoxication of a minor under 18 if the adult knowingly provided alcoholic beverages to a minor or knowingly allowed the minor to be served or provided alcoholic beverages on the premises owned or leased by the adult.

Sale to a minor is a Class A Misdemeanor punishable by:

- A fine up to \$4,000; and/or
- Confinement up to a year in jail.

Zero Tolerance Law

In Texas it is illegal for a person under 21 to operate a motor vehicle in a public place or watercraft, while having ANY detectable amount of alcohol in their system.

1. The consequences for the minor on the first offense of driving under the influence of alcohol is a Class C Misdemeanor punishable by:
 - A fine up to \$500;
 - Attendance at an alcohol awareness class;
 - 20 to 40 hours of mandatory community service;
 - 60 days driver's license suspension. The minor would not be eligible for an occupational license for the first 30 days.
2. The consequences for the minor on the second offense increases the consequences to a Class C Misdemeanor punishable by:
 - A fine up to \$500;
 - Attendance at an alcohol awareness class at the judge's discretion;
 - 40 to 60 hours of mandatory community service;
 - 120 days driver's license suspension. Minor would not be eligible for an occupational license for the first 90 days.
3. The consequences for the minor on the third offense of driving under the influence of alcohol:
 - A third offense is not eligible for deferred adjudication.
 - The minor's driver's license is suspended for 180 days and an occupational license may not be obtained for the entire suspension period.

If the minor is 17 years of age or older, the fine increases to \$500 to \$2,000 and/or confinement in jail for up to 180 days.