

SIX KEY STEPS



AFTER A CAR ACCIDENT

You need to act right away after a crash. Car accidents occur frequently in Chicago and across Illinois. Traffic crashes statewide occurred at a rate of 772 per day in 2011, the Illinois Department of Transportation says. Every hour, nine people suffered injuries in a wreck, and two persons died.

You can't control when an accident is going to happen. But you can control what happens next. If you are in a car accident, you need to act right away in order to protect your rights.

Make sure to take these six important steps:



✓ Check for Injuries

Try to remain calm after an accident. Consider whether you are in pain and whether you have injuries. Ask others in your car whether they are hurt. Approach the other vehicle and inquire about its occupants. If anyone is

hurt, phone 911 immediately and request emergency medical assistance.



✓ Answer the police officer's questions

Respond to questions from the police honestly, politely and succinctly. Do not volunteer information. Do not make accusations or admit fault. Ask the officer how you can obtain a copy of

the crash report, and obtain the report as soon as you can.



✓ Secure the scene

If your car accident has resulted in major damage or injury, do not move the cars until instructed to do so by law enforcement personnel. Turn on your car's hazard lights. If you have flares, traffic cones or other tools for warning approaching

motorists, set them out on the roadway. Use your cell phone or a camera to document the crash with photographs. In only the most minor crashes should you move the cars before police arrive.



✓ Contact your insurance carrier

Report the accident to your car insurance company and follow their instructions, such as to get repair estimates. Do not agree to any settlement offers; do not sign anything. If the other driver's

insurance company contacts you, inform them that you would prefer they work through your insurance carrier.



✓ Get driver information ready

Many guides suggest exchanging insurance and other information with the other driver. We suggest that if you are asked, you politely assure the other driver that you have insurance, registration, a driver's license, etc., and suggest

that the patrol officer will gather that information from both of you and share it. In all interaction with the other driver you should remain calm and polite, regardless of their behavior.



✓ Contact a car accident lawyer

An initial consultation with any reputable attorney is free of charge. A car accident attorney experienced in the state of Illinois and/or the Chicago area can assess the facts of your accident and advise you of your

legal options. A lawyer can also help you if your insurance carrier or the other driver's insurance company is reluctant to agree to an appropriate settlement.



Salvi, Schostok & Pritchard P.C. Can Help You

Proving fault for serious injuries in a car accident often requires an investment of time, experience and resources. It can be complicated. But an experienced Chicago car accident attorney can help you obtain a proper insurance settlement or other compensation for your medical expenses and other losses after a car accident. For a free, no-obligation evaluation of your case, contact Salvi, Schostok & Pritchard P.C. today at our toll-free number or through our [online contact form](#).