

# Seven Things You Must Know Before Hiring a DUI Attorney

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## Introduction

Some people don't quite understand the severity of getting a DUI. In many cases, your license is instantly taken away and you won't be driving for a long time. You can also expect to spend either a bit of time in jail or paying a pretty hefty fine.

That's why, whether you're guilty or not, you should definitely get a good DUI attorney. They aren't exactly inexpensive, but they're definitely worth the investment. Consider that even if you don't get completely off the hook, your attorney will fight for you to get a lighter sentence than what the judge might've delivered otherwise.

I'm sure you already know that, hence the reason why you're reading this report. The good news is that by the end of these next few pages, you'll understand not only why you absolutely *must* have a good DUI attorney, but also how to find the best one to defend you in this tough situation.

# 1) Do I Need a DUI Attorney or is there an Alternative?

You probably already know the answer to this, but we'll go through it anyways. The short answer is yes... but it's not a good alternative.

The only alternative to hiring a DUI attorney is to defend yourself. The problem is that even if you do a bit of research on the subject, you just don't have the knowledge or experience to defend yourself well. Your judge will essentially see your defense as "I didn't do it", and you probably won't really have any evidence or witnesses to testify otherwise.

Even if you were able to get a few witnesses, you won't really know what to ask them.

Meanwhile, a good DUI attorney recognizes that there are several ways to defend your case. Depending on the details, they will probably fight to either get you without any kind of sentence or try to get you a much easier sentence than normal. For example, while jail time is often a punishment for this crime, they may help you get off with a case like a work furlough, a rehabilitation center or electronic monitoring (a.k.a. "house arrest").

If your attorney has been in the area for a while, they'll also have some experience knowing what strategies work best for your local judicial system. Some judges may be very aggressive about throwing you in jail, while others may be perfectly fine sentencing you to a ton of volunteer work instead. You wouldn't know these things yourself, but a good attorney would have done his research and figured out the best case to build.

All of that said- if you plan on pleading guilty because you're pretty sure you can't win, it may be worth just skipping the lawyer- especially if this is your first DUI. Attorneys aren't cheap, and even though they may be able to help you get a lower sentence, it might also backfire on you. You'd hate to wind up in jail AND have that hefty legal fee to pay.

## 2) What Exactly will a DUI Attorney do for Me?

As we discussed earlier, the best time to hire a DUI attorney is if you think you plan on pleading innocent and think you have a pretty good case. But even if you think you may lose, there are a few reasons to consider getting a good attorney.

The first is that instead of going to jail and losing your license, you may get a much, much lighter sentence. Volunteer work comes to mind, although some judges have moved away from that because they don't think it's a strict enough sentence.

House arrest, where you're not allowed to leave your house, is another option. Sometimes the monitoring isn't quite restricted to your home, meaning you can still go to and from work. The key point here is that you're being monitored. Someone at the other end can always tell exactly where you are, and it's still a punishment because you'll be surprised how boring life can be if you're always restricted to just work and your house.

There are also alternative jails, which are still considered jails but have very low security. These won't exactly be fun, but they're still better than a more traditional jail.

More options are out there, but you get the idea. A good DUI attorney will fight to win your case first. If things don't go the right way, they can then switch gears and choose the strategy of getting you off on a lighter sentence.

The bottom line is that you want someone on your side- that's what your attorney is for!

### 3) Is it Worth the Cost of Hiring a DUI Attorney?

Depending on who you talk to, you'll get mixed feelings on whether or not forking over money for a DUI attorney is worth it.

On the one hand, consider the consequences if you're found guilty of a DUI:

- Suspended driver's license
- Traditional jail time
- Lost job (probably)
- Tarnished reputation in the community
- Hefty fees
- Added difficulty to find future jobs or opportunities
- Forced into alcohol addiction classes

Remember that the judge and jury don't care if this was your first DUI or not. Whether you're 21 or 61, getting a DUI is bad news because it will have some long-lasting effects.

On the other side of the coin, a good DUI attorney may win your case. Not only does this allow you to sidestep all of the pain mentioned earlier, but you've still learned your lesson!

The only downside to hiring a DUI attorney is that you have to pay their legal fees. This will definitely hurt, but it's better than the alternative. While some people may disagree about that, it's better to pay a bit of money and have freedom than to get locked up!

## 4) How Should I Go About Finding a DUI Attorney

Unfortunately, finding a good DUI attorney isn't quite as easy as finding a plumber or electrician. you're dealing with something more serious than getting the toilet unclogged, so you've got to make sure you're making a good choice.

