What a Car Accident Attorney Looks at After a Rear-End or T-Bone Crash

Rear-end crashes and T-bone collisions are two crash types that come up often in injury claims. The label describes how the vehicles met, but it does not decide who was at fault. A car accident lawyer reviewing one of these crashes usually begins with the sequence of events, from each car's speed to the signals that controlled traffic.

What causes rear-end collisions

Many state traffic codes prohibit following another vehicle more closely than is reasonable and prudent, taking into account the speed of traffic and the condition of the road. Distraction is a frequent factor. NHTSA explains that sending or reading a text takes a driver's eyes off the road for 5 seconds, which at 55 mph is like driving the length of a football field with eyes closed. A car crash lawyer may ask for the other driver's phone records when distraction is suspected.

The trailing driver is often found at fault in a rear-end crash, but that is not automatic. A car that cuts in and brakes suddenly, brake lights that fail or a vehicle backing up can shift some or ***car accident lawyer free consult*** all of the fault. In a chain-reaction crash, every impact is its own event, and a middle vehicle pushed forward may not be responsible for the second impact.

Whiplash and soft tissue injuries

Rear-end impacts are often associated with whiplash, a neck injury caused by the head snapping back and forth. Symptoms such as neck pain and headaches may not appear until hours after the crash, which is one reason prompt medical care matters. Insurance companies sometimes challenge injury claims after low-speed rear-end crashes, pointing to light vehicle damage. Photos of both cars and the medical records help respond to that argument, along with imaging such as an MRI when a doctor orders one.

What causes T-bone crashes

In a T-bone crash, the front of one vehicle strikes the side of another, most often at an intersection. Typical causes include failing to yield on a left turn and running a red light or a stop sign. A car's sides have less space to absorb crash forces than its front or rear, which is why the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) rates side protection in a separate side-impact crash test. Occupants on the struck side can suffer serious injuries, including traumatic brain injury and pelvic fractures.

Disputes in these crashes often come down to who had *car accident lawyer* the right of way. Useful evidence includes signal timing records, intersection camera video, nearby business surveillance footage, dashcam video and witness statements, as well as the event data recorder (EDR) in each car, which may hold speed and braking data from the seconds before the crash. A car crash lawyer typically moves quickly to collect video, since many systems overwrite footage within days or weeks.

Shared fault and comparative negligence

Fault is not always all or nothing. Most states apply some form of comparative negligence, which lowers a recovery by the injured person's share of fault. Under modified comparative negligence, a person found at least 50 or 51 percent at fault, depending on the state, may recover nothing, while pure comparative negligence allows a reduced recovery at any level of fault. A small number of jurisdictions still follow

contributory negligence, which can bar recovery for any fault at all. An automobile accident lawyer can explain which rule applies where the crash happened.

Deadlines and general information

Each state sets its own statute of limitations for injury claims, and claims involving a government vehicle or agency can require written notice much sooner. This article is general information, not legal advice, and it cannot predict the outcome of any claim.