



# STATE OF OHIO BOARD OF PHARMACY

*newsletter to promote pharmacy and drug law compliance*

## **From the Director's Desk**

Dear Ohio Pharmacists,

On September 20, 2023, several pharmacy organizations came together to establish Pharmacy Workforce Suicide Awareness Day. The goal of this day is to increase awareness and discussion around a highly stigmatized topic that disproportionately affects health care professionals, including the pharmacy workforce.

According to the latest available data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide was the eleventh leading cause of death for Americans as of 2021. Further, a recent study published by JAPhA showed that pharmacists are at an increased risk of death by suicide when compared to the general public. According to that study, the suicide rate among pharmacists in the United States is 20 per 100,000, which is higher than the general population rate of 12 per 100,000.

*Source: American Pharmacists Association*

Licensees who are experiencing a mental health or addiction crisis, and their family members, can call, text, or chat the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline to reach a trained specialist who can offer help and support.

The easy-to-remember, three-digit number provides 24/7, free, and confidential support to those in a behavioral health crisis. 988 is a direct connection to compassionate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress. That could be thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress.

### ***National Pharmacy Compliance News***

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Numerous studies have shown that most 988 callers are significantly more likely to feel less depressed, less suicidal, less overwhelmed, and more hopeful after speaking to a 988 Lifeline crisis counselor. Almost 98% of people who call, chat, or text the 988 Lifeline get the crisis support they need and do not require additional services at that moment. The 988 Lifeline crisis counselors are trained to help reduce the intensity of a situation for the person seeking help and connect them to additional local resources, as needed, to support their well-being.

For more information and additional resources, please visit <https://988lifeline.org>.

On behalf of the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy, thank you for all that you do to help keep Ohioans, including its pharmacy workforce, safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Steven W. Schierholt, Esq  
Executive Director  
State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy

## ***New Ohio Rules on Pharmacy Technician Immunizations***

Effective September 1, 2023, Rule 4729:3-3-06 of the Ohio Administrative Code authorizes a certified or registered pharmacy technician working under the direct supervision of a pharmacist to administer, subject to a physician protocol, the following immunizations:

- Any immunization for any disease to individuals 13 years old or older without a prescription.
- Any immunization for any disease to individuals ages seven through 12 if there is a prescription for the immunization (except as provided below for COVID-19 vaccines and flu shots).
- Food and Drug Administration-authorized COVID-19 vaccines and flu shots to individuals starting at seven years old without a prescription.

For more information, the Board developed a guidance document that can be accessed [here](#).

## ***Recent Changes to Ohio's Terminal Distributor Licensing Laws***

Effective July 11, 2023, Ohio law no longer requires terminal distributor licensure for the following:

1. An office-based opioid treatment facility licensed in accordance with Section 4729.553 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC).
2. A person who possesses nitrous oxide (including nitrogen) for use as a direct ingredient in food pursuant to 21 Code of Federal Regulations 184.1545 or for testing or maintaining a plumbing or heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system.

3. A person who possesses medical oxygen, sterile water, or sterile saline for direct administration to patients or for the purpose of installation or maintenance of home medical equipment, as defined in Section 4752.01 of the ORC.

Additionally, the Board updated the following guidance documents to reflect these changes:

- [Terminal Distributor Licensure of Prescriber Practices](#)
- [Terminal Distributor Licensure of Office-Based Opioid Treatment](#)
- [Terminal Distributor Licensure Exemptions for Non-Prescriber Practices](#)

## **Pharmacists Can Now Administer Long-Acting/Extended-Release Buprenorphine Under Ohio Law**

With recent changes to federal law on the prescribing of buprenorphine, the Board updated its compliance guidance to allow pharmacists to administer long-acting injectable buprenorphine in accordance with ORC 4729.45. For more information on the requirements for pharmacists administering injectables, visit [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/injections](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/injections).

## **Board Offering Free Fentanyl Test Strips to All Ohio Licensees**

In recognition of Overdose Awareness Day on August 31, 2023, the Board is partnering with the Office of Governor Mike DeWine, RecoveryOhio, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Ohio Department of Health to offer no-cost fentanyl test strips to all Ohio pharmacies.

To help save lives, the Board encourages you to make these important tools available to your patients. The Board is offering each licensee up to two boxes of strips per order (100 strips per box). Strips will be available until supplies last and may be reordered by the same location if you are running low. Additionally, you may also request copies of the Board's educational handouts (100 per pack).

Orders must be placed online using the following link: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/FTSorder](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/FTSorder).

**Due to grant funding restrictions, the Board is only able to offer strips to licensees located in the state of Ohio.**

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