Public Inebriate Program Frequently Asked Questions

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Table 1: Document Management History

Version Number	Version Date	Summary of Changes	Section/Page	Author
1.0	3/18/26	First version	All	VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
1.1	10/26/26	Added a question about possession of device during screening	Technology and Accessibility: p. 5	VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact AHS.VDHDSU@vermont.gov.

Virtual Screening Overview

How can a law enforcement officer request a virtual screening?

A law enforcement officer can request a virtual screening by calling Recovery House at **802-694-5016**. Officers should expect a **brief wait (approximately 1–5 minutes)** to be connected with a Recovery House screener, depending on staff availability. If Recovery House is unable to take the call, officers can leave a voicemail and Recovery House will call back as soon as possible.

How can a law enforcement officer join a virtual screening?

A law enforcement officer can join a virtual screening using any device capable of making a video call on Microsoft Teams (e.g., mobile phone, laptop, mobile data computer (MDC), or tablet). After the officer calls Recovery House to request the virtual screening, the screener will request the officer's contact information—either a phone number for text or an email address—to send the Microsoft Teams meeting link. An email address is also required to deliver the screening results, which can be the agency's shared inbox or the officer's own email.

Where should a law enforcement officer conduct a virtual screening?

Screenings should be conducted in a safe, secure location with a sufficiently reliable internet connection to support a clear video feed for the virtual screening. If the officer has a mobile device, they can conduct the screening in any location that is safe, secure, and has a sufficiently strong internet connection to a support a clear video call. If the officer does not have a mobile device or a secure enough internet connection, they can conduct the screening at the barracks using a computer. If this is not a feasible option, the officer should transport the person to an emergency department.

For more information on how to conduct and join a virtual screening, please refer to the full law enforcement virtual screening training resource on the Grantees & Contractors webpage.

Are there any differences between the paper screening form and the virtual form?

The screening questions on the virtual screening form are the same as those on the paper screening form.

Are there any other changes to PIP or impacts to an officer's legal responsibilities?

The virtual screening tool only changes the process for requesting and conducting a screening; it does not change the public inebriate statute or an officer's legal responsibilities.

Technology and Accessibility

Do law enforcement officers need a Microsoft Teams account or app to conduct a virtual screening?

A Microsoft Teams account is not required to conduct a virtual screening. Officers joining a screening on a **computer do not need the Microsoft Teams app** – following the link provided by the screen will open a web-based Teams call in their web browser**.** Officers joining a screening on a **mobile device or tablet will need the Microsoft Teams app**, which can be downloaded on the Play (Android) or iOS App Store (Apple). For more detailed information on how to download and use the Teams App, please refer to the full law enforcement virtual screening training resource on the Grantees & Contractors webpage.

What if the officer cannot download the Microsoft Teams app?

Attempt to conduct the screening over a computer. If this is not a feasible option, the officer should transport the person to an emergency department.

What devices work for the new screening process?

Mobile phones, tablets, laptops, mobile data computers (MDC), and desktop computers that can connect to the internet, have video calling capabilities, and are able to use Microsoft Teams.

How can a law enforcement officer conduct a virtual screening if their internet connection isn't strong enough to handle a video call?

If an officer is trying to conduct a screening from the field but their internet connectivity is not strong enough, they can try transporting the person to a different location with more reliable internet connectivity and conducting the screening there.

Alternatively, they can transport the person back to the barracks and conduct the screening inside. If they are still unable to conduct the screening or this is not a feasible option, they should transport the person to the emergency department for an in-person screening by staff there.

What if the officer does not have an email address?

An email address is not required to conduct a virtual screening but is required to receive the results. You can use a department email address if you don't have one.

Why is the video and/or audio not working on the Microsoft Teams meeting?

Make sure to allow Microsoft Teams to use your camera and audio before joining the meeting, if prompted. Then, double-check the camera and microphone button are both switched on after joining the meeting.

What is the procedure for if a law enforcement officer's device cannot support a video call, even after trying different locations?

The officer should first try transporting the person back to the barracks and conduct the screening inside. If they are still unable to conduct the screening or this is not a feasible option, they should transport the person to the emergency department for an in-person screening by staff there.

Does a person being screened need to hold the device during the virtual call?

No, the person being screened should not have possession of the device. The officer may hold the device so the screener can see the person or position the device in the front seat of their cruiser while the person remains seated in the back. Officers may use their discretion to conduct the screening in a manner that is appropriate for the circumstances and prioritizes the safety of everyone involved.

How will providers/law enforcement agencies view the results of the virtual screening?

Providers (i.e., a DOC or PIP facility) who are receiving a person through a PIP placement will automatically be sent the screening results electronically. Law enforcement officers will have to provide the screener with an email (either their own or a centralized inbox for the agency) in order to receive the screening results.

Who should contact the designated provider about a potential PIP placement?

Law enforcement officers will contact the appropriate DOC facility if the person is being routed there. Recovery House will contact a PIP facility to confirm bed availability.

Technical Assistance and Questions

The PIP Manual, which provides more details on PIP and the updated screening processes, is available on the Grantees & Contractors webpage.

For any questions about Public Inebriate Program or centralized virtual screening tool, please contact Julia.Harrison@vermont.gov.