

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P0AC4

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P0AC4

Hybrid/EV Powertrain Control Module Requested MIL Illumination

This code means the hybrid or electric vehicle's powertrain control module has decided that a serious fault exists and is asking the engine control module to turn on the malfunction indicator lamp, commonly called the check engine light. The computer is not reporting a specific component failure itself; it is flagging that another module has requested the warning light because a condition could affect emissions or hybrid system integrity.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Generic (all makes)	Medium	Professional	Hybrid propulsion

Symptoms you may notice

- The check engine light or service vehicle soon light is illuminated, often with no other obvious symptom.
- The hybrid system may enter a reduced-power or limp mode, limiting acceleration.
- The vehicle may refuse to start or may not allow the high-voltage system to engage.
- A message such as 'Check Hybrid System' or 'Service Hybrid System' may appear on the dashboard.
- The engine may run continuously or behave erratically if the hybrid control strategy is affected.
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, especially if the underlying fault is intermittent.

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 A fault in the hybrid battery pack, such as a weak cell or a failing battery management module.
- 2 A problem with the inverter or converter assembly, including internal circuit faults.
- 3 A failing hybrid transaxle or motor-generator unit that sets a companion code in the hybrid control module.
- 4 A wiring or connector issue in the hybrid CAN bus or a poor ground connection between modules.
- 5 A software or calibration mismatch in the powertrain control module or hybrid control module.
- 6 A fault in the engine control system that the hybrid module monitors, such as a sensor or actuator error.
- 7 A low or failing 12-volt auxiliary battery that causes communication errors between modules.



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Connect a scan tool and read all codes from every module, not just the engine computer, to find the underlying fault that triggered the request.
- 2 Check the 12-volt battery state of charge and condition, as a weak battery can cause false communication codes.
- 3 Inspect the hybrid system wiring and connectors for corrosion, loose pins, or chafed harnesses, especially around the inverter and battery pack.
- 4 Verify that the powertrain control module and hybrid control module have the latest software calibrations and perform any available reprogramming.
- 5 Follow the manufacturer's diagnostic flow for the companion codes found in the hybrid control module, such as battery cell voltage or inverter temperature tests.
- 6 If the underlying fault is repaired, clear the codes and perform a road test to confirm the MIL request does not return.
- 7 If no other codes are present, perform a thorough inspection of the hybrid system grounds and CAN bus integrity before condemning any module.

When the light is not the real problem

- P0AC4 is a request code, not a component code, so replacing the powertrain control module is almost never the correct fix.
- Many technicians miss that the hybrid control module may store its own codes that are not readable with a basic OBD-II scanner, requiring a factory-level tool.
- A weak 12-volt battery is a common cause of spurious MIL requests on hybrid vehicles because module communication can drop out during cranking.
- The code can be set by a fault that has already been repaired but not cleared, so always check for pending or history codes before diagnosing.
- Some hybrid systems will set this code if the fuel cap is loose or the evaporative emissions system has a small leak, so check the simple things first.

Can I keep driving with P0AC4?

If the check engine light is on but the vehicle drives normally, you can usually continue driving to a repair shop, but avoid long trips or heavy loads. If the hybrid system warning is also displayed or the vehicle enters limp mode, stop driving and have it towed to avoid further damage.



Tools that help

- Hybrid-capable scan tool with module reading capability
- Digital multimeter with CAT III rating for hybrid systems
- Factory service information and wiring diagrams
- Insulation tester for high-voltage cables
- Battery conductance tester for the 12-volt battery

Reading P0AC4

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
0	Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
A	Hybrid propulsion.
C4	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0A94 DC/DC Converter A Performance · **P0AA6** Hybrid/EV Battery Voltage System Isolation Fault · **P0AC0** Hybrid/EV Battery Pack Current Sensor A Circuit Range/Perfor · **P0AFA** Hybrid/EV Battery System Voltage Low · **U0100** Lost Communication With ECM/PCM A

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How Regenerative Braking Works in Electric Cars](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p0ac4/>

