

Sexual Abuse Defense Lawyer in Utah

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If you or a loved one is facing sexual abuse charges in Utah, it is essential to contact legal representation. A sexual abuse conviction can not only come with harsh prison sentences, community service, rehabilitation and fines, but it can also cause dramatic changes in your life that will stay with you forever. Those convicted of sexual abuse or child sexual abuse will be [required to register as a sex offender sometimes for life](#). This information can easily be found by the public and can result in ostracization from the community as well as difficulty finding employment.

When it comes to sexual abuse, even a false accusation can lead to convictions and long legal battles. At Wasatch Defense Lawyers we can intervene, guide you through your rights, and help you to get through this difficulty. Our [Utah criminal defense lawyer consultations are free, so contact us today!](#)

What is the Difference Between Sexual Abuse and a Sexual Assault?

No, sexual abuse and sexual assault are different charges in Utah. The primary differences between sexual assault and sexual abuse typically involve the age of the victim as well as the circumstances of the relationship between the abuser and the victim.

- **Sexual Abuse** – [Sexual abuse](#) occurs when the abuser is in a guardianship role or a role that requires care of the victim. In this case, the abuser uses the victim's trust to pressure or force them into sexual activity. In adult victims, this most commonly occurs in medical centers and nursing home facilities where the patient under care suffers abuse. This type of abuse happens most often with the elderly as they are typically reliant on others for their daily care. In cases of child sexual abuse, the abuser is often a family member, guardian, teacher, or another adult that provides some form of care for the child.
- **Sexual Assault** – [Sexual assault](#) involves an unwanted sexual behavior or act that is often violent, forced, and threatening to a victim. Sexual assaults are typically characterized by violence and trauma. In some instances, these assaults can even be life threatening.

What is Forcible Sexual Abuse?

Forcible sexual abuse occurs when an abuser takes indecent liberties with a victim over the age of 14.

This can involve touching or caressing of the victim's breasts, buttocks, or genitalia with the intent to stimulate, arouse, or sexually gratify without consent. The abuse can also be used to inflict physical or emotional pain on the victim.

Forcible sexual abuse carries strict prison sentences which can vary depending on the circumstance of the abuse. Aside from certain conditions, forcible sexual abuse is considered a 2nd-degree felony and carries a sentence of one to 15 years in prison. If during the sexual abuse, the abuser causes bodily damage to a victim, the crime can be considered a first-degree felony and will carry a sentence of 15 years to life in most circumstances. If bodily injury occurs and the court determines a lesser sentence should be imposed, they can also sentence the abuser for terms of six years to life or 10 years to life.

What is Child Sexual Abuse?

Sexual abuse of a child occurs when the victim is a child and the abuser, touches the victim inappropriately on the genitals, breasts, or buttocks with the intent to produce emotional or physical pain, or to arouse or gratify. In the instance of sexual abuse of a child, Utah law can treat it as a statutory charge, which still allows the charge to stand if the child is under the age of consent, but willingly participated. The **age of consent in Utah is set at 18 years old**, therefore anyone 17 or under is defined as a child and unable to give their consent to engage in sexual activity.

Aggravated Sexual Abuse

Aggravated sexual abuse is considered a more severe offense. A defendant can be charged with aggravated child sexual abuse if:

- They used a weapon at any time during the commission of the crime
- They were a stranger who made friends with the victim to commit the offense
- They engaged the child in viewing or producing pornography
- The abuse was committed on two or more victims at the same time
- The abuse occurred more than five times with the same victim
- The abuser was in a position of special trust
- The act involved penetration no matter how slight
- Bodily injury occurred during the offense
- The act involved elements of prostitution or human trafficking

While sexual abuse of a child is a second-degree felony, aggravated sexual child abuse is treated as a first-degree felony and can incur much more stringent penalties including:

- A prison sentence of 15 years to life
- A sentence of life without parole if it was found that bodily harm was caused
- A sentence of life without parole if the defendant has been previously convicted of a sexual offense.

Wasatch Defense Lawyers Can Protect Your Freedom and Your Future – Get a FREE Case Review!

Even if you are well-known in the community for your good reputation, you have evidence to prove your innocence, or you believe that the accusations are baseless and will soon be dismissed, it is important to seek legal advice immediately if accused of sexual abuse. If convicted of a sexual abuse charge, you can be affected for the remainder of your life, so it is imperative to have the services of an experienced attorney. Remember even those who are falsely accused should hire a lawyer to ensure that their rights are protected throughout the entire legal process.

It is essential that you have the right law firm in your corner when you are facing sexual abuse charges. Don't let an accusation of sexual abuse in Utah ruin your life. Contact the [professional sex crime defense attorneys](#) Wasatch Defense Lawyers today for your free consultation.