



[Responsibility.org](https://www.responsibility.org) advocates at the state and federal levels for effective policies to eliminate impaired driving and underage drinking. The organization serves as a resource to policymakers and partners with traffic safety organizations across the country on the recommendations contained in this document.

Responsibility.org and the National Alliance to Stop Impaired Driving (NASID) are dedicated to the elimination of all forms of impaired driving. The organizations take no position on cannabis legalization but are dedicated to ensuring that any cannabis legislation includes strong provisions to prevent impaired driving and underage cannabis consumption.

To learn how we can support or partner with you, contact our government relations team at govrelations@responsibility.org.

Preventing Impaired Driving and Underage Drinking from the Outset

High Visibility Enforcement (HVE)

Responsibility.org supports the efforts of law enforcement agencies to utilize High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) countermeasures, which is greater law enforcement presence on the roadways, particularly during periods when individuals are most likely to be consuming alcohol and drugs that impair (e.g., night-time, weekends). This can deter people from driving impaired because they think there is greater potential that they will be pulled over and arrested for DUI. These campaigns are an evidenced-based strategy when they are combined with strong messaging around HVE.

Minimum Drinking and Purchase Age Laws

Responsibility.org supports the minimum legal drinking age law of 21 years of age as well as laws that enforce it, including penalties (e.g., mandatory fines, community service, license suspension) for illegal possession, consumption, purchase, and attempts to purchase alcohol by people under age 21. In states that have legalized recreational cannabis sales, Responsibility.org also supports a minimum legal purchase age of 21. Responsibility.org encourages the use of mandatory screening and assessment among underage offenders to determine whether they would benefit from treatment interventions.

Partnering with Traffic Safety and Judicial Partners on Best Practices

Responsibility.org partners with organizations in state capitols across the United States and in Washington, D.C. to tackle complex traffic safety issues that will lead to safer roadways for all. Additionally, Responsibility.org believes that ongoing practitioner education and training is integral to improve the detection, processing/adjudication, sanctioning, supervision, and effective assessment and treatment of impaired driving offenders. As such, Responsibility.org

convenes stakeholders and obtains input from experts and partners to aide in the development of publications and online courses that can guide best prevention practices, improve outcomes, and save lives.

Technological Advances in Anti-Drunken Driving Prevention

Responsibility.org knows that bold, innovative approaches are required to reduce crashes and save lives. New technology ultimately may help prevent drunk, drugged, and multiple substance-impaired driving, as well as distracted driving and fatigued driving. Responsibility.org supported the HALT/RIDE Acts that were signed into law to advance drunk and impaired driving prevention technology becoming the standard in new motor vehicles. Responsibility.org believes technological advances like this are fundamental to saving lives and preventing impaired driving fatalities in the future.

Partnering with Policymakers on Impaired Driving and Underage Drinking Prevention

Responsibility.org partners with policymakers at every level to help spread the word about impaired driving and underage drinking prevention. Two of the most visible ways are through Responsibility.org's annual PSA program with state Attorneys Generals during December's Impaired Driving Prevention Month and April's Alcohol Responsibility Month and working with legislators to film "Responsibility Starts With Me" videos.

Preventing Repeat Impaired Driving

Mandatory Compliance Based Ignition Interlocks for All Convicted DUI Offenders

One of the most effective countermeasures available to jurisdictions to separate drinking from driving is the alcohol ignition interlock device (IID). An ignition interlock requires a DUI offender to blow into the device, connected to the starter or other on-board computer system, prior to starting the vehicle. If the breath sample registers a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) above a defined pre-set limit (typically .02), the vehicle will not start. The device also requires repeated breath tests while the vehicle is used to ensure the DUI offender remains sober throughout their trip. IIDs should also be considered for use pre-trial and in Probation Before Judgement programs. Responsibility.org supports states' efforts to provide financial assistance for individuals who require it to complete installation.

Enhanced Sanctions for High-BAC Drivers and Repeat Offenders

Drivers with a high blood alcohol concentration (BAC) have a heightened relative crash risk. Compared with drivers who have not consumed alcohol, drivers with BACs of .15 or above are 380 times more likely to be involved in a single-vehicle fatal crash (Zador et al., 1991). As such, they pose a critical threat to public safety and should be subject to increased criminal penalties. In recognition of the heightened risk these offenders pose to public safety, Responsibility.org also recommends mandatory screening and assessment for mental health and substance use disorders be used to identify issues that require further intervention.

Screening and Assessment for All Impaired Drivers

The use of comprehensive screening and assessment in the criminal justice setting is necessary to identify DUI offenders who have substance use and/or mental health disorders that require further intervention. The two assessment instruments that practitioners should integrate within their programs are the [Computerized Assessment and Referral System](#) (CARS) and the [Impaired Driving Assessment](#) (IDA). Both tools are available free of cost and are validated among the DUI offender population. Assessment findings can provide direction to practitioners and inform release, sentencing, supervision, and treatment decisions.

Supporting DUI Specialty Courts to Keep High BAC and Repeat Offenders Off the Road

DUI Courts are specialized court programs that provide a structure of appropriate treatment, supervision, and accountability. These specialty courts follow the well-established Drug Court model and are based on the premise that drunk driving can be prevented if the underlying psychiatric co-morbidity causes of the DUI offender (e.g., substance dependence and mental health issues) are identified and addressed.

Administrative License Revocation/Suspension (ALR/ALS)

Administrative license revocation/suspension laws are an immediate countermeasure and deterrent for the offense of drunk driving. In many states, these laws allow law enforcement officers to confiscate a driver's license if an individual fails or refuses to submit to a chemical test. Responsibility.org also supports state programs that allow individuals with a suspended license to obtain limited driving privileges upon the installation of an ignition interlock.

Implied Consent Laws and Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) tests

Responsibility.org supports the efforts of law enforcement and prosecutors to effectively identify and prosecute suspected DUI offenders. All 50 states and Washington, D.C. have an "implied consent" law which provides that a driver that has obtained a license and/or is driving on local roads has consented to a chemical test (breath, blood, urine or saliva) should they be arrested for impaired driving. Responsibility.org also believes jurisdictions should be able, upon probable cause, to obtain search warrants for blood samples from suspected impaired drivers who refuse chemical tests. Responsibility.org supports state programs that allow individuals who refuse a BAC test to obtain limited driving privileges upon the installation of an ignition interlock.

In addition to this approach, Responsibility.org also supports the development and use of electronic search warrant systems, which facilitate timely acquisition of search warrants for evidential blood draws, streamlining a critical component of DUI investigations.

Youth Assessment and Brief Interventions

Neuroscience has firmly established that young people are hard-wired for risk-taking in their early teens, making potential reckless behavior troubling but not surprising. Research confirms that early alcohol consumption may increase the risk for alcohol dependence later in life. Responsibility.org supports screening and brief interventions for underage drinkers at the time of an underage alcohol policy violation resulting in arrest or an alcohol-related injury. The

screenings and brief interventions should identify potential alcohol use disorders, effective treatment (when indicated), and brief interventions for their parents.