

What you need to know

Fact sheet: Breath-testing for alcohol – Getting started

What is breath-testing for alcohol?

We use breath-testing for alcohol to monitor practitioners and students where there is a history of or concerns about alcohol misuse or dependence.

Why do we need you to undergo breath-testing?

We need to make sure that practitioners and students with a history of or concerns about alcohol misuse or dependence are safe to be in practice or training. This is to protect the public from possible harm.

Negative breath-testing results are an effective way for us to know you are not affected by alcohol and can continue safely in practice or training.

How does breath-testing benefit you?

Breath-testing and subsequent negative results gives assurance to you, the public, and your employers that you can continue safely in practice or training.

What information should I have received?

You should have received:

- our [Alcohol screening policy](#), and its supporting [Participant procedure: breath-testing for alcohol](#)
- our [Supervisor procedure: breath-testing for alcohol](#)
- [Starting breath-testing for alcohol form](#)
- [Breath-testing supervisor nomination form](#)
- [Breath-testing log](#).

How do I start breath-testing?

Before you start breath-testing you must complete our [Starting breath-testing for alcohol](#) form. This form contains information on:

- the breath-testing device
- the device service plan
- nominating a breath-testing supervisor.

You must get this form to us within 7 days of the breath-testing condition being placed on your registration so we can consider the information and approve your breath-testing arrangements.

When do I have to start breath-testing?

You need to start breath-testing within 24 hours of being told by us that your breath-testing arrangements have been approved.

When do I have to have a breath-test?

You must breath-test before you start practice or attend clinical training at each of the following times:

- no more than 30 minutes before you start for the day
- if you have taken a break of more than 30 minutes
- no more than 30 minutes before you end the day

What do I do when I have to have a breath-test?

When you have to have a breath-test you must ensure:

- you have a breath-test administered by an approved supervisor
- your supervisor completes and you sign your [Breath-testing for alcohol log](#).

What do I do if my breath-test is positive?

If your breath-test is positive (> 0%) you must stop practising and follow the process outlined in our [Participant procedure: breath-testing for alcohol](#).

If you disagree with your result you can arrange to have a blood-alcohol test. This process is outlined in our [Participant procedure: breath-testing for alcohol](#).

What do I do with my breath-testing log?

You need to send us your breath-testing log and evidence of your practice or training hours within 7 days of the start of each calendar month. We will let you know if any action is required.

How much will it cost?

You are responsible for all breath-testing costs. This includes device purchase or hire, mouth pieces, device servicing, any supervision costs, and any blood-alcohol tests.

Details of where you can purchase or hire breath-testing devices is included in our [Participant procedure: breath-testing for alcohol](#).

What do I need to be careful of?

Some prescription medicines, over-the counter preparations, health and personal hygiene products, and foods and drinks can cause positive results. It is your responsibility to avoid these while you are attending for screening. More information about what to avoid is included in the [Participant procedure: breath-testing for alcohol](#).

When does my supervisor have to contact us?

We collaborate with your supervisor to ensure you meet the requirements of your breath-testing conditions. Your supervisor will follow the processes outlined in our [Supervisor procedure: breath-testing for alcohol](#).

Your supervisor has to contact us if:

- your breath-test is positive
- your device fails or is not available
- you did not attend for breath-testing as required by your conditions
- they have any concerns about your alcohol use, health or compliance with your conditions.

What do I do now?

You need to read the information you have been provided to make sure you understand what is required of you and your screening conditions. If you have any questions contact us on 1300 197 177 or email monitoring@hpca.nsw.gov.au