

What Should I Do Immediately After a Hit and Run Accident in Tennessee?

Being involved in a hit and run accident can be a frightening and confusing experience. If you've been the victim of a hit and run in Knoxville or elsewhere in Tennessee, knowing exactly what steps to take immediately afterward can protect your rights and improve your chances of receiving proper compensation. Taking the right actions in those critical first moments and hours can make a significant difference in the outcome of your case.

In this blog post, **Knoxville legal expert Timothy G. Elrod** discusses what you should do immediately after a hit and run accident in Tennessee.

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Key Takeaways:

- Prioritize your safety and medical needs first, then document as much evidence as possible at the scene
- Report the accident to police immediately and file an official report, which is crucial for insurance claims
- Contact your insurance company promptly and consult with a personal injury attorney before accepting any settlement
- Never chase after the fleeing driver as this can create additional dangers and legal complications

Safety First: Immediate Actions After a Hit and Run

Your first priority after any accident, including a hit and run, should be your physical safety and that of any passengers. Move to a safe location away from traffic if possible and check for injuries. Call 911 immediately if anyone is injured, even if the injuries seem minor. Medical documentation created immediately after an accident can be crucial evidence for your case.

"The most critical mistake I see hit and run victims make is failing to seek medical attention promptly. Even seemingly minor accidents can cause serious injuries that don't manifest symptoms until days later, and delaying treatment can not only worsen your condition but also complicate your insurance claim." - **Knoxville personal injury attorney Timothy G. Elrod**

Never attempt to chase or pursue the fleeing driver. Doing so puts you at risk of another accident, potential confrontation, or even being accused of reckless driving or road rage. Instead, try to note as much information about the vehicle as possible, including make, model, color, license plate (even partial), and any identifying features.

Document Everything at the Scene

While the details are fresh in your mind, document everything about the accident. Use your smartphone to take photos of:

- Your vehicle and the damage sustained
- The accident scene, including skid marks, debris, and road conditions
- Any injuries you or your passengers sustained
- The surrounding area, including traffic signs and signals

If there were witnesses to the accident, ask for their contact information and if they would be willing to provide a statement. Their testimony could be invaluable in identifying the fleeing driver or establishing the circumstances of the accident.

Report to Law Enforcement Immediately

In Tennessee, you are legally required to report any accident involving injury, death, or property damage exceeding \$50. For hit and run accidents, reporting is essential regardless of damage amount.

When police arrive, provide them with all the information you have gathered. Be detailed but stick to the facts. Request a copy of the police report once it's filed, as this document will be crucial for your insurance claim and any potential legal action.

"Many victims don't realize that in Tennessee, you must also file an Owner Operator Report with the Department of Safety within 20 days if the accident involved injury, death, or property damage exceeding \$1,500. Failing to do so could result in license suspension, even if you were the victim of a hit and run." - **Tim Elrod**

Notify Your Insurance Company

Contact your insurance company as soon as possible after a hit and run accident. Tennessee is a fault-based state for auto insurance, which means the at-fault driver's insurance should cover damages. However, since the driver fled the scene, you may need to rely on your own insurance coverage.

Review your policy to understand what coverage applies:

- Uninsured motorist coverage can help when the at-fault driver is unknown
- Collision coverage can pay for repairs to your vehicle
- Personal injury protection or medical payments coverage can help with medical expenses

Be honest and thorough when reporting to your insurance company, but avoid making speculative statements or admitting fault.

Consult with a Knoxville Attorney

Before accepting any settlement offer from your insurance company, consult with an experienced personal injury attorney who understands Tennessee's hit and run laws. Insurance companies often make initial offers that don't fully account for all your damages, especially long-term medical needs or pain and suffering.

An attorney can help determine the true value of your claim, negotiate with insurance companies on your behalf, and pursue legal action against the hit and run driver if they are eventually identified.

Seek Medical Attention

Even if you feel fine immediately after the accident, see a doctor as soon as possible. Some injuries, particularly those involving soft tissue or internal damage, may not show symptoms right away. Getting prompt medical attention serves two purposes: it ensures your health and safety, and it creates an official medical record connecting your injuries to the accident.

Follow Through with Legal Requirements

In addition to filing a police report, Tennessee law requires drivers involved in accidents with injuries, deaths, or property damage exceeding \$1,500 to file an Owner Operator Report with the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security within 20 days of the accident.

This requirement applies even if you were the victim of a hit and run. Failure to file this report could result in suspension of your driver's license and registration, adding unnecessary complications to an already difficult situation.

Keep Detailed Records

Maintain a comprehensive file of all documents related to your hit and run accident:

- Police report
- Medical records and bills
- Repair estimates and receipts

- Communications with your insurance company
- Photos and witness statements
- Documentation of missed work and lost wages

These records will be invaluable if the fleeing driver is identified or if you need to pursue an uninsured motorist claim with your own insurance company.

Why Choose OEB Law for Your Car Accident Settlement

When calculating your car accident settlement, having experienced legal representation can make a substantial difference in the compensation you receive. **Top attorneys in Knoxville** at OEB Law understand how insurance companies try to minimize settlements and know how to properly value all aspects of your claim.

Our team at OEB Law can help you gather proper documentation, calculate an accurate settlement value, negotiate with insurance companies, and ensure you're not leaving money on the table. With our experience handling thousands of similar cases, we can identify areas of compensation you might overlook on your own.

Who is OEB Law and Why Are They Good for the Community?

