

Approval of Instruments to Reduce Drug Poisoning

Updated 10/1/2025

Effective October 1, 2025, OAC [4729-8-02](#) makes test strips and reagent kits that test for the presence of the following compounds legal to distribute in Ohio:

Compound Name
Fentanyl and fentanyl-related compounds*
Xylazine
Medetomidine**
Benzimidazole-opioids (commonly referred to as nitazenes)
Benzodiazepine and benzodiazepine-related compounds

**Fentanyl test strips were legal to distribute prior to 10/1/2025. However, reagent kits to test for fentanyl and fentanyl-related compounds are now legal to distribute in Ohio.*

***Medetomidine is not a controlled substance. However, it was added to the list for approved drug checking instruments in the event of future federal or state action classifying the compound as a controlled substance.*

Per Ohio law (ORC [4729.261](#)), instruments that test for the presence of controlled substances are considered drug paraphernalia. However, recent law changes now permit the Ohio Board of Pharmacy to exempt certain instruments from the definition of drug paraphernalia if the Board determines the instrument demonstrates efficacy in reducing drug poisoning by determining the presence of a specific compound or group of compounds.

The Board has determined that any test strip or reagent kit that tests for the presence of the compounds listed above may be legally distributed and utilized in the state. These compounds are commonly found in street drugs often without users knowing, making it more likely for an overdose to occur. Detecting the presence of these compounds before consuming a drug [can save lives](#).


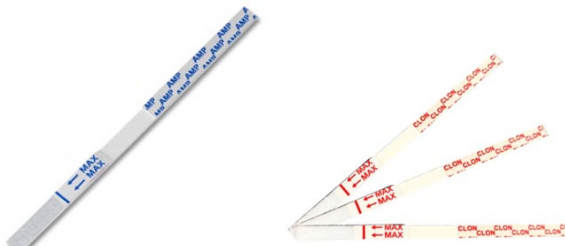
To assist with the implementation of this new rule, the Board developed the following frequently asked questions document. If you need additional information, the most expedient way to have your questions answered will be to e-mail the Board office by visiting: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/contact

Does this mean that all test strips and reagent kits that test for the compounds listed on page 1 of this document are legal to distribute or possess in Ohio?

Yes. Possession and distribution of any test strip or reagent kit that tests for the compounds listed on page 1 of this document would be legal to possess and distribute under Ohio law. Specifically, the law grants exemption from ORC 2925.14 for any instrument the Board determines demonstrates efficacy in reducing drug poisoning.

By law, the Board is not permitted to approve any instrument that measures the purity of any mixture (i.e., the proportion of a controlled substance within the total mixture).

What is the difference between a reagent kit and a test strip?

Reagent Kits	Test Strips
Reagent kits contain chemicals that turn different colors in the presence of certain drugs. They can help you learn more about the general contents of the drug and identify any “red flags” in your sample.	Test strips are paper strips that can identify tiny amounts of a specific type of drug in any drug sample when you mix part of a drug sample with a small amount of water.
	
Examples of Reagent Kits	Examples of Test Strips

What is the criteria used by the Board to approve new drug testing instruments?

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy uses the following criteria pursuant to rule [4729-8-02](#) when evaluating whether to approve additional instruments:

- Drug poisoning/overdose data, including data from other states;
- Reports from established forensic laboratories in Ohio;
- Reporting from harm reduction organizations in Ohio; and
- Any other information as determined by the Board.

REMINDER: By law, the Board is not permitted to approve any instrument that measures the purity of any mixture (i.e., the proportion of a controlled substance within the total mixture).

If you are a company or organization seeking approval of a new drug testing instrument, you may send a request for consideration to the Board of Pharmacy by email to:

contact@pharmacy.ohio.gov

Additional Resources

- The Ohio Board of Pharmacy, the Office of Governor Mike DeWine, RecoveryOhio, and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services have partnered together to offer no-cost fentanyl test strips and patient counseling brochures for Board of Pharmacy licensees. To place an order, visit: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/FTSORDER.
- The Board of Pharmacy developed a quick reference handout that can be accessed here: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/TestYourDrugs