

BREATHALYZER PROCEDURE

Odyssey House of Utah



BREATHALYZER TESTING

WHAT

Breath alcohol testers (Breathalyzers) are intended to measure alcohol in human breath. Readings obtained from this device are used in the diagnosis of alcohol intoxication and will measure the approximate blood alcohol concentration level of the client.

WHO

Odyssey House staff who have completed the Breathalyzer Technician Certification Course and have passed the competence assessment with satisfactory marks are considered qualified to perform breathalyzer testing with clients.

WHEN

Each facility has different policies on when to perform a Breathalyzer test. Clients blood alcohol levels are typically tested when there is reasonable cause to suspect they have been drinking due to their actions, appearance, or conduct.

HOW

Clients must wait 20 minutes after they smoke, eat or drink before testing. Failure to wait 20 minutes can give wrong blood alcohol readings and damage the sensor!

Step 1: Insert a new mouthpiece

- **Outpatient:** If it has been more than 24 hours since the device has been used, the sensor must be primed by blowing into the mouthpiece for 4-5 seconds before turning on the device.

Step 2: Press the Power On/Off Button

This should turn on the unit display.

Step 3: Complete Countdown and Prepare Client

The Breathalyzer unit will complete a countdown. At the end of the countdown the unit will be ready for the client's use.

Step 4: Client Blows into the Breathalyzer

The client will take a deep breath and blow steadily into the unit for at least 5 seconds until a beep sounds to signal the completion of the testing.

Step 5: Read the Results

Once the sensor has analyzed the breath sample, the estimated blood alcohol content value is displayed.

Step 6: Additional Client Testing

To perform additional testing on clients, staff must wait one (1) minute and then repeat steps 1-5.

Note: If you receive any error messages, you must refer to the owner's manual for troubleshooting.

PRECAUTIONS

- Wait at least 20 minutes after drinking, eating or smoking before testing
- Do not blow smoke, food, or liquids into the sensor
- Do not test in areas with strong winds, smoke, or in an area where alcohol is being consumed
- Only use the unit in a temperature range of 50-104 degrees Fahrenheit. Operation above or below these temperatures may affect the results
- Replace batteries when the battery indicator shows low power
- Avoid testing in the presence of any liquids that contain any kind of alcohol or acetone. These substances may interfere with the results of the test
- Odyssey House cannot use the results of the breathalyzer in court

DOCUMENTATION

If the Breathalyzer device registers either a positive or invalid reading, staff must document a miscellaneous note to the client file including the test, date, and the result.

CALIBRATION

The accuracy of breath alcohol testers can fluctuate after six to twelve months, depending on frequency of use and operating conditions. If the unit is providing inconsistent results, unusually high or low readings, or no readings at all, a professional needs to recalibrate the unit.

Calibration must occur after 200 tests have been performed, or every six to twelve months if less than 200 tests have been performed. Senior staff will monitor the amount of tests performed, and will send breath testing units in for calibration as per the manufactures instructions on the above mentioned timeframe.

References:

Odyssey House BACtrack Breathalyzer Owner's Manual
Odyssey House AlcoHAWK Breathalyzer Owner's Manual