

DOT ALCOHOL TESTING:

Breath Alcohol Technician (BAT) vs. Screening Test Technician (STT)



Should I get trained as a BAT or STT — What’s the difference?

In the highly regulated world of Department of Transportation (DOT) drug and alcohol testing, strict adherence to the [DOT’s Part 40 Rules](#) is essential for maintaining a compliant and successful testing program.

At [Certified Training Solution LLC](#), we frequently speak with individuals and organizations interested in starting or expanding a drug and alcohol testing business. One of the most common questions we receive is: “Should I get trained as a breath alcohol technician (BAT) or screening test technician (STT)?”

In most cases, we recommend breath alcohol technician (BAT) training right off the bat (pun intended). Understanding the distinction is critical:

- **BATs** are qualified to perform both *screening* and *confirmation* tests
- **STTs** are **ONLY** qualified to conduct *screening* tests

Why would someone choose STT training?

The primary reason comes down to **cost and simplicity**.

Screening devices—known as Alcohol Screening Devices (ASDs)—are significantly more affordable than fully approved Evidential Breath Testing (EBT) devices. Likewise, STT training is generally less expensive and faster to complete.

STTs must use a [NHTSA-approved ASD](#), which may be either:

- Saliva-based devices
- Breath-based devices

[All approved devices must appear on the NHTSA Conforming Products List \(CPL\).](#)

- **Important Notes:**
 - Under DOT Part 40 rules, only **saliva and breath** samples are permitted for federal alcohol testing. Blood, urine, hair, and other specimen types are *not allowed*.
- Not all devices appearing on the NHTSA Conforming Products List (CPL) are approved for DOT alcohol testing purposes. The CPL also includes devices intended for law enforcement and other non-DOT testing programs. In addition, the DOT Part 40 Rules impose further requirements for Evidential Breath Testing (EBT) devices, and not all CPL-listed devices satisfy those requirements. For example, DOT-compliant EBTs must be capable of assigning a unique test number, printing test results directly from the device itself, and performing an air blank, among other requirements. Before purchasing any device, it is essential to conduct careful research and due diligence to ensure the device is fully compliant and appropriate for your intended testing program.

The critical limitation of STTs

Here's where things become operationally challenging.

Under DOT regulations, any screening test result of **0.02% BAC or greater** requires a **confirmation test after a 15-minute wait (but no later than 30 minutes from the time of the screening test)**.

If your facility only has STTs—and no BAT with an evidential breath testing device—you may quickly find yourself in a difficult position.

Real-world scenario:

You conduct a screening test using a saliva ASD (such as the [Alco-screen 02.](#)), and the employee's result is 0.02% or higher.

Now you have **30 minutes** to:

- Locate a qualified BAT
- Access an approved EBT device
- Get the employee to that location

Failure to meet this timeline can result in serious DOT compliance violations and penalties.

Operational and liability risks

Relying solely on STTs can create several business and safety concerns:

- Sending clients to competitors for confirmation testing
- Risking the loss of your customer entirely
- Increased liability during employee transport
- Logistical stress under strict time constraints

Ask yourself:

- Should the employee drive themselves after a non-negative result? (*No*)
- Should you transport them personally? (*Also risky*)

This situation is not only inconvenient—it can expose your business to unnecessary liability.

Where STTs and screening devices still make sense

Despite these limitations, ASDs still play an important role in many programs.

Because of their **low cost and ease of use**, they are ideal for decentralized or field-based operations.

Example:

Let's say you are a company with multiple locations and/or field employees. It may be more practical and cost-effective to equip supervisors with alcohol screening devices (ASDs) and provide STT training, rather than purchasing an evidential breath testing (EBT) device for each location.

In the occasional case of a non-negative result, the supervisor can then transport the employee to a main office or nearby facility where a trained BAT with an EBT can perform the confirmation test.

Since saliva ASDs (such as the Alco-Screen 02) cost about \$2.50 per test, compared to \$1,500–\$4,500 for EBT devices, the cost savings can be significant. Just be sure you have a reliable system in place to complete confirmation testing within the required timeframe.

Key takeaway:

This model only works if you have a **clear, reliable confirmation testing plan in place.**

Why BAT training is the choice for most

Choosing BAT training gives you **full control over the entire testing process.**

As a BAT, you can:

- Perform both screening and confirmation tests
- Eliminate the need for a second technician
- Avoid time-sensitive logistical issues
- Provide seamless, professional client experience

Most importantly, you stay fully compliant without relying on outside providers.

Choosing the right EBT device — Why LifeLoc stands out

To perform confirmation testing, you must use a **[NHTSA-approved Evidential Breath Testing \(EBT\) device listed on the CPL.](#)**

At Certified Training Solutions LLC, we proudly offer **[LifeLoc EBT devices](#)**, widely recognized as some of the **most trusted, reliable, and reputable instruments in the industry.**

LifeLoc devices are known for:

- Proven accuracy and DOT compliance
- Durable, field-tested design
- User-friendly operation
- Strong industry reputation among professionals

Our top recommendation—and a long-time favorite—is the **[LifeLoc Phoenix® 6.0 BT](#)**, which combines advanced technology with portability and ease of use. It's an excellent choice for both new and experienced testing professionals looking for a dependable, compliant solution.

By standardizing on LifeLoc devices, we ensure our clients receive:

- High-quality equipment they can trust
- Streamlined, device-specific training
- Long-term reliability and support

What must I do to become certified as a BAT or STT?

Whether you choose **[BAT](#)** or **[STT](#)** training, the DOT rules require completion of a **two-part training process** in accordance with 49 CFR Part 40 and DOT Model Course Requirements:

1. Procedures Training

2. Device Proficiency (Hands-On) Training

Certified Training Solutions LLC offers:

- **Self-paced online procedures training** for both **[BAT](#)** and **[STT](#)**
- **Live, instructor-led hands-on training** (required by DOT)

The hands-on portion must include **real-time interaction** between instructor and student via live webcam or in person (not self-study).

Device-specific training requirement

BAT and STT qualification training is **device-specific**.

This means:

- BATs must be trained on the exact EBT device they will use
- STTs must be trained on their specific ASD

There is no “one-size-fits-all” qualification training or certification.

We provide access to **highly qualified instructors** trained on LifeLoc devices and other commonly used equipment. Contact us to find the right training solution for your needs.

New to the industry?

If you’re just getting started, we also offer our popular online course:

“How To Start a Drug and Alcohol Testing Business”

This affordable course covers:

- Training requirements
- Equipment selection (including choosing the right devices)
- Business setup and marketing
- Includes a **FREE sample service agreement**

It also provides deeper guidance on choosing between BAT and STT training.

You may reach us by email at: Admin@CertifiedTrainingSolutions.com

Or by telephone at: 307-640-5859 or (888) 684-1658

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