

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

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An Act to amend and reenact §§ 54.1-3408.02, as it shall become effective, and 54.1-3410 of the Code of Virginia, relating to electronic transmission of certain prescriptions; exceptions.

[H 2559]

Approved

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:
1. That §§ 54.1-3408.02, as it shall become effective, and 54.1-3410 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 54.1-3408.02. (Effective July 1, 2020) Transmission of prescriptions.

A. Consistent with federal law and in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Board, prescriptions may be transmitted to a pharmacy as an electronic prescription or by facsimile machine and shall be treated as valid original prescriptions.

B. Any prescription for a controlled substance that contains an ~~opi~~ate opioid shall be issued as an electronic prescription.

C. The requirements of subsection B shall not apply if:

1. The prescriber dispenses the controlled substance that contains an opioid directly to the patient or the patient's agent;

2. The prescription is for an individual who is residing in a hospital, assisted living facility, nursing home, or residential health care facility or is receiving services from a hospice provider or outpatient dialysis facility;

3. The prescriber experiences temporary technological or electrical failure or other temporary extenuating circumstance that prevents the prescription from being transmitted electronically, provided that the prescriber documents the reason for this exception in the patient's medical record;

4. The prescriber issues a prescription to be dispensed by a pharmacy located on federal property, provided that the prescriber documents the reason for this exception in the patient's medical record;

5. The prescription is issued by a licensed veterinarian for the treatment of an animal;

6. The FDA requires the prescription to contain elements that are not able to be included in an electronic prescription;

7. The prescription is for an opioid under a research protocol;

8. The prescription is issued in accordance with an executive order of the Governor of a declared emergency;

9. The prescription cannot be issued electronically in a timely manner and the patient's condition is at risk, provided that the prescriber documents the reason for this exception in the patient's medical record; or

10. The prescriber has been issued a waiver pursuant to subsection D.

D. The licensing health regulatory board of a prescriber may grant such prescriber, in accordance with regulations adopted by such board, a waiver of the requirements of subsection B, for a period not to exceed one year, due to demonstrated economic hardship, technological limitations that are not reasonably within the control of the prescriber, or other exceptional circumstances demonstrated by the prescriber.

§ 54.1-3410. When pharmacist may sell and dispense drugs.

A. A pharmacist, acting in good faith, may sell and dispense drugs and devices to any person pursuant to a prescription of a prescriber as follows:

1. A drug listed in Schedule II shall be dispensed only upon receipt of a written prescription that is properly executed, dated and signed by the person prescribing on the day when issued and bearing the full name and address of the patient for whom, or of the owner of the animal for which, the drug is dispensed, and the full name, address, and registry number under the federal laws of the person prescribing, if he is required by those laws to be so registered. If the prescription is for an animal, it shall state the species of animal for which the drug is prescribed;

2. In emergency situations, Schedule II drugs may be dispensed pursuant to an oral prescription in accordance with the Board's regulations;

3. Whenever a pharmacist dispenses any drug listed within Schedule II on a prescription issued by a prescriber, he shall affix to the container in which such drug is dispensed, a label showing the prescription serial number or name of the drug; the date of initial filling; his name and address, or the name and address of the pharmacy; the name of the patient or, if the patient is an animal, the name of the owner of the animal and the species of the animal; the name of the prescriber by whom the

57 prescription was written, except for those drugs dispensed to a patient in a hospital pursuant to a chart
58 order; and such directions as may be stated on the prescription.

59 B. A drug controlled by Schedules III through VI or a device controlled by Schedule VI shall be
60 dispensed upon receipt of a written or oral prescription as follows:

61 1. If the prescription is written, it shall be properly executed, dated and signed by the person
62 prescribing on the day when issued and bear the full name and address of the patient for whom, or of
63 the owner of the animal for which, the drug is dispensed, and the full name and address of the person
64 prescribing. If the prescription is for an animal, it shall state the species of animal for which the drug is
65 prescribed.

66 2. If the prescription is oral, the prescriber shall furnish the pharmacist with the same information as
67 is required by law in the case of a written prescription for drugs and devices, except for the signature of
68 the prescriber.

69 A pharmacist who dispenses a Schedule III through VI drug or device shall label the drug or device
70 as required in subdivision A 3 of this section.

71 C. A drug controlled by Schedule VI may be refilled without authorization from the prescriber if,
72 after reasonable effort has been made to contact him, the pharmacist ascertains that he is not available
73 and the patient's health would be in imminent danger without the benefits of the drug. The refill shall be
74 made in compliance with the provisions of § 54.1-3411.

75 If the written or oral prescription is for a Schedule VI drug or device and does not contain the
76 address or registry number of the prescriber, or the address of the patient, the pharmacist need not
77 reduce such information to writing if such information is readily retrievable within the pharmacy.

78 D. Pursuant to authorization of the prescriber, an agent of the prescriber on his behalf may orally
79 transmit a prescription for a drug classified in Schedules III through VI if, in such cases, the written
80 record of the prescription required by this subsection specifies the full name of the agent of the
81 prescriber transmitting the prescription.

82 E. (Effective July 1, 2020) ~~No pharmacist shall dispense a controlled substance that contains an~~
83 ~~opiate unless the prescription for such controlled substance is issued as an electronic prescription. A~~
84 ~~dispenser who receives a non-electronic prescription for a controlled substance containing an opioid is~~
85 ~~not required to verify that one of the exceptions set forth in § 54.1-3408.02 applies and may dispense~~
86 ~~such controlled substance pursuant to such prescription and applicable law.~~

87 **2. That the Board of Medicine, the Board of Nursing, the Board of Dentistry, and the Board of**
88 **Optometry shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this act regarding**
89 **prescriber waivers to be effective within 280 days of its enactment.**

90 **3. That the Secretary of Health and Human Resources shall convene a work group of interested**
91 **stakeholders, including the Medical Society of Virginia, the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare**
92 **Association, the Virginia Dental Association, the Virginia Association of Health Plans, and the**
93 **Virginia Pharmacists Association, to evaluate the implementation of the electronic prescription**
94 **requirement for controlled substances and shall report to the Chairmen of the House Committee**
95 **on Health, Welfare and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Education and Health by**
96 **November 1, 2022. The work group's report shall identify the successes and challenges of**
97 **implementing the electronic prescription requirement and offer possible recommendations for**
98 **increasing the electronic prescribing of controlled substances that contain an opioid.**