

Motor Vehicle Registry Information Bulletin

L14 - Northern Territory Alcohol Ignition Lock (AIL) Program and How it Affects You

What is the Northern Territory Alcohol Ignition Lock Program?

The Northern Territory's Alcohol Ignition Lock Program is a period of driving under conditions, which include the requirement to drive a vehicle fitted with an Alcohol Ignition Lock (AIL). The AIL Program applies to repeat drink drivers. These drivers may be required to serve an AIL period immediately following a period of disqualification from driving.

AIL periods are imposed by the Court and range from 6 months to 3 years. If you are required to serve this period, you may apply for an AIL licence. For the duration of the AIL licence, you may only drive a vehicle fitted with an AIL. If you choose not to apply for an AIL licence, the effect is the AIL period imposed by Court continues as a disqualification from driving until the end of the AIL period.

The AIL Program targets repeat drink drivers in an effort to improve driving behaviour through the use of an AIL.

What is an Alcohol Ignition Lock?

An AIL is an electronic breath testing device connected to the ignition of a vehicle. Its function is to prevent the vehicle being started if the driver has been drinking.

Before the ignition can be turned on, the AIL requires the driver to blow an adult volume of air in a certain way into the device. A microcomputer within the AIL analyses the breath sample for alcohol concentration. If the breath sample is below the pre-set alcohol limit, the vehicle can be started.

In order to ensure that the driver remains sober throughout the journey, the AIL requires the driver to provide further breath samples at random intervals.

[Table 1](#) lists the AIL limits.

Am I Eligible to Enter the AIL Program?

To be eligible to enter the AIL Program you must meet the following criteria:

- have a Court conviction for a second or subsequent drink driving offence ([Table 2](#) provides the list of relevant offences), having committed your second or subsequent offence on or after 9 April 2009;
- have served a period of disqualification from driving of less than 5 years for the repeat offence;
- have held a valid driver licence, other than a learner licence, within the 5 years before applying for an AIL licence;
- have completed the relevant Drink Driver Education course/s (<http://www.nt.gov.au/transport/mvr/licensing/infobulletins/ibl22.pdf>); and
- be required by the Court to serve an AIL period.

[Table 3](#) lists all the steps of the AIL Program.

Who pays for the program and what are the costs?

All AIL services are paid for by you, the participating driver. This includes, installation, lease, servicing and removal of the AIL. You must also pay for the issue of an AIL licence.

As costs may vary according to the type of AIL and supplier, you should carefully check the cost and requirements before entering into an agreement. [Table 4](#) lists the approved suppliers and their contact details for fee information.

If you are a low income earner or live remotely, the AIL Subsidy Scheme may assist you with the cost.

The low income earner subsidy applies to the cost of installation, removal and leasing of an approved AIL. [Table 5](#) provides the details.

You may receive the subsidy if:

- you hold a valid Commonwealth (Centrelink) Health Care Card, or an income statement issued by Centrelink clearly demonstrating that you receive the maximum rate of pension;
- you are an NT resident;
- the vehicle the AIL will be fitted to is currently registered; and
- you are [eligible](#) to enter the AIL Program.

If you meet all these criteria, you should complete the subsidy section of the AIL licence application form when you apply for your AIL licence.

Remote assistance applies to unscheduled servicing of an approved AIL due to misuse of the AIL. Especially in the first months of AIL use, you may accidentally use the AIL incorrectly. [Table 5](#) provides the details of remote assistance.

You may receive remote assistance if the unscheduled servicing is carried out more than 150kms from Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, Nhulunbuy or Tennant Creek.

How do I Apply for an AIL Licence?

When your Court ordered disqualification has ended, you may apply for an AIL licence at any Motor Vehicle Registry Office or remote police station.

However, if you have or get a suspension notice for another reason (e.g. non-payment of fines or excessive demerit points), your AIL licence period will not commence or will temporarily stop until the other suspension period ends.

You must:

- complete Form [L7 – Application for a NT AIL Licence](#) (you may be asked to provide evidence of identity and residency);
- present the Notice of Fine that the Court gave you, which specifies your AIL period; and
- pay the one-off AIL licence fee (there is no annual renewal fee, regardless of the length of your AIL period).

