

CHRYSLER · POWERTRAIN

P1294

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P1294 · Chrysler

Target Idle Not Reached

P1294 on Chrysler vehicles means the engine computer commanded a specific target idle speed but the actual engine speed stayed outside the acceptable window for too long. The powertrain control module monitors idle speed through the crankshaft position sensor and adjusts the idle air control motor or electronic throttle body, and it sets this code when the correction it applies cannot bring idle back to target.

SYSTEM

Powertrain

CODE TYPE

Chrysler specific

SEVERITY

Medium

FIX DIFFICULTY

Intermediate

AREA

Fuel and air
metering (injector
circuits)

Symptoms you may notice

- Idle speed that is noticeably higher or lower than normal, often fluctuating or surging at stops
- Engine stalling when you come to a stop or when the transmission is shifted into gear
- Rough or shaky idle that smooths out as soon as you press the accelerator
- A drop or flare in idle speed when the air conditioning compressor engages or when you turn the steering wheel
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light if the deviation is small and intermittent
- Poor fuel economy or a slight hesitation on tip-in from a stop

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Carbon buildup or sticking in the throttle body bore and on the throttle plate, restricting airflow at idle
- 2 A dirty or failing idle air control (IAC) valve on cable-throttle engines, or a carbon-fouled electronic throttle body on drive-by-wire engines
- 3 Vacuum leaks from cracked intake hoses, a leaking intake manifold gasket, or a failed PCV (positive crankcase ventilation) system
- 4 A faulty or contaminated mass airflow (MAF) sensor reporting incorrect airflow at idle
- 5 Engine coolant temperature sensor reading cold when the engine is warm, keeping the computer in a high-idle strategy
- 6 A weak or failing battery or charging system causing low system voltage that disturbs idle control
- 7 Mechanical issues such as low compression, a worn timing chain, or incorrect base ignition timing on older engines



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules for stored and pending codes, then check freeze-frame data for engine speed, coolant temperature, and throttle position at the time the code set
- 2 Inspect the intake tract for vacuum leaks with a smoke machine and verify that the PCV system and all hoses are intact
- 3 Clean the throttle body bore and plate with approved cleaner, then perform a throttle relearn or idle relearn procedure with a scan tool
- 4 Test the idle air control valve for proper movement and resistance on cable-throttle engines, or command the electronic throttle through its range with a scan tool
- 5 Check the mass airflow sensor reading against expected values at idle and clean or replace it only if the data is out of range
- 6 Verify engine coolant temperature sensor readings against actual engine temperature with an infrared thermometer
- 7 Check battery voltage and charging system output, then inspect for mechanical problems such as low compression or a jumped timing chain if all electronic and airflow checks pass

Idle problems that mimic a bad throttle body

- A dirty throttle body is the most common cause on Chrysler drive-by-wire engines, but many technicians replace the throttle body before trying a proper cleaning and relearn, which solves most cases.
- A vacuum leak that is small enough to avoid a lean code can still push idle speed outside the target window and set P1294 without any other trouble code stored.
- On Chrysler vehicles with cable-operated throttles, a sticking idle air control valve often tests fine electrically but still fails to move smoothly, so a physical cleaning and movement check matters more than a resistance test.
- A weak battery or a charging system that drops below normal voltage can cause the computer to lose its learned idle strategy and set this code, so always check voltage before condemning idle control parts.
- This code does not always mean the idle control system is faulty; a coolant temperature sensor that reads cold when the engine is warm will keep the computer commanding a high idle and trigger P1294.

Can I keep driving with P1294?

You can usually drive the vehicle to a repair shop, but avoid heavy stop-and-go traffic and long idling because a stalling engine is a safety risk. If the engine stalls repeatedly or idle surges badly, stop driving and have it diagnosed before continuing.



Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and bidirectional control capability
- Smoke machine for intake leak detection
- Throttle body cleaner and soft brushes
- Digital multimeter for voltage and resistance checks
- Infrared thermometer for coolant temperature verification

Reading P1294

- P** Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
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- 1** Manufacturer-specific code (Chrysler): its meaning depends on the make.
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- 2** Fuel and air metering (injector circuits).
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- 94** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0121 Throttle Position Sensor A Circuit Range/Performance · **P0171** System Too Lean (Bank 1) · **P0505** Idle Control System Malfunction · **P0506** Idle Control System RPM Lower Than Expected · **P0507** Idle Control System RPM Higher Than Expected

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Turbocharger Works, Step by Step](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/chrysler-p1294/>

