



Community Action for
Substance Free Youth

substance free is where it's at

Connecticut Alcohol Law Penalties

Laws	Penalties
Hosting an Underage Drinking Party	Court appearance for any offense, with penalties including fines and possible jail time.
Providing Alcohol to Minors	Court appearance for any offense, with penalties including fines and possible jail time.
Risk of Injury to a Minor	Court appearance for any offense, with penalties including fines and possible jail time.
Minor in Possession	Fine and automatic driver's license suspension. Possession in a vehicle: 90-day suspension Possession on public property: 60-day suspension Possession on private property: 30-day suspension
Youth DUI	Court appearance with penalties including possible jail time, fines, and suspension of the minor's driver's license for one year.
Misrepresenting Age to Obtain Alcohol	Court appearance for any offense, with penalties including fines, possible jail time, and a suspension of the minor's driver's license.

In addition to suspension of one's driving license, another consequence could be that a) your family's car insurance rates will significantly increase or b) the insurance company may cancel your family's car insurance.

Scenario 1: Mr. and Mrs. Smith's teen, Tyler, is having a post-prom party, and they are happy to host, to ensure everyone is safe and off the road. When the Smiths go down to check on the party guests before bed, they notice the teens are drinking alcohol that they did not supply. Stunned, they call Tyler over to explain how the teens got the alcohol. He said one of his friends brought it over, it's cool, and they can handle the situation. Hesitant, the Smiths wonder if they should call all of the parents to come and get their kids. Tyler pleads with his parents to go to bed, and tells them it's better than being out in the woods. The Smiths agree, and head up to bed. An hour later the teens are spilling out onto the lawn, screaming obscenities. A neighbor calls a patrol cop to come over to check out the situation. Once he realizes the teens are in possession of alcohol, he calls for backup to safely disperse the party. Are Mr. and Mrs. Smith in trouble? How about Tyler?

Scenario 2: Mr. Jones is away on vacation, and he leaves his 18-year-old daughter Amaya at home, since she is bright and responsible. Amaya calls a few friends to come over for a movie night and before she knows what's happening, word spreads that she is having a party without adult supervision. Soon the house is full of 45 kids, some of whom she barely knows. Several party guests decide to raid the fridge and liquor cabinet to "get the party going." A patrol officer notices cars parked on both sides of the road, creating a hazard. He knocks on the door, and asks to come inside. While there, he notices a young teen unconscious in the corner, and calls for medical assistance. He also calls for back-up. He asks for the person in charge, and Amaya steps forward. Who is responsible?

Scenario 3: The Bakers are having a graduation party for their 17-year-old son Ethan. Mr. Baker gets a few kegs at the local package store. Given that he collected the kids' car keys, he doesn't see a problem with letting the recent grads celebrate with a few "cold ones" in a controlled environment. After a few hours, the music gets loud and the neighbors call to complain. When the police come to tell the homeowner to turn down the music, they see teens consuming beer on the front porch. Since the Bakers were not monitoring the party, they didn't know that Ethan's friend Joe used an extra set of car keys, left the party and drove to pick up another teen. On his way, Joe, who had consumed 4 beers, got into an accident. Who faces legal ramifications?

Scenario 4: High-school sophomores Chris and Dawan are driving home from their football game. Chris runs a stop sign and is immediately pulled over by a police officer who is running radar. When the officer walks over to the car he sees a 30-pack of beer in the back seat. The box and bottles are sealed. Are the boys in trouble?

Scenario 5: 17-year-old Janelle is at a house party, and after one beer decides to drive her intoxicated friends back to their houses. Janelle is stopped for speeding. The police officer smells alcohol on her breath and performs the field sobriety test. She passes most of the test, but is sent to the station with the officer to provide a breath sample. Her blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is .02 (less than .08). Can she still be charged?

Scenario 6: Brody, age 18, was asked to obtain alcohol for his friend's after-graduation party. Knowing he wasn't old enough to legally purchase alcohol, he decided to use his older (22) brother's ID. The store clerk immediately detected that the photo did not match the young customer and called 911. What charge could Brody face?

Scenario 1 Answer: The police will investigate to trace the alcohol back to the source. Since Mr. and Mrs. Smith didn't provide the alcohol, they won't be charged with delivering alcohol to minors. They can be charged with hosting an underage drinking party because they knowingly allowed minors to possess alcohol and didn't make a reasonable attempt to stop the minors from possessing. Tyler can also be charged with hosting, and he, like other party guests, can be charged as minors in possession.

Scenario 2 Answer: Since Mr. Jones is out of town and had no idea the party was happening, he will not be charged with hosting an underage party. Amaya can be charged with both hosting a party and possessing alcohol. She can also be charged with risk of injury to a minor because of the teen passed out in the living room.

Scenario 3 Answer: Mr. and Mrs. Baker can be charged with providing alcohol to a minor, hosting an underage drinking party and risk of injury to a minor. Ethan and his fellow grads can be charged with possession of alcohol by minors. Joe will likely be charged with Youth DUI and lose his license for a year. In addition, Joe's parents (who did not know that alcohol would be served at the party) can take legal action against Mr. and Mrs. Baker.

Scenario 4 Answer: Yes, it is illegal for minors to have alcohol in their cars. The penalty can include an infraction for minors possessing alcohol, and will result in a driver's license suspension for 90 days.

Scenario 5 Answer: Yes. Connecticut has a zero-tolerance policy for anyone under age 21. If under 18, a driver can have his/her driver's license automatically suspended for a year following any BAC of .02 or higher.

Scenario 6 Answer: In Connecticut it is illegal for a minor to misrepresent his/her age by using a fake ID or someone else's ID card. Brody can face fines, possible jail time, and a suspension of his driver's license.

(A Parent's Guide to Underage Drinking, The Governor's Prevention Partnership. 2010)

CASFY: Community Action for Substance Free Youth

The Mission of Community Action for Substance Free Youth (CASFY) is:
Prevent and reduce alcohol and other drug use among Lyme and Old Lyme youth by collaborating with the community to raise awareness, modify social norms, educate youth and adults, initiate policy change and promote healthy activities.