Founded in 2004 in Knoxville, Tennessee, OEB Law has grown over nearly two decades to now serve clients across multiple states. **Tim Elrod** established the firm with a simple but powerful mission: *we care and we help people*. Today, together with attorneys Michael Bernard, Billy Sivyer, Gena Lewis, and Logan Wade, our team brings over 50 years of combined experience representing clients throughout Tennessee, Kentucky, the Carolinas, and Georgia in personal injury and criminal defense cases.

Our Legal Expertise

Our attorneys have built their reputation through:

- Successfully representing thousands of personal injury and criminal defense clients
- Developing specialized knowledge across all types of accident and injury cases
- Mastering the complexities of Tennessee's legal system through decades of practice

Why Trust Us

At OEB Law, our reputation speaks for itself:

- **Proven Results:** We've recovered significant compensation for our clients through both settlements and courtroom verdicts
- **Client Satisfaction:** Our numerous **5-Star Google Reviews** showcase our commitment to responsive, caring, and effective legal representation

- **No Fee Unless We Win:** You don't pay attorney fees unless we successfully secure compensation in your case
- **Local Knowledge:** As East Tennessee natives, we understand our community and care deeply about the people we serve
- **Personalized Approach:** We personalize each case to meet our clients' specific needs, ensuring you're never just another file number

Community Commitment

Our dedication extends beyond the courtroom. We proudly support:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Tennessee Valley programs and toy drives
- Local high school football programs through Rivalry Thursday sponsorships
- The Knoxville Ice Bears and community fundraising initiatives
- Numerous youth, student, and community organizations throughout East Tennessee

As Tim Elrod says, "*We don't just take—we give back because the people you're giving back to are the people who are supporting your firm.*"

Have a personal injury or criminal defense case? We're available 24/7 to help.

Get In Touch

- **Call or Text:** [phone]
- **Visit:** <https://oeblawtn.com/>
- **Available:** Standing by 24/7

Why OEB Law? ***Because They're Good For The Community.***

TEXT or CALL [phone] for HELP NOW. Standing By 24/7.

FAQ: What if I can't identify the driver who hit me in Tennessee?

Even if the hit and run driver is never identified, you may still have options for compensation in Tennessee. Your uninsured motorist coverage can typically be used in hit and run cases where the at-fault driver remains unknown. This coverage can help pay for medical expenses, lost wages, and pain and suffering. To maximize your chances of recovery, make sure to report the accident immediately, thoroughly document the scene, obtain the police report, and consult with a Knoxville attorney who specializes in hit and run accidents.

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For this task you are an SEO writing expert, use this information, the outline and your sources to write a 750 to 900 word seo blog post titled, "What Should I Do Immediately After a Hit and Run Accident in Tennessee?". Be helpful, be informative, and follow Google best practices for content. The target reader is someone who has been in a car accident and is looking for professional advice from a law firm on how to calculate their car accident settlement.

Include 2 to 3 quotes about the topic from "the experts at OEB Law" in the entire post. Avoid markdown format. Only use bullet points where necessary. Don't make an entire section bullet points. Address the reader as "you" where relevant.

Title: What Should I Do Immediately After a Hit and Run Accident in Tennessee?

Introduction: 75 words. Make the last sentence: “In this blog post, the experts at OEB Law and the professionals at [name] will discuss what you should do immediately after a hit and run accident in Tennessee.

Key Takeaways: at least 3 bullet points summarizing the entire blog post for the reader to easily scan

H2: What Should I Do Immediately After a Hit and Run Accident in Tennessee?

If you are involved in a hit and run accident in Tennessee, it’s important to act quickly to protect your safety, comply with state law, and preserve your ability to recover damages. Here’s what you should do immediately:

- **Ensure Safety and Check for Injuries:** Move to a safe location if possible and check yourself and any passengers for injuries. If anyone is hurt, call 911 right away for medical assistance.
- **Do Not Chase the Fleeing Driver:** Stay at the scene. Chasing the other vehicle can be dangerous and may complicate your legal situation.
- **Call the Police Immediately:** Report the hit and run to law enforcement as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the accident. Provide all available details about the fleeing vehicle, driver, and the circumstances of the crash.
- **Document the Scene:** While waiting for police, take photos or videos of your vehicle, any damage, debris, and the surrounding area. Gather contact information from any witnesses and write down everything you remember about the other vehicle and the accident.
- **File a Police Report:** Cooperate fully with responding officers and ensure an official report is filed. Request a copy of the police report for your records and insurance claim.
- **Notify Your Insurance Company:** Report the accident to your insurance provider as soon as possible. Provide them with the police report and any evidence you’ve collected.

- **Submit an Owner Operator Report:** If the accident involved injury, death, or more than \$1,500 in property damage (or \$400 if government property is involved), you must file an Owner Operator Report with the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security within 20 days—even if the other driver fled the scene. Failure to do so can result in suspension of your driver's license and vehicle registration.
- **Keep Records:** Save all documentation, including police and Owner Operator reports, photos, witness statements, and insurance correspondence.

Summary Table: Immediate Steps After a Hit and Run in Tennessee

Step	Action
Ensure safety	Move to safety, check for injuries, call 911 if needed
Stay at the scene	Do not pursue the fleeing driver
Call police	Report incident immediately, provide all details
Document the scene	Take photos, gather witness info, write down details
File police report	Cooperate with officers, obtain a copy of the report
Notify insurance	Report the accident to your insurer, provide documentation
Submit Owner Operator Report	File with TN Dept. of Safety within 20 days if required by law
Keep records	Save all related documents and correspondence

Following these steps ensures you comply with Tennessee law, protect your legal rights, and support any insurance or legal claims you may need to pursue.

