FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WEST VIRGINIA ALCOHOL TEST AND LOCK (INTERLOCK) PROGRAM

1. What is an ignition interlock?

It is a small, hand-held, one-piece alcohol sensor, roughly the size and shape of a cordless telephone that weighs a few ounces. The device is “hard wired” into a vehicle's electrical system and requires a breath test before allowing the vehicle to be started.

2. How does it work?

The driver blows into the device and it measures his or her breath alcohol content to determine if it is above an established BrAC point set by the DMV. If alcohol is detected at or above the set point, the unit will not allow the vehicle to start. Once the unit allows the driver to start the vehicle, it will require random rolling retests to ensure the driver is not consuming alcohol while driving.

3. What is a rolling retest?

After a driver starts a vehicle, the unit will require another breath test within a few minutes. If the test is successful, the driver will then be subject to rolling retests at random intervals during the operation of the vehicle. If the driver fails a retest, or declines to submit to one when required, the unit will cause the vehicle's horn to sound intermittently until the vehicle is turned off or the driver successfully takes the retest. The device will NOT shut a vehicle off while it is in operation.

4. How else does the unit monitor the driver?

The unit contains a small computer that records all start attempts, the results of all tests, and the results of all rolling retests. It also records the time of day the vehicle is started and the time of day the vehicle is turned off. Additionally, any attempts to disconnect or tamper with the unit are recorded. All information is recorded and placed on a secure internet website for a Driver Services DUI-Interlock Section representative to review. Violations can result in anything from additional participation time or disqualification from the program. All participants acknowledge what is considered a violation in accordance with the Division Demerit System Policy during their initial training session.

5. How is a person in the interlock program monitored?

The participant appears at one of the service centers throughout the state (Charleston, Beckley, Fairmont, Huntington, Parkersburg, Martinsburg and Wheeling) where a technician downloads the recorded data from the interlock device onto a secure internet website. The monitoring frequency is normally set

at 30-60 day intervals. Any combination of 3 violations will automatically set the device into “early recall” to return for service prior to the previously scheduled appointment. If any violations were committed since the previous monitoring the technician immediately contacts a representative at the Driver Services DUI-Interlock Section for review of the violation(s) and possible actions. The vehicle's odometer is also checked for total mileage driven and all connections are checked for tampering.

6. What happens if the participant does not appear as required?

The interlock unit is set to "lock out" after a grace period of 72 hours if the participant fails to appear for monitoring. If this happens, the vehicle will not start and the participant must tow the vehicle to a service center or a technician must be sent to the vehicle to download the unit and reset it. The participant is charged for this extra service. Additionally, the failure to appear for monitoring is reported to the Driver Services DUI-Interlock Section. Depending on the circumstances and the history of the driver they can be disqualified from the program and returned to a revoked status.

7. What does it cost?

The program was developed to require the DUI offender to pay all costs. There is a $100.00 application fee, $50.00 installation fee, and approximately $65.00 per month lease fee and tax on the device.

8. How does a person get into the interlock program?

Potential participants must contact the Drivers Services DUI-Interlock Section for review of their driving record for eligibility. <u>All drivers will not qualify for this program.</u> If approved for participation a restricted license is issued and the participant can only operate an interlock equipped vehicle. Only approved drivers can have the device installed. National Interlock and Mountaineer Smart Start are the approved service providers in the State of West Virginia. All providers communicate with the Driver Services DUI-Interlock section on a daily basis to ensure only approved drivers are installed or removed once all requirements have been met.

9. Can other people use the vehicle equipped with an interlock device?

Yes. All drivers of the vehicle are asked to appear with the approved participant at the time of installation to be trained in how to use the device. The participant is responsible for ensuring that any other users of the vehicle comply with all program rules.

10. What if the participant gets someone else to blow into the device to start his car?

This can be done. However, since the unit requires rolling retests, the driver would have to take the person along with them. Experience shows that such behavior is detected rather quickly because of the other patterns of behavior associated with such actions. Additionally, the device requires a specific breath testing pattern that is difficult to teach others especially if the teacher is under the influence. Verified circumvention attempts of any type will lead to program disqualification. Participants can be ordered to have a camera type Interlock device installed that records all start up and running recall events on the device. This type of device has an additional daily use charge that is paid for by the participant.

11. What if the participant has trouble with the unit after normal office hours?

The service provider is on call 24 hours a day 365 days a year and can be reached with a toll-free call. Service Provider technicians will go to the participant at no charge if the interlock unit has caused a problem.

12. How can I get additional information?

Call one of the following numbers:

Driver Services DUI-Interlock Section @ 1-800-642-9066 or 304-558-1672

National Interlock Service @ 1-877-753-6571 or www.nationalinterlock.com

Mountaineer Smart Start @ 1-800-880-3394 or www.smartstartinc.com