

How to File a Claim After a Pedestrian Hit-and-Run Accident in Arizona

Get an experienced car accident lawyer who will fight for your rights

Being hit by a car is one of the most terrifying experiences a person can have. When the driver speeds off instead of stopping to help, that fear quickly turns into anger, confusion, and uncertainty. Drivers often do this if they're too afraid to face the consequences, fleeing from police, or committing a crime. They may also be impaired or uninsured.

When this happens, many pedestrians in Arizona are left wondering what to do next or how they'll pay their medical bills when the person responsible disappears. The good news is that you still have legal options. Even if the driver isn't identified, there are ways to file a claim and recover compensation for your injuries. Here's what you need to know if you're involved in a hit-and-run [pedestrian accident](#).

What should I do immediately after a hit-and-run accident?

The moments after a hit-and-run can feel chaotic, but your actions right after the crash are critical. The first priority is always safety and medical care.

Move out of traffic if you can and call 911 right away. Let emergency responders know you were struck by a vehicle that fled the scene. The police will arrive to document the crash, take statements, and begin an investigation. That report will become a key piece of evidence for your insurance claim later.

If you're able, start collecting information before the trail goes cold, including:

- **Vehicle details:** Try to remember the make, model, color, or even a few digits of the license plate.
- **Photos and videos:** Take pictures of the scene, your injuries, vehicle debris, skid marks, and surrounding buildings that might have security cameras.
- **Witness contacts:** Get names and phone numbers of anyone who saw the crash or the driver leaving.

If you're too injured to do these things, ask a bystander or the responding officer to help. A single camera or witness could identify the driver later and strengthen your claim.

How do police and investigators identify hit-and-run drivers in Arizona?

Even when a driver flees, Arizona police have tools to track them down. Investigators often start by reviewing traffic and surveillance camera footage near the scene. In busy areas such as Phoenix, Mesa, and Tucson, intersection and business cameras can provide clear images of vehicles or license plates.

Officers may also use license plate recognition systems, which automatically scan passing cars and compare them to suspect vehicles. Physical evidence such as paint chips, broken lights, or tire marks can be analyzed to identify the make and model of the car involved.

Witnesses play an important role, too. Someone may have seen a partial plate number, noticed a damaged car nearby, or captured dashcam footage that helps police connect the dots.

Even if the driver isn't caught immediately, police can reopen cases if new leads appear. That's why filing a detailed police report is so important. It keeps your case active and creates the documentation needed for insurance or legal action.

What if the driver is never found?

In many hit-and-run cases, the driver can't be located. It's frustrating, but it doesn't mean you're out of options. Arizona law gives pedestrians another path through uninsured motorist (UM) coverage.

When you buy auto insurance in Arizona, your insurance company must offer UM coverage, though you can reject it in writing. If you didn't opt out, you probably have it. This coverage protects you if you're injured by a driver who doesn't have insurance or who flees and can't be identified.

Here's what UM coverage can pay for:

- Medical bills from emergency care, hospitalization, and follow-up treatment
- Rehabilitation and therapy for long-term recovery
- Lost income from missing work
- Pain and suffering caused by physical and emotional trauma

You don't have to be in a car to qualify. As long as a motor vehicle caused your injuries, your UM policy (or sometimes a family member's policy in your household) can apply.

If the driver is later identified, you can still file a claim against their liability insurance or sue them for additional damages. But in the meantime, UM coverage can be a lifeline that helps you recover financially while you heal.

How do I file an uninsured motorist claim in Arizona?

Filing a UM claim is similar to filing any car accident claim, but it requires careful attention to deadlines and documentation. Insurance companies often challenge these claims, so following each step helps protect your rights. Here's what to do:

- Notify your insurance company right away. Most policies require prompt notice of a potential claim. Waiting too long could give your insurer a reason to deny coverage.

