

# Alcohol Interlock Program

## USER'S HANDBOOK

Alcohol Interlock is a proven technology that is helping to reduce drinking and driving in other parts of Canada and around the world. We are confident that the program will help keep Nova Scotia's roads safer.

**A Road Safety** Initiative



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# Introduction

The Alcohol Interlock Program has been put in place to keep our roads safer by reducing the number of people who drink and drive.

The program is for people who have lost their driver's licence because they have been convicted of an alcohol-related offence. It may also apply to those who have had alcohol-related incident(s) on their driving record.

For many in this category, entering this program will be the only way to regain their full driver's licence.

You may choose to participate in this program if this is your first conviction, depending on your assessment from Addiction Services. However, you must participate if this is your second or subsequent conviction, if your Addiction Services counselor has rated you a high risk or if you have been convicted for impaired driving causing death or bodily harm.

In the case of those with non-criminal alcohol-related incident(s) on their driving record, the Office of the Registrar of Motor Vehicles may require you to enter this program.

# How the Program Works

The program involves:

- **installing an alcohol interlock device in your vehicle**
- **participating with Addiction Services**

## THE INTERLOCK DEVICE

This is a small, hand-held, breath-testing device fitted to a vehicle's ignition. You must take and pass a breath test by simultaneously blowing and humming into the device and if alcohol is detected and is higher than a pre-set limit,\* the vehicle will not start.

Once you start the vehicle, the interlock device requires you to provide breath samples at random times while the engine is running.

If the sample is not provided or the blood alcohol content is over the setpoint, the device will log the event, warn you, and trigger an alarm that will sound until the ignition is turned off.

If the interlock device registers a "fail", you must complete a re-test following the 5-minute lock-out period. The re-test allows us to determine whether the fail was for blood alcohol or "air" (mouth) alcohol (e.g., windshield wiper fluid, mouth wash, etc.). If you do not take the immediate re-test, the fail will be deemed to be the result of blood alcohol.

All the activity is recorded and stored in the alcohol interlock. The handset connects to the receptacle that is installed under the dashboard in the vehicle and is used to track your progress in the program. You must schedule an appointment at an authorized Service Centre every 30 to 60 days so that a staff member can download the data from the alcohol interlock.

*\* The blood alcohol content limit for people in the Interlock Program in Nova Scotia is 0.02 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood. This number represents the average amount of alcohol that is naturally produced in the human body and from commercial products such as mouth wash.*

Alcohol Countermeasure Services Systems Corp (ACS) are under contract to the Department to supply the Alcohol Interlock devices and maintain a database of results. The installation, repair, download and removal of the device is completed by ACS staff or by persons contracted by them.

## **ADDICTION SERVICES**

Addictions Services' counselors of the District Health Authorities provide an assessment to the Registrar informing whether clients are at a low, medium or high level of risk for alcohol/drug-related problems. The counselors also provide an education program about the effects of driving while impaired.

You should register for the above program as soon as possible as there are significant wait times in some areas. You must pay the applicable program fee to the Department before contacting an Addiction Services office.

Following the assessment/education components, the counselors meet with clients in the Alcohol Interlock Program on a bi-monthly basis.

The purposes of the meetings are:

- To review and assess your situation
- To explore the harmful effects of alcohol use from a physiological, social, and legal standpoint
- To help you make a plan to avoid problems associated with drinking and driving based on your unique needs
- To monitor your progress with your plan

Below is contact information for an Addiction Services centre near you:

|                        |              |
|------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Amherst</b>         | 902-667-7094 |
| <b>Antigonish</b>      | 902-863-5393 |
| <b>Bridgewater</b>     | 902-543-7882 |
| <b>Elmsdale</b>        | 902-883-0295 |
| <b>Halifax</b>         | 902-424-1118 |
| <b>Kentville</b>       | 902-679-2392 |
| <b>Lunenburg</b>       | 902-634-7325 |
| <b>Middleton</b>       | 902-825-6828 |
| <b>New Glasgow</b>     | 902-755-7017 |
| <b>Truro</b>           | 902-893-5900 |
| <b>Port Hawkesbury</b> | 902-625-2363 |
| <b>Sydney</b>          | 902-563-2590 |
| <b>Yarmouth</b>        | 902-742-2406 |

Website: [www.addictionservices.ns.ca](http://www.addictionservices.ns.ca)

# Ignition Interlock and You

## PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM

If you have been convicted of an impaired driving offence under the Criminal Code of Canada, you may apply to be in the program.

