

Child Abuse and Aggravated Child Abuse in Utah

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In Utah, child abuse is a very serious crime with extreme penalties for conviction. Injuries to children are often reported by well-intentioned teachers, neighbors, and healthcare providers, which can cause even the ideal parents to become suspects. In a custody battle, child abuse allegations can be hurled like ammunition. If you have been charged with child abuse in Utah, you need to begin working with the best [child abuse](#) lawyer available to you as soon as possible to prevent your reputation and your rights from being permanently damaged.

What is Child Abuse?

In Utah, the law defining child abuse covers a broad scope that includes even accidental injuries. How are [felony vs. misdemeanor](#) child abuse charges determined? Depending on the details of the case, charges can range from a Class C misdemeanor up to a Second Degree felony and even to charges of aggravated crimes that cause penalties to be “enhanced” by the court.

Is spanking child abuse? If the effects of spanking a child rise to the level of injury that is defined under one of the definitions of an act of child abuse, then the state child abuse law may apply.

Penalties for Child Abuse in Utah

The various levels of child abuse crimes are described below. As you can see, the more extreme the nature of the abuse, the higher the level of the criminal charges. Unless other punishments are specifically required, generally, these are the penalties for the various [levels of misdemeanors and felony crimes in Utah](#):

If a physical injury caused to a child was:

Intentionally inflicted	Class A misdemeanor	6 months in jail, a maximum fine of \$1,000, or both
Recklessly inflicted	Class B misdemeanor	Up to 6 months in jail, a maximum fine of \$1,000 or community service
By criminal negligence	Class C misdemeanor	Up to 90 days in jail, a maximum fine of \$750 or community service

What is Aggravated Child Abuse?

Under Utah Criminal Code [76-5-109.2](#), a person commits aggravated child abuse if the perpetrator causes serious physical injury to a child, such as:

- Burns
- Starvation
- Broken bones
- Head injuries from hitting or shaking
- Suffocation

The state law also applies to a person who has custody or is responsible for the care of a child and either causes or allows someone else to seriously physically injure a child in Utah.

Penalties for Aggravated Child Abuse in Utah

This crime is a Second Degree felony if the crime is committed intentionally or knowingly. It is a Third Degree felony if done recklessly. It is a Class A misdemeanor if it is committed with criminal negligence.

If a serious physical injury caused to a child was:

Intentionally inflicted	Second Degree felony	1 to 15 years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine
Recklessly inflicted	Third Degree felony	Up to 5 years in prison, and a maximum fine of \$5,000
By criminal negligence	Class A misdemeanor	6 months in jail, a maximum fine of \$1,000, or both

How Can Your Criminal Defense Lawyer Help?

Child abuse cases can be very complicated. The outcomes often hinge on an array of medical evidence and the testimony of the child victims. These kinds of evidence can often be interpreted in different ways.

So, if you're facing charges, you will need the best child abuse defense lawyer Utah has to offer you. These are some of the ways your criminal defense lawyer can help you:

- A Utah child abuse defense lawyer knows how to identify discrepancies in matters for interpretation.
- An experienced lawyer obtains expert witnesses to explain matters logically to help you receive the fullest benefit of the doubt in each critical area.
- A skilled child abuse attorney can draw focus to the aspects of your case that support reducing or even dropping charges or minimizing the sentence, depending on the situation.
- The best criminal defense lawyers guide the legal process and ensure that all state laws and court rules are obeyed throughout the trial.
- Your lawyer makes sure that all of your rights are fully protected and that everything that can be done is done to develop the strongest possible case for your defense.

Best Child Abuse Defense Attorney Utah

Wasatch Defense Lawyers in Salt Lake City represents clients accused of child abuse. Whether you are a parent or non-parent facing these allegations, we can help you. Our highly skilled team is deeply familiar with Utah law and the Salt Lake City court rules and processes.

We will start working immediately to have your charges significantly reduced or dropped completely. We're focused on keeping you out of jail and free from criminal records.

If you are facing trial for child abuse, call Wasatch Defense Lawyers at (801) 980-9965, or contact us here on our website to set an appointment to discuss your situation.

How to report child abuse: If you suspect someone you know of child abuse, you should report your concerns to the proper law enforcement authority in your town or county.