If you meet the [low income earner subsidy criteria](#) you should also complete the subsidy section of the AIL licence application form and present your Centrelink Health Care Card or income statement. You may be asked to provide evidence of vehicle registration.

Where Can I Have an AIL Fitted to My Vehicle?

You may only drive a vehicle that has been fitted with an AIL by a supplier as approved by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles (Registrar). [Table 4](#) lists the approved suppliers and their contact details. If you live remotely, you may need to make alternative arrangements with a supplier.

Can I Have an AIL Fitted in More Than One Vehicle?

You may choose to have as many vehicles fitted with an AIL as you like at your own expense. If you are eligible for a subsidy, you will only receive the subsidy for one vehicle.

Can Others Drive the Vehicle Fitted With an AIL?

Yes. Others with a licence to drive the particular vehicle fitted with the AIL may do so. However, others who drive the vehicle must comply with the AIL operating conditions as programmed by the AIL supplier even though others are not bound by the conditions of an AIL licence. Failure to comply may result in disabled ignition (**lockout**) and mandatory return of the vehicle to the supplier for servicing at your cost.

What Happens if I Travel Interstate?

If you plan to drive your AIL vehicle interstate, you should contact your AIL supplier prior to the trip, for details and locations of your supplier's authorised interstate agents. If none is available, you may need to consider how you will continue to meet the operating conditions of your AIL.

Missing a scheduled or unscheduled AIL service may result in a temporary or permanent **lockout**. If this occurs outside the NT, and the supplier's authorised agent is not close, the vehicle may need to be transported, at your expense, to the agent.

What Happens if I Move Interstate?

Your AIL period is a Court order that continues as a disqualification from driving until the end of your AIL period – *if you do not hold a valid NT AIL licence*. Thus, if you move from the NT, your AIL period may disqualify you from driving elsewhere in Australia (and other countries). You should ask the licensing authority in your new home location if the conditions of your NT AIL licence will be recognised there.

What Happens if I Move to the NT on an Interstate AIL Licence?

If you move to the NT on an interstate AIL licence you can ask the Registrar to exempt you from an NT licence. As an exempted driver, you may be able to continue to drive while complying with the conditions of your interstate AIL licence. Prior to moving to the NT, you should ask your licensing authority if the Registrar's exemption will in any way breach the conditions of your licence. If your licensing authority cancels your licence while you are exempted from holding an NT licence, you will be deemed to be unlicensed and the exemption will no longer apply.

Where Can I Find Out More?

Further information is available from Motor Vehicle Registry offices, remote police stations, and by phone.

Contact Details		
	AIL Officer	Motor Vehicle Registry
Telephone	1300 364 924	1300 654 628
Facsimile	(08) 8999 3117	(08) 8999 3103
Email	AIL@nt.gov.au	mvr@nt.gov.au
Web	www.mvr.nt.gov.au	
Postal Address	GPO Box 530 Darwin NT 0801	

