

GENERIC · CHASSIS

C0784

OBD-II TROUBLE CODE

C0784

Trailer Brake Force Sensor Circuit Malfunction

C0784 indicates that the vehicle's computer has detected an abnormal signal from the trailer brake force sensor circuit, which measures the amount of force applied to the trailer brake controller or the trailer's brake system. The computer compares the sensor's voltage or resistance to expected values and sets this code when the signal falls outside the normal range or is intermittent.

SYSTEM

Chassis

CODE TYPE

Generic (all makes)

SEVERITY

Medium

FIX DIFFICULTY

Intermediate

AREA

Brakes, steering and suspension

Symptoms you may notice

- Trailer brake warning light illuminated on the dashboard
- Trailer brakes may not engage or may apply unevenly
- Reduced or no braking assistance from the trailer brake controller
- Intermittent trailer brake operation, especially over bumps
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, with the trailer brakes still functioning normally

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Damaged or corroded wiring harness or connector at the trailer brake force sensor
- 2 Faulty trailer brake force sensor
- 3 Poor ground connection for the trailer brake system
- 4 Open or short circuit in the sensor signal or return circuit
- 5 Failed trailer brake control module or electronic brake control module
- 6 Water intrusion or physical damage to the sensor or its wiring
- 7 Aftermarket trailer brake controller installation error or incompatible equipment

How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Inspect the trailer brake force sensor and its wiring for visible damage, corrosion, or loose connections
- 2 Check the sensor's resistance or voltage output against the manufacturer's specifications
- 3 Test the continuity and resistance of the sensor signal and ground circuits
- 4 Verify the trailer brake control module has good power and ground connections
- 5 Replace the trailer brake force sensor if it fails the electrical test
- 6 Repair or replace damaged wiring or connectors in the sensor circuit
- 7 Clear the code and perform a road test to confirm the repair and ensure the code does not return



Trailer brake sensor faults often misdiagnosed

- A common oversight is assuming the sensor itself is faulty when the real problem is a corroded connector or chafed wire in the trailer harness, especially near the hitch where moisture and road debris accumulate.
- The code can be set by a low battery or charging system issue that causes voltage spikes or drops, so always verify battery and charging system health before replacing parts.
- Aftermarket trailer brake controllers that are not properly calibrated or are incompatible with the vehicle's system can trigger this code even when all factory components are functioning correctly.
- Some vehicles require a relearn or calibration procedure after sensor replacement, and skipping this step will cause the code to return immediately.
- The trailer brake force sensor circuit may share grounds with other systems, so a bad ground elsewhere can set this code along with others, leading to unnecessary sensor replacement.

Can I keep driving with C0784?

If the trailer brakes are not working properly, avoid towing until the fault is repaired because stopping distances will increase and stability may be compromised. If only the warning light is on and trailer brakes seem normal, you can drive cautiously to a repair shop, but do not tow heavy loads.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool
- Digital multimeter
- Wiring diagram for the trailer brake circuit
- Basic hand tools (screwdrivers, socket set)
- Electrical contact cleaner
- Jack and jack stands (if sensor is underneath the vehicle)

Reading C0784

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

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How ABS Works: Anti-Lock Brakes in X-Ray](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/c0784/>