- Provide a police report. The report verifies that the collision was a hit-and-run caused by another driver, not a single-vehicle incident.
- Submit all supporting evidence. Include photos, medical records, hospital bills, proof of lost wages, and statements from witnesses.
- Cooperate with your insurance provider's investigation. They may request a statement or ask for an independent medical examination.
- Get legal advice before accepting any settlement. Even though it's your own insurance provider, they're still a business and their goal is to reduce the amount they pay.

An experienced Arizona accident lawyer can handle communications, prepare your evidence, and ensure your insurance company treats your claim fairly. Without representation, it's easy for an insurance adjuster to undervalue your injuries or pressure you into a low offer.

Can I still file a lawsuit for a hit-and-run accident?

If police later identify the driver who hit you, you can pursue a civil lawsuit for negligence. Arizona law ([A.R.S. § 12-542](#)) generally gives you two years from the date of the accident to file a personal injury claim.

However, if the driver is identified after that period, your attorney may argue for an exception based on when the driver's identity was discovered. Timing is crucial, which is why legal guidance early in the process can help preserve your right to sue.

Through a lawsuit, you can seek compensation for:

- Future medical expenses, including surgeries or rehabilitation
- Long-term care if you suffer permanent injuries
- Lost earning potential if you can't return to your previous job
- Pain, suffering, and emotional distress

Even if the driver faces criminal charges for leaving the scene, that's separate from your civil case. The criminal case punishes the offender, while your lawsuit seeks compensation for your losses.

What evidence helps strengthen your claim?

Whether you're filing through insurance or taking your case to court, strong evidence is the foundation of your claim. The more documentation you have, the harder it is for an insurance company or defense attorney to dispute what happened.

Important forms of evidence include:

- **Police reports:** These provide an official account of the crash and often include witness statements and officer observations.
- **Medical records:** Detailed medical documentation connects your injuries directly to the accident and shows the extent of your recovery.
- **Bills and receipts:** Keep copies of every expense, such as hospital visits, prescriptions, therapy sessions, and transportation to appointments.
- **Witness statements:** Third-party observations can confirm the driver's actions or provide identifying details.
- **Photos and videos:** Visual evidence, especially of injuries and the accident scene, can be powerful when negotiating with insurers.
- **Expert analysis:** Accident reconstruction specialists can help explain how the crash occurred, even without identifying the driver.

How can I protect my rights after a pedestrian hit-and-run?

After a hit-and-run, time is your most valuable asset. Acting quickly helps preserve evidence and keeps your options open. Following an accident:

- **Don't delay medical care.** Even if you think your injuries are minor, some symptoms (such as head trauma or internal bleeding) may not appear right away.
- **Keep detailed records.** Save every medical bill, police report, and communication with your insurance company.
- **Avoid giving recorded statements to insurance companies** before talking to an attorney. Anything you say could be used to reduce your claim.
- **Follow through on treatment.** Insurers often argue that missed appointments mean you weren't seriously injured.
- **Contact a skilled Arizona pedestrian accident lawyer** who can handle your claim from the start, prevent costly mistakes, and ensure deadlines are met.

Injured in a hit-and-run in Arizona? Let a no B.S. lawyer fight for you!

If you were injured in a hit-and-run pedestrian accident, don't hesitate to get legal help. The Arizona legal team at [Browne Law Group](#) is ready to step in, protect your rights, and fight for the justice you deserve. Attorney Byron Browne can listen to your story, explain your legal options, and take immediate steps to build your case and hold the responsible parties accountable.

When you work with Browne Law Group, you get more than legal representation; you get a team that stands up to insurance companies and refuses to settle for less than you deserve. We offer a free consultation so you can get honest answers before making any decisions.

You'll never pay anything upfront because our firm works on a contingency fee basis, meaning you owe nothing unless we win your case. Browne Law Group proudly serves pedestrians and injury victims across Gilbert, Mesa, Chandler, Tempe, and throughout Maricopa County. If you've been hurt in a hit-and-run accident, [contact us online](#) or call today to schedule your free consultation.