

ATTENTION:
 GENERAL MANAGER
 PARTS MANAGER
 CLAIMS PERSONNEL
 SERVICE MANAGER

IMPORTANT - All Service Personnel Should Read and Initial in the boxes provided, right.

© 2026 Subaru of America, Inc. All rights reserved.



QUALITY DRIVEN® SERVICE

SERVICE BULLETIN

APPLICABILITY: 2020-25MY Legacy & Outback 2.5L
 2020-25MY Crosstrek & Impreza
 2024-25MY Forester
 2022-25MY Forester Wilderness

NUMBER: 16-159-26
DATE: 06/22/26

SUBJECT: DTC P0851 and P0852 / Diagnostic Procedure

INTRODUCTION:

This Service bulletin provides new diagnostic steps for DTC P0851 and P0852 to be used in conjunction with the applicable Service Manual. In some cases, these DTCs can be set due to a misadjusted inhibitor switch caused by incorrect tolerance of the installation tool on the production line. If either P0851 or P0852 is set, follow the service procedure outlined in this bulletin.

SERVICE PROCEDURE / INFORMATION:

Step 1: Perform the troubleshooting tree as outlined in the applicable Service Manual.

Was the result of either P0851 or P0852 troubleshooting to replace the inhibitor switch?

- **Yes**– If the result of the troubleshooting is to replace the inhibitor switch, proceed to Step 2 before replacing it.
- **No**– Perform the repair recommended by the troubleshooting tree.

Step 2: Turn the ignition ON with the engine OFF. Move the shifter through all positions while depressing the brake pedal.

Did the shift lever move freely, and did all of the shifter ranges display on the instrument cluster?

- **Yes**– Go to Step 3.
- **No**– Inspect the shifter assembly and cable. Adjust the inhibitor switch.

Step 3: Confirm that the shifter position remains displayed on the combination meter when the shifter is shaken in each gear position.

Did the shifter range disappear from the combination meter while applying forward or backward pressure?

- **Yes**– Perform inhibitor switch adjustment.
- **No**– Go to Step 4.

CAUTION: VEHICLE SERVICING PERFORMED BY UNTRAINED PERSONS COULD RESULT IN SERIOUS INJURY TO THOSE PERSONS OR TO OTHERS.

Subaru Service Bulletins are intended for use by professional technicians ONLY. They are written to inform those technicians of conditions that may occur in some vehicles, or to provide information that could assist in the proper servicing of the vehicle. Properly trained technicians have the equipment, tools, safety instructions, and know-how to do the job correctly and safely. If a condition is described, DO NOT assume that this Service Bulletin applies to your vehicle, or that your vehicle will have that condition.

Subaru of America, Inc. is ISO 14001 Compliant

ISO 14001 is the international standard for excellence in Environmental Management Systems. Please recycle or dispose of automotive products in a manner that is friendly to our environment and in accordance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations.

Continued...

Step 4: With the shifter in the Park range, **without pressing the shift lever button or applying the brake**, pull the shifter toward the Reverse range.

Did the Park range disappear from the combination meter?

- **Yes**– Perform inhibitor switch adjustment.
- **No**– Go to Step 5.

Step 5: With the shifter in the Reverse range, **without pressing the shift lever button or applying the brake**, push the shifter toward the Neutral range.

Did the Reverse range disappear from the combination meter?

- **Yes**– Perform inhibitor switch adjustment.
- **No**– Go to Step 6.

Step 6: With the shifter in Park, ensure it cannot be moved to any other position when the brake pedal is not depressed, even if the shift lever button is pressed.

Did the shifter move out of Park?

- **Yes**– Inspect the shift lock and Park range switch.
- **No**– Go to Step 7.

Step 7: With the parking brake applied, attempt to start the vehicle while pulling the shifter toward the Reverse range without **depressing the shift lever button**.

Did the vehicle start?

- **Yes**– Go to Step 8.
- **No**– Perform inhibitor switch adjustment.

Step 8: With the parking brake applied, attempt to start the vehicle with the shifter in Neutral while pressing toward Reverse without **depressing the shift lever button**.

Did the vehicle start?

- **Yes**– Replace the inhibitor switch.
- **No**– Perform inhibitor switch adjustment.

WARRANTY / CLAIM INFORMATION:

For customers exhibiting a symptom addressed by this bulletin and within the New Car Adjustment Period (3/36) this repair may be submitted ONE TIME using the following claim information:

Warranty Type	Labor Description	Labor Operation #	Labor Time	Fail Code	Skill Level
WC	CVT INHIBITOR SWITCH ADJUSTMENT	A304086	0.8h	MDV88	SG 2 / SL 2

The Skill Group and Skill Level listed in this bulletin define the qualifications recommended for this work. Repairs should be dispatched to a technician who is trained at the specified level. For more information on Labor Operation Skill Group/Level assignments, [click here to access the Gear Reduction](#). To request a Skill Group/Skill Level change, [fill out this form](#).

Continued...

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- SOA strongly discourages the printing and/or local storage of service information, as previously released information and electronic publications may be updated at any time.
- Always check for any open recalls or campaigns anytime a vehicle is in for servicing.
- Always refer to STIS for the latest service information before performing any repairs.