The first place you should go is friends, family and coworkers that you trust. This is especially important for coworkers, because you don't want them to spill the beans that you're going on trial for a DUI (unless you've already told your boss).

There's a very good chance that you'll have trouble finding someone who's hired a DUI attorney before, but it doesn't hurt to ask. If you ask around for a few days and can't find any recommendations, it's time to turn to good ol' Google.

A simple search for "DUI attorney" will pull up a few in your area, but you won't get many customer reviews. They may have some testimonials on their websites, but keep in mind that they're only going to keep the positive, best-looking reviews from customers up there.

Another option is to check out your local chamber of commerce. They are supposed to stay in touch and keep tabs on most local businesses, so they may have a few recommendations for you.

Finally, you can crack up a phone book (or go to yp.com) and search that way. This method isn't bad and is how we did things for decades, but we recommend this as a last resort.

Once you've found a few potential attorneys, it's time to do some interviews. After all, you're going to be spending a LOT of money with them- you want to make sure you get the best bang for your buck, right?

We'll discuss that later, but for now let's move into figuring out how to find the best lawyer for you.

## 5) How do I Choose the Right DUI Attorney for My Situation?

Before you start conducting a few interviews, you need to make sure that you're talking to the right types of lawyers for your particular situation. It doesn't make sense to move forward down one path and then figure out it was the wrong path.

Here are a few things to consider:

### Are they Specialized?

Some attorneys run the whole gamut, from divorce to defending murderers. While these attorneys do have some advantages, they aren't out first recommendation.

The main drawback with using an attorney that does a number of things is that they won't have nearly as much targeted knowledge. They can certainly defend you in your DUI case, but they won't have as much experience researching this part of the law and identifying possible alternatives to jail time.

### Specialized DUI Attorneys

Just like you'd expect, these attorneys focus solely on DUI cases. There is plenty of this work to keep them busy, so some of these firms have thousands of cases under their belts.

The main thing to keep in mind with these attorneys is how many cases they've worked similar to yours. Every situation is different- some people get in accidents while driving under the influence, while others simply get pulled over by a cop because they were serving. How your judge and jury treat you will largely depend on the situation.

### Local Experience

You don't want an attorney that just moved here from out of town. They won't know the local law, and they'll have no experience with your judge.

Instead, try to find someone who has been in your area for a while. They probably would have worked with your judge before and also know the culture of the local court system. Even though the mission of every court is to deliver justice, you'd be surprised how much the culture can change from town to town.

## 6) What to Ask While Interviewing DUI Attorneys

Once you've picked a few attorneys that seem like a good fit, it's time to ask them a few questions. These will help you select the best one between them and move forward with your case.

- **How many years have you been practicing?**
- **How many DUI cases have you taken to trial?**
- **Are you covered by a malpractice policy?**
- **How many cases like mine have you handled?**
- **What are the potential legal costs?**
- **Have you ever been disciplined by the state bar?**
- **How do you communicate with me regarding the case?**
- **Who will handle most of my case? Will it be yourself or a paralegal or junior attorney?**
- **How many of your DUI clients have pleaded guilty?**
- **Will you attend my DMV case as well as the criminal court case?**
- **What are the biggest challenges regarding my case?**
- **What do you expect to be the final outcome?**

You can ask more questions if you like- consider this a list to help you get started.

The important thing is to ask the same questions to each attorney you interview. Make sure you compare apples to apples here.

## 7) Important Questions to Ask Your DUI Attorney

So you're all done with the research process and you've selected the best attorney for your situation. They're starting work on your case and you feel a lot better, knowing that you now have a much better chance to get a favorable ruling.

You aren't out of the water yet though, so you still need to stay in touch with your attorney regularly to make sure they have everything they need. Here are a few questions to ask to make sure you're on the same page.

- **What information or documents do you need from me?**
- **What's the best way for me to contact you?**
- **When do you think you'll be done preparing my case?**
- **Do you plan on taking this to trial, or should we settle?**

The good news is that since you went through an extensive interview process, you already know a lot about the attorney and their strategy. Just make sure you are very open with them, as their job is to defend you and they can't do that if you withhold information.

## Conclusion

Being accused of driving under the influence isn't a fun position to be in, but hiring a good DUI attorney is the best thing you can do. They'll do everything in their power to get you a favorable sentence, and provide strong legal counsel to help you make the best decision for your situation.

If you have any questions or concerns about hiring a DUI attorney, please contact us today!

Thanks for your time and we look forward to speaking with you.