Illinois Alcohol & Drugs: The Ultimate Decoded Study Guide

Master the numbers, spot the traps, and pass the Illinois knowledge test.

Illinois does not grade DUI on a curve. Time is the only cure, and the numbers are absolute.

Keep the Two Tracks Separate



Track 1: Statutory Summary Suspension

Nature: Administrative penalty

Trigger: Failed or refused test

Measure: Counted in

MONTHS



Track 2: DUI Conviction

Nature: Criminal court outcome

Measure: Counted in

YEARS

Test Trap: The exam will constantly swap these two. Always identify which track a question is asking about.

The Triggers: Know Your Limits

0.08

BAC — ADULT LIMIT

0.08% (The Adult Line)

The per-se limit for adults. At or above 0.08, it's a DUI on the number alone.

Trap Spotter: DUI is still possible below 0.08 if **driving is impaired.** 0.08 is a floor for automatic guilt, not a safe harbor.

0.16

DOUBLE — ENHANCED

0.16% (The Enhanced Line)

Double the limit.

Penalties are severely enhanced here, or if transporting a child under 16.

5 ng/mL

THC — WHOLE BLOOD

5 ng/mL (The Cannabis Line)

The per-se limit for THC in whole blood (10 ng/mL in other substances).

Driving with ANY trace of a controlled substance from unlawful use is illegal.

Zero Tolerance (Under 21): The Absolute Floor

> 0.00 to < 0.08 = Violation

There is no “small amount” allowance for drivers under 21. Any measurable alcohol is a violation.

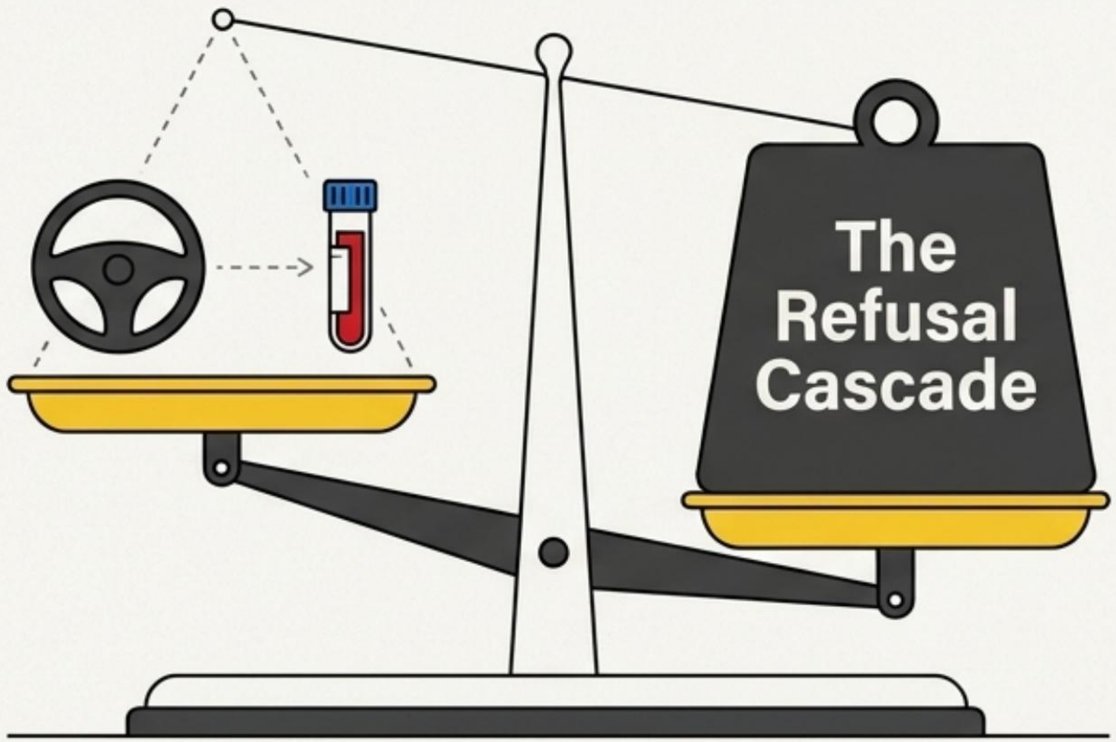
	Fail Test	Refuse Test
First Offense	3 Months	6 Months
Prior Suspension	1 Year	2 Years

Under-21 DUI Trap

A zero tolerance violation is bad, but a full under-21 DUI conviction brings a minimum 2-year revocation, a remedial education course, and a possible complete re-examination.

