



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5122-26-15 Medication handling and theft.

Effective: [August 1, 2026](#)

- (A) A provider is to have written policies and procedures regarding the purchasing, receipt, storage, distribution, return, and destruction of medication that include accountability for and security of prescription and over-the-counter medications located within any of its facilities. These policies and procedures are to include all of the following mandates:
- (1) The provider is to possess a valid and current terminal distributor of dangerous drugs license from the state board of pharmacy if the provider maintains a stock supply of prescription medications, participates with the department's central pharmacy to receive dispensed prescriptions, or when otherwise necessitated by rules of the state board of pharmacy.
 - (2) The provider is to store all prescription blanks in a locked, secure area.
 - (3) The provider is to designate a person who will have access to or may handle medications and is to maintain a current list of these persons, their credentials, and their medication handling responsibilities.
 - (4) The provider is to provide a method to record and follow the medications from the time of receipt to the time of distribution, return to central pharmacy, donation to a drug repository program operated pursuant to Chapter 4729:5-10 of the Administrative Code, or destruction. This record is to be retained by the provider for three years and will include the following information:
 - (a) The date and time the medication was received by the provider, distributed to individuals served, returned to central pharmacy, donated to a drug repository program or, if appropriate, destroyed;
 - (b) The name, credentials, and signature of all persons handling medications;
 - (c) A provision stating that unused medications prescribed for an individual are to be appropriately destroyed or returned to central pharmacy, unless the unused medications have been donated to a drug repository program; and
 - (d) A provision stating that unused medications will not be issued to another individual unless that issuance is done through a drug repository program. Return of unused medications prescribed to an individual is only allowed when the return is to central pharmacy in accordance with rule 4729:5-3-16 of the Administrative Code.
 - (5) The provider is to ensure that all staff handling medications have basic and ongoing instruction and training in safe and effective handling of medications.



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- (6) The provider is to ensure that medications are handled only by authorized persons and that others do not have access to the medications.
 - (7) The provider is to ensure that controlled substances are destroyed in accordance with rule 4729:5-3-01 of the Administrative Code.
- (B) Providers maintaining a limited stock supply of medications are to do both of the following:
- (1) Allow only a physician or pharmacist to dispense medications, although a clinical nurse specialist, certified nurse practitioner, or physician assistant may personally furnish controlled substances in accordance with section 3719.06 of the Revised Code or personally furnish dangerous drugs that are not controlled substances in accordance with section 4723.481 or 4730.43 of the Revised Code, as applicable; and
 - (2) Have posted in a conspicuous location the phone number of the Ohio poison centers.
- (C) A provider is to describe in its policies and procedures whether a client is permitted to possess prescription and over-the-counter medication while at the provider site and whether they may self-administer medication at the provider site.
- A provider that permits a client to possess prescription and over-the-counter medication at the provider site is to have written procedures that address this authority.
- A provider that does not permit clients to possess prescription and over-the-counter medication at the provider site is to have written procedures for taking possession of, accounting for, and returning such medication to the client at the time of the client's departure or discharge.
- A provider that permits a client to self-administer medication is to have written policies and procedures that address this authority.
- (D) The provider is to have a policy on employee medication theft and is to inform all employees concerning this policy. The policy is to include attention to prescription as well as over-the-counter medications maintained for client use.
- (1) An employee, intern, or volunteer with knowledge of medication theft by an employee or any other person is to report such information to the executive director of the provider. If the executive director of the provider is suspected of medication theft, the employee or volunteer is to notify the department.



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The provider is to take all reasonable steps to protect the confidentiality of the information and the identity of the person furnishing the information.

- (2) Suspected medication theft is also to be reported to the state board of pharmacy. For controlled substances, suspected medication theft is also to be reported to the federal drug enforcement administration. Providers participating in medication services with the department's central pharmacy are to also notify central pharmacy.
- (3) Failure to report information of medication theft is to be considered in determining the eligibility of the employee to continue to work in a secure area where medications are stored.
- (4) If an employee violates the provider's medication theft policies, the provider is to assess the seriousness of the employee's violation, whether the violation has a direct and substantial relationship to that employee's position, the past record of employment, and other relevant factors in determining whether to suspend, transfer, terminate, or take other action against the employee.