

GENERIC · CHASSIS

C0071

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

C0071

2/4 Wheel Drive Status Input

C0071 is a chassis code that indicates the antilock brake system (ABS) control module cannot reliably determine whether the vehicle is in two-wheel drive or four-wheel drive. The module monitors a dedicated status input from the drivetrain control system, and when the signal is missing, implausible, or contradicts other sensor data, it stores this code and typically disables ABS and traction control functions.

SYSTEM

Chassis

CODE TYPE

Generic (all makes)

SEVERITY

Medium

FIX DIFFICULTY

Intermediate

AREA

Brakes, steering and suspension

Symptoms you may notice

- ABS warning light illuminated on the dashboard
- Traction control or stability control warning light also on
- Four-wheel-drive indicator lamp flashing or showing an incorrect mode
- ABS and traction control systems disabled, which may be felt as a lack of intervention during hard braking or slippery conditions
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, with normal braking performance in dry conditions
- On some vehicles, the transfer case may fail to engage or disengage four-wheel drive

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Faulty or contaminated four-wheel-drive mode switch on the transfer case or dash
- 2 Damaged, corroded, or disconnected wiring between the drivetrain control module and the ABS module
- 3 Failed transfer case encoder motor or actuator that cannot report the current drive mode
- 4 Malfunctioning drivetrain control module (DCM) or four-wheel-drive control module
- 5 Internal fault in the ABS control module affecting its ability to read the status input
- 6 Low system voltage or poor ground connection causing intermittent signal loss
- 7 Aftermarket modifications or improper reprogramming that disrupt the drive status signal



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules for related codes and record freeze-frame data to understand when the fault occurs
- 2 Inspect the four-wheel-drive switch and its connector for corrosion, damage, or loose terminals
- 3 Check the wiring harness between the transfer case, drivetrain control module, and ABS module for continuity and shorts
- 4 Test the transfer case encoder motor or actuator operation and verify it reports the correct drive status
- 5 Verify battery voltage and ground connections at the ABS module and drivetrain control module
- 6 If wiring and components test good, follow the manufacturer's diagnostic flow for the ABS module input circuit
- 7 Repair or replace the faulty component and clear codes, then verify the drive status reads correctly in live data

What the drive status input really means

- A dirty or sticking four-wheel-drive switch is a common cause that many technicians overlook while chasing wiring faults.
- The code can set intermittently from a weak battery or poor ground, so always check voltage and grounds before replacing modules.
- C0071 does not always mean the ABS module is bad; the status input often originates from the transfer case control module or a separate four-wheel-drive controller.
- On vehicles with electronic transfer cases, a failed encoder motor can report an invalid drive mode without setting a transfer case code.
- Aftermarket lift kits or tire size changes can alter drivetrain signals and trigger this code if the control modules are not recalibrated.

Can I keep driving with C0071?

You can usually drive the vehicle, but ABS and traction control may be disabled, so allow extra braking distance and avoid slippery or off-road conditions. If the four-wheel-drive system fails to engage or disengage properly, avoid using four-wheel drive until the fault is repaired.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with ABS and drivetrain module capability
- Digital multimeter
- Wiring diagram for the specific vehicle
- Basic hand tools for connector and switch inspection
- Manufacturer service information for diagnostic flow



Reading C0071

- C** Chassis: brakes, steering and suspension.
- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
- 0** Brakes, steering and suspension.
- 71** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

C0035 Left Front Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit Range/Performance · **C0040** Left Rear Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit · **C0050** Right Rear Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit Malfunction · **C0561** ABS Disabled Warning Indicator Request · **U0102** Lost Communication with Transfer Case Control Module

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Car Thermostat Works: Wax Pellet and Cooling Fan](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/c0071/>