Depending on your situation, the program may be voluntary or mandatory.

**Voluntary** - if it is your first offence and you are considered "low or medium risk" by your Addiction Services counselor.

**Mandatory** - if you are a repeat offender, are considered to be a "high risk" first-offender and/or have been convicted of impaired driving causing bodily harm or death.

Please see **Appendix A** for more detailed information on how the program may relate to you.

## PROGRAM COSTS

Like other provinces across Canada, Nova Scotia's program operates on a user-pay system.

This means that the program will cost you an estimated \$1700 to \$2000 over the course of the first year to have the device installed and maintained.

Depending on your circumstance, this cost may vary after your first year in the program.

For a full list of program costs, please see **Appendix B**.

## APPLYING FOR THE PROGRAM

Once you have received your introduction letter from the Registry of Motor Vehicles stating that you have been identified as a satisfactory participant for the interlock program, you can apply for the program by submitting the following to the Registry of Motor Vehicles:

1. A completed Alcohol Interlock Enrollment (application) form. Forms are available on-line at [www.interlock.gov.ns.ca](http://www.interlock.gov.ns.ca), and all Access Nova Scotia Centre and Registry of Motor Vehicles' offices throughout Nova Scotia.
2. Payment of the applicable, non-refundable application fee.\*

You can drop off your application at any Access Nova Scotia Centre/ Registry of Motor Vehicles office or you can mail it to:

**Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations**

P.O. Box 1652 Halifax, NS B3J 2Z3

*\* Any unrelated suspensions or revocations must first be addressed and all outstanding fines must be paid in full prior to applying for the interlock program.*

**BEING ACCEPTED INTO THE PROGRAM**

The Registrar of Motor Vehicles will review your application and make a decision based on the following information:

- Your driving history, especially in relation to the incidents of alcohol-related driving
- Any information and recommendations provided by Addiction Services
- Any medical information that may affect your ability to drive
- Any other factors that may affect your ability to operate a motor vehicle

If approved, you will receive a letter from the Registry of Motor Vehicles that approves the installation of an Alcohol Interlock device in your car. **You must bring the letter of acceptance with you when you have the device installed.**

You will also receive a letter notifying you if your application has been denied.

You can expect to receive a response from the Registry of Motor Vehicles within 10 to 15 business days of submitting your application.

# The Program

## INSTALLING THE DEVICE

### Primary Service Centres

There are four primary Service Centres in Nova Scotia that install or remove the devices.\*

These centres are located in:

#### **Bridgewater**

ALCOLOCK NS

South Shore Speed and Sound

76 Dominion Street, Bridgewater NS

Phone: 902-530-3130

#### **Dartmouth**

ALCOLOCK NS

109 Ilsley Avenue, Suite 8, Dartmouth NS

Phone: 902-405-7075

#### **Sydney**

ALCOLOCK NS

NewWave Enterprise Ltd

484 Grandlake Road, Sydney, NS

Phone: 902-564-9400

#### **Truro**

ALCOLOCK NS

Serious Sounds

21 Brunswick Street, Truro, NS

Phone: 902-843-7686

The toll free number is 1-855-350-7075 to make an appointment to have the device installed.

*\*These are the correct locations as of March 2012, but are subject to change at any time without notice.*

## **DATA MONITORING**

The Alcohol Interlock records the activity within the device. You must bring your vehicle into an authorized Service Centre every **30 to 60 days**, so that the recorded information within the interlock device can be verified and downloaded.

The electronic data is immediately made available to the Registry of Motor Vehicles and Addiction Services and will be assessed to support your continuation in, exit out of, or removal from the program.

## **COUNSELING SESSIONS**

You will continue to meet with your Addiction Services counselor every two months while you are in the program. It is your responsibility to meet with Addiction Services within 10 days of visiting a service centre to have your recorded information downloaded. Please note that the frequency of counseling sessions may vary depending upon your particular needs.

At the end of your minimum time in the program, your counselor will provide a recommendation to the Registrar as to whether or not he/she believes that you should exit from the program.

