

South Carolina DUI Penalties*

First Offense:	\$1,000 fine, 90 days jail
Second Offense:	\$6,500 fine, 3 years jail
Third Offense:	\$10,000 fine, 5 years jail
Fourth/Subsequent Offense:	7 years jail
Felony DUI:	\$25,100 fine, 25 years jail

In addition to the penalties listed above, DUI/DUAC convictions carry the possibility of having your vehicle immobilized or confiscated, losing your driver's license (mandatory), and being forced to install an ignition interlock device on your vehicle at your own expense.

Oftentimes, the criminal fines can effectively be doubled, because you must pay court fees, administrative fees, and other costs.

Defense of DUI/DUAC Charges

The best defense is to never drink and drive. You should also never agree to take a Breathalyzer or blood test – the police cannot force you to take these tests unless you are charged with felony DUI.

However, there are many different ways to fight your DUI or DUAC charge. South Carolina law heavily regulates the specific procedures the police must follow in order to gather evidence and charge you with a drunk driving-related crime. An attorney may be able to successfully challenge the police procedures or evidence gathering and win you the opportunity to plead to a lesser charge that doesn't include the stiff DUI penalties. An attorney may also be able to challenge the Breathalyzer or statements you've made and have them thrown out.

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If you are facing drunk driving charges, it's in your best interest to hire a dedicated criminal defense attorney to represent you. You should hire an attorney right away, as you will have more time to prepare an adequate defense to your charge and to analyze and challenge the State's evidence against you.

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* Maximum penalties