



# STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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**TO: ALL NEW YORK STATE PRACTITIONERS**  
**FROM: JAMES GIGLIO, DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF NARCOTIC ENFORCEMENT**  
**DATE: January, 2007**  
**SUBJECT: CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE AND OFFICIAL PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM UPDATE**

## **Ordering and Safeguarding Official New York State Prescriptions**

The new Public Health Law that requires an official prescription for all written prescriptions also requires practitioners to adequately safeguard all their official prescriptions against theft, loss, or unauthorized use. The law further requires practitioners to maintain a sufficient but not excessive supply of official prescriptions. Ordering and maintaining excessive supplies increases the potential for official prescriptions to be stolen by individuals seeking to use them illegally to divert drugs for addiction and street sale.

## **Reporting Lost or Stolen Official New York State Prescriptions**

Practitioners are required to immediately notify the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement of the loss, destruction, theft or unauthorized use of any official prescriptions issued to them, as well as the failure to receive official prescriptions within a reasonable time after ordering them. The notification form required for reporting this information can be obtained by phoning the Bureau at (866) 811-7957 or accessing the Bureau's web site as listed below.

## **Indicating Drug Quantity and Refills in Numerical and Word Form**

New regulations now in effect require official prescriptions for controlled substances to indicate the quantity of drug prescribed and the number of refills authorized by the practitioner in **both numerical and written word forms**. Because drug-seeking individuals often alter these numbers in an attempt to divert controlled substances, this requirement will help detect and prevent such illegal activities.

## **Faxing Official Prescriptions for Controlled Substances**

- Practitioners may now fax to a pharmacy official prescriptions for controlled substances for patients enrolled in a hospice program or residing in a Residential Healthcare Facility (RHCF). **Note:** The dispensing pharmacy must have a written agreement with the hospice program or RHCF and the practitioner must indicate on the faxed prescription that the patient is a "hospice patient" or "RHCF patient".
- Practitioners may also fax to a pharmacy official prescriptions for controlled substances to be compounded for direct parenteral administration to patients.
- All other faxed prescriptions for controlled substances must comply with requirements for oral prescriptions for controlled substances.
- **Practitioners faxing official prescriptions for controlled substances are required to send the original official prescription to the dispensing pharmacy within 72 hours.**

The controlled substance law and regulations may be viewed online at: [www.nyhealth.gov/professionals/narcotic](http://www.nyhealth.gov/professionals/narcotic). Practitioners with questions about official prescriptions or controlled substances may contact the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement at (866) 811-7957 or online at: [narcotic@health.state.ny.us](mailto:narcotic@health.state.ny.us)