## **EXITING THE PROGRAM**

You must apply to the Registrar in order to exit the program. Upon receipt of the application, the Registrar will review your file including:

- The recommendation from the counselor
- The download results
- Any occurrence reports which you may have completed concerning a high fail
- Your overall driving record

The Registrar will notify you if you are approved for exit. You can then make an appointment to have the device removed.

The Registrar may decide to extend your time in the program based on one or more of the above-noted criteria.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Can I have the device installed in a car that does not belong to me?**

Yes, as long as you present authorization from the vehicle owner that clearly gives you permission to have the device installed. There is a section on the enrollment form dedicated to such a circumstance.

The owner can take away the authorization at any time and for any reason and it is up to you to ensure that the device is removed immediately.

## **What happens if I leave the province?**

If you are considering traveling outside the province, you must first contact your home Service Centre. They will advise you of the proper procedures required, which will involve putting you in contact with the Program Manager for ACS.

## **How will the police know that I am in the Interlock Program?**

Once you've been approved and your device has been installed, you will be issued a special licence that identifies you as a participant in the Interlock Program. This is a valid licence as long as you remain compliant with the program requirements. Your Interlock Driver's Licence will carry a large red "R" on the front and "Ignition Interlock" will be printed on the back to identify you as a participant. You will also have a "Zero Blood Alcohol" restriction noted on your licence.

You are only permitted to drive the "interlock" vehicle that is registered with the program. If you are caught driving any other vehicle, you are considered disqualified and can be charged under the Criminal Code of Canada.

## **If I have the interlock installed in my car, can another driver use it?**

Another person can drive the vehicle, but since the device is hard-wired into the car, he or she must take and pass the required breath test in order to start the vehicle. Other drivers in your household can receive training from the Service Provider on how to use the device.

All data from the interlock device is deemed to be that of the interlock participant, so any readings from other drivers are attributed to the interlock licence holder.

## **HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?**

### **Contact us at**

Phone: 902-424-5851 (metro)  
1-800-898-7668 (toll-free)

Email: [askus@gov.ns.ca](mailto:askus@gov.ns.ca)

# Appendix A

## HOW THE INTERLOCK PROGRAM WORKS

The program is based on the number of impaired driving convictions you have had. Please check below for the category that applies to you.

### **First Conviction - MINIMUM 1 YEAR LICENCE REVOCATION PERIOD**

If you have been assessed by Addiction Services as a low or medium risk:

- You MAY CHOOSE to enter the Interlock program.
- You can apply for the program after the first 3 months of your revocation period has expired.

If you are accepted into the program, then the minimum period that you must drive a vehicle equipped with an interlock device is for the remainder of your revocation period.

### **First Conviction - MINIMUM 1 YEAR LICENCE REVOCATION PERIOD**

If you have been assessed by Addiction Services as a high risk:

- You MUST enter the Interlock program if you wish to regain your driver's licence.
- You can apply for the program after the first 3 months of your revocation period has expired.

If you are accepted into the program, then you must drive a vehicle equipped with an interlock device for a minimum of 1 year.

### **Second Conviction - MINIMUM 3 YEAR LICENCE REVOCATION PERIOD**

- You MUST enter the Interlock program if you wish to regain your driver's licence.
- You can apply for the program after the first 6 months of your revocation period has expired.

If you are accepted into the program with 2 or more years left in your revocation period, then the minimum period that you must drive a vehicle equipped with an interlock device is for the remainder of your revocation period.

If you are accepted into the program and you have less than 2 years left in your revocation period, then you must drive a vehicle equipped with an interlock device for a minimum of 2 years.

### **Third Conviction - MINIMUM 10 YEAR LICENCE REVOCATION PERIOD**

- You **MUST** enter the Interlock program if you wish to regain your driver's licence.
- You can apply for the program after the first 12 months of your revocation period has expired.

If you are accepted into the program with 3 or more years left in your revocation period, then the minimum period that you must drive a vehicle equipped with an interlock device is for the remainder of your revocation period.

If you are accepted into the program and you have less than 3 years left in your revocation period, then you must drive a vehicle equipped with an interlock device for a minimum of 3 years.

### **Causing Death or Bodily Harm, First Conviction**

#### **- MINIMUM 5 YEAR LICENCE REVOCATION PERIOD**

- You **MUST** enter the Interlock program if you wish to regain your driver's licence.
- You can apply for the program after your 5 year revocation period has expired.