Implied Consent: The Cost of “No”

Driving on Illinois roadways IS your consent to testing.



Refusing never wins. It costs you:

1. **EVIDENCE:** Your refusal can be used against you in court.
2. **TIME:** It doubles or triples administrative suspensions.
3. **CASH:** Up to $500 liability for blood-test costs if convicted.
4. **REVOCATION:** Minimum 1-year revocation if you refuse after a crash involving serious injury or death.

Track 1 Timeline: The 45/46 Rule

Day 0

Arrest: Officer takes your license and issues a temporary receipt.

Days 1 to 45

Grace Period: You may legally drive on the temporary receipt.



The Wall: The statutory summary suspension strictly begins, regardless of whether your court case has been heard.

Memory Aid: The receipt covers 45; the penalty starts on 46.

Track 1 Matrix: Statutory Summary Suspension

	Fail Test	Refuse Test
1st Offender	6 Months	1 Year
2nd Offender (within 5 yrs)	1 Year	3 Years



The BAIID Exception: Eligible 1st offenders can drive during suspension ONLY with a Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Device (BAIID) permit. Driving while suspended without this program is a felony.

Track 2 Ladder: Conviction Revocations

A conviction results in revocation (indefinite withdrawal of privileges). The ladder only climbs:



Cabin Rules: Alcohol & Cannabis Transport

Open Container (Alcohol)



The Rule

NO drinking or opened containers allowed in the passenger area.

The Exceptions

Chartered buses (non-school), motor homes, and limousines.

Cannabis in the Car



The Rule

Legal for adults to own, but ILLEGAL for driver or passengers to use in the vehicle.

Transport Formula

Must be Sealed + Odor-proof + Child-resistant.

The Ghost That Follows You

The Geography Trap

Moving does not launder your record. Out-of-state convictions and out-of-state refusal suspensions count heavily in Illinois.



The Lookbacks Stack

Prior offenses haunt you. The state looks back

5 years
for suspension escalations
and
20 years
for revocation escalations.



ULTIMATE TRUTH

A DUI conviction stays on an Illinois driving record PERMANENTLY.

THE 5-STEP RETURN: RESTORING PRIVILEGES

1

STEP 1
Complete an alcohol/drug evaluation.

2

STEP 2
Complete a rehab or education program.

3

STEP 3
Pass an administrative hearing with the Secretary of State.

4

STEP 4
Pay the reinstatement fee ($250 for 1st summary suspension, $500 for 2nd or a revocation).

5

STEP 5 (FINAL)
Maintain SR-22 Financial Responsibility Insurance for

3

continuous years.

Test Prep: 3-Question Trap Spotter



The Below-Limit Trap

A driver blows 0.07 and argues conviction is impossible below 0.08. Why does this defense fail?

The Timeline Trap

A first offender refuses the breath test. State the suspension length, when it begins, and how long they can drive on the arrest receipt.

The Ladder Trap

Recite the minimum DUI conviction revocation ladder for 1st, 2nd (within 20 yrs), 3rd, and 4th offenses.

MASTER DATA LOG & ANSWER KEY

THE ANSWER KEY

A1 0.08 is a per-se line, not a safe harbor; conviction is possible below it if impaired.

A2 1 Year suspension; begins day 46; receipt is good for 45 days.

A3 1 year, 5 years, 10 years, lifetime.

THE NUMBER VAULT (MASTER DATA TABLE)

Adult BAC Limit	0.08
Under-21 Limit	> 0.00
Cannabis Limit	5 ng/mL THC (whole blood)
Conviction Revocation	1 - 5 - 10 - Life
Reinstatement Fees	$250 / $500
SR-22 Requirement	3 Years

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drivinglicensetest.org/il