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## E-News Update November 2020

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### **Board of Pharmacy Issues Additional Guidance on Vaccine Storage and Administration in Institutional Facilities and Other Settings**

To assist institutional facilities (nursing homes, jails, etc.) and other settings (congregate, EMS) that are developing vaccine distribution and administration plans, the Board recently issued a [new guidance document](#). This guidance is intended to provide information on compliance with Board of Pharmacy requirements. Licensees and other facilities are reminded to consult with other regulating entities, including the Ohio Department of Health, to ensure full compliance with all federal and state laws, rules, and policies.

To access the guidance, visit: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/vaccineguide](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/vaccineguide)

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### **Board of Pharmacy Reminds Licensees of Drug Distributor Due Diligence Requirements**

In June 2020, the Board of Pharmacy delayed the drug distributor [due diligence requirements](#) set forth in rule 4729:6-3-05 of the Administrative Code. Please be advised that these requirements, [by resolution](#), were extended **until November 29, 2020**. Licensees should be aware that collection of customer information by drug wholesalers and other drug distributors is required by Ohio rule in order to engage in the shipment of controlled substances and gabapentin. The Board strongly encourages all licensees to respond to requests for information from wholesalers and other drug distributors to avoid any delays in receiving controlled substance shipments.

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### **Notice to All Licensees Regarding Fraudulent Prescriptions for Promethazine-Codeine Syrup**

The Board has been made aware of an increasing number of fraudulent prescriptions for promethazine being dispensed at this time.

- Suspects are using VoIP/VoLTE data phone numbers to impersonate practitioners' offices, which include fake voice message services.
- Organized groups from as far away as Chicago and California have been traveling to Ohio to pass paper prescriptions and phoned-in prescriptions.
- Fake prescriptions for plain promethazine syrup (non-controlled) have been phoned in without the need for a prescriber's DEA number; it has been speculated that the plain promethazine is being adulterated with other controlled substances, and/or it is being used to dilute promethazine-codeine syrup, which is resold to consumers on the street.

**IMPORTANT:** Pharmacies and/or pharmacists should report all incidents of prescription fraud to the Board of Pharmacy and **must report such activity to local law enforcement**.

Reports to the Board may be filed online by visiting: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/complaint](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/complaint).

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### **Reminder to Licensees on Theft or Significant Loss Reporting**

Licensees are reminded that initial reports of theft or significant loss must be followed up with a detailed report of the theft or loss using the Board's [online portal](#) within thirty days of the initial report (see Q5 of Board [guidance](#)).

The follow-up report is similar to the form required by DEA (Form 106) and must be submitted using the online portal. A guidance document for submitting information through the portal is available

here: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/reportTL](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/reportTL).

**Failure to submit the follow-up report is considered a violation of rule [4729:5-3-02](#) or [4729:6-3-02](#) and may subject a licensee to administration action.**

For more information about complying with the Board's theft or significant loss reporting requirements visit: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/theft](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/theft)

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## **Board of Pharmacy Warns of Increasing Extortion Scam Calls During COVID-19**

As a reminder, the Board continues to receive reports of calls threatening legal action if an exorbitant fine is not paid immediately over the phone. The callers identify themselves as either Board of Pharmacy or DEA personnel and instruct their victims to pay a "fine" via wire transfer to avoid arrest, prosecution, imprisonment, and license revocation.

The reported scam tactics are continually changing, but share many of the following characteristics:

- Callers use fake names and badge numbers or names of well-known senior officials.
- The tone of calls is urgent and aggressive; callers refuse to speak or leave a message with anyone other than the person for whom they are calling.
- Callers threaten arrest, prosecution, imprisonment, and license revocation.
- Callers demand thousands of dollars via wire transfer or in the form of untraceable gift cards.
- Callers falsify the number on caller ID to appear as a legitimate phone number.
- Callers often ask for personal information, such as social security number or date of birth.
- When calling a medical practitioner, callers often reference National Provider Identifier numbers and/or state license numbers and threaten revocation of their license.

**Board of Pharmacy and DEA employees do not contact healthcare providers or members of the public by telephone to demand money or any other form of payment.**

Anyone receiving a telephone call from a person purporting to be a DEA or Board of Pharmacy employee seeking money should refuse the demand and report the threat using the Board's online [complaint form](#) and the DEA's [online form](#). Reporting scam calls will greatly assist the Board of Pharmacy and DEA in investigating and stopping this criminal activity.

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## **Guidance on Vaccine Administration and COVID-19 Testing**

Recent guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the PREP Act authorizes pharmacy personnel to conduct vaccine administration and COVID-19 testing.

To assist licensees in complying with federal guidance, the Board has released or updated the following guidance documents:

- [Administration of Childhood Vaccines during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (Updated)
  - [Administration of COVID-19 Vaccines during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (Updated)
  - [Pharmacy Technician Administration of Vaccines during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (New)
  - [Pharmacist, Pharmacy Intern, and Pharmacy Technician Testing Authority During COVID-19](#) (Updated)
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## **REMINDER: Special Notice from the Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Providers**

If you want to administer the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available, it is critically important that you enroll as soon as possible due to accelerated federal timelines. **If you have ultra-cold storage capabilities (below -70 degrees Celsius) and are able to administer COVID-19 vaccines to 500 or more individuals, we ask that you enroll no later than Friday, November 6!** Please note that not every provider needs to have ultra-cold storage capabilities to be a COVID-19 vaccine provider.

While we do not know exactly when vaccine will be available, we must review and process applications and conduct provider training as quickly as possible to be prepared to mobilize immediately with little notice. It also is essential that we be able to identify and address any vaccine provider gaps across the state.

To submit an application to become a COVID-19 vaccination provider, please sign up online by going to the State of Ohio's "OH|ID" webpage at <https://ohid.ohio.gov> and follow the steps outlined in the attached "job aid." Be sure to have on hand all of the information outlined in the [enrollment checklist.](#)

Please note that if you do not already have an OH|ID account, this will be a two-step sign-up process. The first step will be to create an account which must be reviewed and approved, usually within 24 hours. After approval, you will receive an email notification and can go to the second step

by logging into your new OH|ID account to complete your COVID-19 vaccination provider enrollment application.

Instructions for accessing the OH|ID system can be accessed here:  
[www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/ODHvaccine](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/ODHvaccine).

If you have any questions, please contact the ODH COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Enrollment Team at [covidvaccine@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:covidvaccine@odh.ohio.gov).

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### **REMINDER: Clarification on Mandatory E-Prescribing**

The Board of Pharmacy has received questions on mandatory e-prescribing in Ohio.

Please be advised that, under current Ohio law, there is no requirement for mandatory e-prescribing.

Beginning on January 1, 2021, all Medicare Part D plans will require the use of e-prescribing for controlled substances prescriptions. The SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act (HR6) requires the use of e-prescribing for controlled substances (EPCS) for schedule II-V controlled substances covered under a Medicare Part D prescription drug, or a Medicare advantage prescription drug plan starting January 2021.

For more information on Ohio's requirements for issuing a valid prescription, including electronic prescribing of controlled substances visit: [www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/rx](http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/rx).

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