If you are accepted into the program, then you must drive a vehicle equipped with an interlock device for a minimum of 2 years.

### **Causing Death or Bodily Harm, Second Conviction**

#### **-MINIMUM 10 YEAR LICENCE REVOCATION PERIOD**

- You **MUST** enter the Alcohol Interlock program if you wish to regain your driver's licence.
- You can apply for the program after your 10 year revocation period has expired. If you are accepted into the program, then you must drive a vehicle equipped with an interlock device for a minimum of 5 years.

**Note:** *The mandatory minimum periods noted above do not begin to run until the driver has been issued a valid interlock driver's licence.*

# Appendix B

## NOVA SCOTIA FEE SCHEDULE, 1\*

| INSTALLATION                                                   | (\$) CLIENT FEE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Install/Re-install <sup>2</sup> .....                          | 150.00          |
| Surcharge for Heavy Trucks/Special Vehicles <sup>3</sup> ..... | 100.00          |
| Removal .....                                                  | 50.00           |
| <b>MONITORING</b>                                              |                 |
| Monitoring fee (per month) <sup>4</sup> .....                  | 105.50          |
| Remote Monitoring Fee <sup>5</sup> .....                       | 35.00           |
| Reduced Interval Monitoring Fee <sup>6</sup> .....             | 35.00           |
| <b>OTHER</b>                                                   |                 |
| Smart Code/Smart Key Service .....                             | 50.00           |
| Unscheduled Service <sup>7</sup> .....                         | 35.00           |
| Violation Reset .....                                          | 65.00           |
| Canceled/Missed Appointment <sup>8</sup>                       |                 |
| Installation .....                                             | 150.00          |
| Monitoring/Service .....                                       | 75.00           |

*Continued on next page...*

<sup>1</sup> *Applicable taxes will be added to all fees and other charges*

<sup>2</sup> *Includes training and set-up*

<sup>3</sup> *Includes, but is not limited to, luxury and high performance automobiles*

<sup>4</sup> *All monthly charges are calculated on a per diem basis*

<sup>5</sup> *Refers to monitoring at a location other than an installation centre*

<sup>6</sup> *Refers to monitoring not required by administering authorities and/or service provider*

<sup>7</sup> *Refers to user-initiated service other than a violation reset*

<sup>8</sup> *Charges apply to clients who fail to reschedule appointments at least 24 hours in advance*

*\* Fees are subject to change without notice.*

## NOVA SCOTIA FEE SCHEDULE, 1\* *continued...*

| <b>DAMAGE/REPLACEMENT CHARGES</b>               | <b>(\$) CLIENT FEE</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Loss Protection Plan Option (per month) .....   | 10.00                  |
| Security Deposit <sup>9</sup> .....             | 250.00                 |
| Stand-By Option (per month) <sup>10</sup> ..... | 10.00                  |
| Early Termination .....                         | 210.00                 |
| Reinstatement Fee <sup>11</sup> .....           | 75.00                  |
| Temporary Disconnect/Reconnect.....             | 75.00                  |
| Service Call <sup>12</sup>                      |                        |
| Hourly Rate <sup>13</sup> .....                 | 95.00                  |
| Charge per km .....                             | 0.50                   |
| Damage Repair <sup>14</sup> .....               | At cost                |
| Replacement                                     |                        |
| WR2/WR3 Handset .....                           | 1295.00                |
| WR2/WR3 Interface Module .....                  | 895.00                 |
| Auxiliary Lamp Assembly .....                   | 65.00                  |
| Tach Sensor .....                               | 150.00                 |
| Smart Key .....                                 | 150.00                 |
| Coil Cable .....                                | 150.00                 |
| Wiring Harness.....                             | 150.00                 |
| Alarm Horn .....                                | 25.00                  |

<sup>9</sup> Payable in event that Loss Protection Plan is declined

<sup>10</sup> Restricted to commercial vehicles

<sup>11</sup> Administration fee charged to clients who are reinstated without a de-install or re-install

<sup>12</sup> A remote de-install is charged as a service call

<sup>13</sup> Minimum charge is \$45.00

<sup>14</sup> Minimum Charge is \$75.00

\* Fees are subject to change without notice.