

GENERIC · CHASSIS

C061E

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

C061E

Variable Effort Steering Actuator Control Circuit High

The C061E code indicates that the variable effort steering (VES) actuator control circuit has been detected as having a high voltage condition, meaning the control module sees the circuit voltage above the expected range. This typically points to an open circuit, a short to voltage, or a faulty actuator, which can affect steering effort assist.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Chassis	Generic (all makes)	Medium	Intermediate	Brakes, steering and suspension

Symptoms you may notice

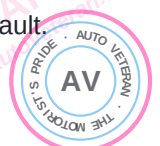
- The steering may feel heavier or require more effort than usual, especially at low speeds.
- The stability control or power steering warning light may illuminate on the dashboard.
- In some cases, the steering assist may become intermittent or completely inoperative.
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, as the system may default to a fixed assist level.
- The driver may notice a change in steering feel when parking or maneuvering at low speeds.

Common causes, most likely first

- An open circuit in the actuator control wiring or connector, such as a broken wire or disconnected terminal.
- A short to voltage in the control circuit, often due to chafed wiring contacting a power source.
- A faulty variable effort steering actuator solenoid or motor.
- Corrosion or water intrusion in the actuator connector or control module connector.
- A failed steering control module or power steering control module.
- High resistance in the ground circuit for the actuator, causing voltage to rise.

How to diagnose and fix it

- Inspect the actuator connector and wiring for signs of damage, corrosion, or loose pins, and repair as needed.
- Disconnect the actuator and measure resistance across the actuator terminals to check for an open or shorted coil.
- With the actuator disconnected, check for voltage on the control circuit with the key on; if voltage is present, trace for a short to voltage.
- Perform a voltage drop test on the ground circuit to ensure it is clean and tight.
- Check for continuity between the control module and actuator on the control circuit to rule out an open wire.
- If wiring and actuator test good, substitute a known-good actuator or control module to isolate the fault.
- Clear the code and perform a road test to verify the repair and ensure the code does not return.



Before replacing the steering actuator

- A high voltage code often results from a simple open circuit rather than a failed actuator, so always check wiring continuity first.
- Water intrusion into the actuator connector is a common cause on vehicles that see road salt or frequent wet conditions.
- The control module may set this code if the actuator circuit is disconnected while the key is on, so ensure connectors are fully seated.
- A weak battery or charging system issue can cause erratic voltage readings that mimic a high circuit fault.
- Some vehicles use the same actuator for variable effort steering and stability control, so related codes may be present.

Can I keep driving with C061E?

You can usually continue driving if the steering feels normal, but if the steering effort increases significantly or the warning light flashes, avoid high-speed maneuvers and have the system inspected promptly. Do not ignore the warning if you notice any change in steering response.

Tools that help

- Digital multimeter
- OBD-II scan tool
- Wiring diagram for the specific vehicle
- Trim removal tools
- Test light

Reading C061E

- C** Chassis: brakes, steering and suspension.
- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
- 6** Brakes, steering and suspension.
- 1E** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

- **C0561** ABS Disabled Warning Indicator Request · **C061D** Variable Effort Steering Actuator Control Circuit Low · **C061F** Variable Effort Steering Actuator Control Circuit Performanc · **C0620** Park Assist Module Communication
- **U0126** Lost Communication With Steering Angle Sensor Module



See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Manual Transmission Works: Four-Speed Cutaway](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/c061e/>