Table 1: AIL Limits

BREATH TEST LIMITS
A blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.02% or higher will result in the AIL locking the vehicle ignition, preventing the vehicle from being driven.
A breath test result below 0.02% will allow the vehicle to be started within 3 minutes.
5 to 10 minutes after an initial test has been passed the AIL will require a retest (this timeframe varies randomly); the driver must pull over to undertake test and if the driver's BAC is below 0.02% the driver can continue to drive.
At 15 to 60 minute timeframes the AIL will require a second and subsequent retest (the timeframe varies randomly).
Initial test lockout – following a BAC of 0.02% but below 0.05% the AIL will disable ignition and prevent a further breath test from being taken for 5 minutes; if the driver's BAC is 0.05% or higher, the AIL will prevent a further breath test for 30 minutes.
Following a retest BAC of 0.02% or higher, the AIL will activate alarms (car horn and hazard lights until vehicle ignition is turned off) and prevent a further breath test for 30 minutes.
Free start timer – within 3 minutes after an initial test has been passed, or after stalling, the driver can start the vehicle without providing a breath sample.
SCHEDULED SERVICING
An in-vehicle service of the AIL is required at the supplier's service agent in the nearest major centre to the driver 30 days after the AIL has been fitted to a vehicle.
Subsequent services will be at 60 days for drivers who live within 150km of a service agent, or at 90 days for other drivers.
There will be a 7 day grace period from the due date of the scheduled service before the AIL will prevent the vehicle from being started.
UNSCHEDULED SERVICING DUE TO VIOLATIONS OF AIL LIMITS
If the violation limits below are reached or exceeded, the vehicle must be serviced within 7 days or the AIL will prevent the vehicle from being started.
At 10 failed initial breath tests in a month, the AIL will require an unscheduled service to allow the AIL to be reset.
At 5 failed retests in a month, the AIL will require an unscheduled service to allow a reset.
At 5 refusals by a user in a month to take a retest, the AIL will require an unscheduled service to allow a reset.
At 5 initial tests of 0.05% BAC or higher in a month, the AIL will require an unscheduled service to allow a reset.
At 5 retests of 0.05% or higher in a month, the AIL will require an unscheduled service to allow a reset.
Emergency override – at 1 use of the AIL override function (e.g. in an emergency in a remote area, a driver can provide a breath sample as usual then if prevented from driving can use a unique code to override the ignition lock and start the vehicle) the AIL will require an unscheduled service to allow a reset.

Table 2: Drink Driving Offences

DRINK DRIVING OFFENCES
Second or subsequent offence may add an AIL period to your disqualification
Driving with a high range blood alcohol content (BAC of 0.15% or greater)
Driving with a medium range blood alcohol content (BAC of 0.08% or greater, but less than 0.15%)
Driving under the influence of alcohol or both alcohol and a drug
Failing to provide a sufficient sample of breath for a breath analysis
Failing to give a sample of blood for analysis
Driving with alcohol in the blood if the driver is subject to zero alcohol limit

Table 3: Alcohol Ignition Lock Program Steps

AIL PROGRAM STEPS
You are found guilty of a second or subsequent drink driving offence.
Court must impose a mandatory disqualification period.
Additionally, Court must impose an AIL period (not more than 3 years), if the disqualification period is less than 5 years.
You complete the Drink Driver Education course/s relevant to your offence.
For the prescribed fee, you may apply for an AIL licence at an MVR or remote police station after completing the disqualification period and Drink Driver Education course.
If you do not apply for an AIL licence, the AIL period imposed by the Court continues as a disqualification from driving until the end of the AIL period.
On application, the Registrar may grant you an AIL licence if you are a current NT resident and were licensed to drive (other than a learner licence) in the last 5 years. Drivers with an 'h' endorsement (to drive a commercial passenger vehicle) will not be able to keep the endorsement during an AIL licence period.
You enter into an agreement with the supplier of the AIL to pay the costs of installation, monthly rental, any unscheduled servicing due to violations of the AIL limits, and removal of the AIL.
At your nearest major centre (Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, Nhulunbuy or Tennant Creek) the AIL is installed and training provided to you and other regular users of the vehicle.
You must return the vehicle to the service agent for service within 7 days of scheduled service dates or unscheduled service dates (due to violations of the AIL limits).
At the end of your AIL period you may apply for a licence without the AIL condition.
You finalise all outstanding accounts with supplier of the AIL.
At your nearest major centre the AIL is removed from the vehicle.

Table 4: Approved AIL Suppliers

AIL SUPPLIERS	
Approved Supplier	Contact Details
Guardian Interlock	Telephone: 1300 881 005 Email: interlocks@bigpond.com Web: www.guardianinterlock.com.au

Table 5: Low Income Earner Subsidy

LOW INCOME EARNER SUBSIDY	
Item	Subsidy
Application fee for AIL licence	Nil
Installation	\$50
Monthly Rental	\$50 per month
Scheduled Service (included in monthly rental)	Included in monthly rental subsidy
Unscheduled Service* (Remote Assistance may apply, see below)	Nil
Removal	\$50
REMOTE ASSISTANCE	
\$50 per unscheduled service* 150km from an urban centre (Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, Nhulunbuy or Tennant Creek) for up to three unscheduled services per eligible participant per year	

* An unscheduled service is due to violations of AIL limits.