

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



Alcohol &
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Enforcement

Bureau of
Criminal
Apprehension

Driver and
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Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

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Friday, March 20, 2020

To: DataMaster Transportable Breath Test Operators

RE: Breath Alcohol Testing Regarding COVID-19

The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) holds public safety in the highest regard which includes the safety of law enforcement. The BCA appreciates the concern regarding COVID-19 and the administration of breath tests. There is a risk of virus transmissions associated with law enforcement interactions including traffic stops and breath alcohol testing including preliminary breath tests. The Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided information for Law Enforcement Personnel which can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-law-enforcement.html>

The BCA is not an expert on infectious disease transmission. In order to minimize risks we have always highly recommended good sanitary practices while administering breath tests on the DataMaster Transportable (DMT) which is in line with general CDC guidelines for preventing the spread of diseases. If the subject has symptoms described in the CDC link above, conducting a breath test is not advised due to the increased risk. Please see the CDC's guidelines for individuals suspected to have COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>

To minimize the risk while administering breath tests on individuals without symptoms, personal protections in the CDC guidelines for Law Enforcement Personnel listed above should be followed. This includes at a minimum trying to maintain a proper distance, wearing gloves, washing hands immediately after conducting a test (or use hand sanitizer when hand washing is not possible) and not being in direct flow of the subject's breath sample.

DMTs require that the mouthpieces be manually removed. You can either choose to have the subject remove the mouthpiece and dispose of it or the operator, with gloved hands can remove it, taking care to avoid handling it where saliva or other liquids exist. Using a disinfecting wipe, routinely clean the DMT and surrounding areas, including the exterior of the breath tube, touch screen, keyboard, and counter and/or wall behind the DMT. The subject's breath exits the instruments in the rear away from the operator.

Further information on cleaning and disinfecting both handheld PBT's and DMT instruments is available from the manufacturer of the DMT, Intoximeters, Inc, at: <https://www.intox.com/ufaqs/what-precautions-should-be-taken-during-a-subject-test-to-protect-against-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19-or-other-pathogens/>

Intoximeters also has a link to steps to limit exposure: <https://www.intox.com/ufaqs/are-there-steps-i-can-take-to-limit-my-exposure-to-the-possibility-of-disease-transmission-when-operating-a-breath-alcohol-detection-device/>

If you have questions, contact the Breath Alcohol Calibration Laboratory at 651-793-2777 or bca.breathtest@state.mn.us.