Navigating Your Drunk Driving Accident Claim

Understanding the difference between criminal DUI cases and civil personal injury claims.

Based on Denver Drunk Driving Accident Lawyer by McCormick and Murphy

Step 1: Understand the Two Legal Processes

Recognize that a drunk driving accident involves two separate legal proceedings: a criminal case and a civil personal injury claim.

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Step 2: Criminal Case Purpose

The criminal case is initiated by the state to punish the drunk driver. Penalties can include fines, jail time, or license suspension.

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Step 3: Civil Claim Purpose

Your civil lawsuit aims to obtain financial compensation for your injuries, including medical bills, lost wages, and pain and suffering.

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Step 4: Independence of Claims

Your civil claim is independent of the criminal case. You can pursue your civil claim regardless of the status of the criminal proceedings.

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Step 5: Do Not Wait for Criminal Case Conclusion

You should not delay filing your civil claim while waiting for the criminal case to be resolved.

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Step 6: Be Aware of Statute of Limitations

Colorado law imposes a three-year statute of limitations for personal injury claims, which begins on the date of the accident, not the date of a criminal conviction.

Resources & Further Reading

Related guides for this process:

- Drunk Driving Accident Claim Checklist

https://storage.googleapis.com/mccormick-and-murphy-checklists-20260706-65ee7b/mccormick-and-murphy/Checklist/drunk-driving-accident-claim-checklist.pdf

- Denver Drunk Driving Accident Action Sheet

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Pursue compensation for your injuries independently of the criminal DUI case.