



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619
617-624-6000 | mass.gov/dph

Maura T. Healey
Governor

Kiame Mahaniah, MD, MBA
Secretary

Kimberley Driscoll
Lieutenant Governor

Robert Goldstein, MD, PhD
Commissioner

CIRCULAR LETTER: DCP 26-08-125¹

To: Massachusetts Licensed Pharmacists, Primary Care Practitioners, and Reproductive Health Care Practitioners
From: James G. Lavery, Director, Bureau of Health Professions Licensure
Date: August 25, 2026
Re: Pharmacist prescribing of certain contraceptives and medications for the prevention of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STI).

Purpose

M.G.L. c. 94C, § 19F, as implemented by 105 CMR 700.000: *Implementation of M.G.L. c. 94C*, authorizes licensed pharmacists practicing in Massachusetts to prescribe and dispense:

- hormonal contraceptive patches;
- oral hormonal contraceptives;
- medications used for prevention of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV); and
- medications used for prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STI).

Although there is no requirement to prescribe these medications, the purpose of this circular letter is to provide guidance to those pharmacists who choose to do so. A pharmacist is not required to obtain a Massachusetts Controlled Substance Registration (MCSR) as long as the prescribing and dispensing both occur at a single pharmacy location.

General Prescribing Requirements

- (a) Only FDA-approved medications authorized by M.G.L. c. 94C, § 19F and contained within this document may be prescribed by a pharmacist.
- (b) The pharmacist must obtain a [National Provider Identifier](#) (NPI).
- (c) Patient counseling and education are conducted on the proper use, risks, and side effects of the selected product.
- (d) The medication is prescribed only in accordance with the manufacturer's approved labeling or [statewide guidance](#).
- (e) The patient is provided a written record of the product that has been prescribed and dispensed.

¹ DCP 25-04-124 is hereby rescinded and replaced with DCP 26-08-125.

- (f) The product is dispensed as soon as practicable after the pharmacist issues the prescription.
- (g) All activities related to the prescribing and dispensing are documented and readily available.
- (h) The patient is referred to, or advised to consult with, a clinical provider, or if the patient provides consent, the pharmacist notifies the patient's primary care practitioner upon the prescribing and dispensing of the selected product.
- (i) The pharmacist must maintain continued competency regarding current guidelines. Continuing education programs are one way to maintain competency.
- (j) Pharmacists are encouraged to enroll in MassHealth for the limited purpose of ordering and referring services covered by MassHealth in order to allow for MassHealth reimbursement for pharmacists' prescriptions to MassHealth enrollees.

****NOTE:** Certain medications are also authorized to be administered by pharmacists. Please review the [Pharmacist Administration of Medications circular letter](#) for details.

Hormonal Contraceptive Patches and Oral Hormonal Contraceptives

- (a) A pharmacist may prescribe hormonal contraceptive patches and oral hormonal contraceptives (regardless of whether the product is over-the-counter or prescription-only) to patients of any age, provided that: prior to prescribing, the patient completes a pharmacy-provided self-screening risk assessment tool based on the current [United States Medical Eligibility Criteria for Contraceptive Use](#) such as the one located [here](#);
- (b) A valid prescription for up to, but not more than, a 12-month supply is generated;
- (c) Lack of a clinical visit with a primary care practitioner or reproductive health care practitioner does not preclude a pharmacist from issuing a prescription with refills;
- (d) A scheduled appointment with the pharmacist shall not be required for the purpose of the prescribing or dispensing of a hormonal contraceptive patch or oral hormonal contraceptive; and
- (e) Prior to prescribing, the pharmacist completes a training program that addresses the objectives outlined below. Training programs accredited by the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE) or Interprofessional Continuing Education (IPCE) are recommended. Documentation of completed training must be provided upon request. Program objectives must include:
 - i. Describing the mechanism of action and differentiate between types of hormonal contraceptive products.
 - ii. Assessing patient eligibility for hormonal contraceptive use and recommended products.
 - iii. Educating patients on proper use, risks, and benefits of various contraceptive products.
 - iv. Educating patients on strategies to reduce risk of sexually transmitted infections.
 - v. Documenting patient care visits related to hormonal contraceptive products.

Additional resources for prescribing birth control:

<https://birthcontrolpharmacist.com/resources/>

<https://health.maryland.gov/pharmacy/Pages/Contraception-Prescribing.aspx>

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Prevention

A pharmacist may prescribe HIV prevention medications for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) or post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) provided that:

- (a) Prescribing is in accordance with the applicable statewide guidance ([PreP](#) or [PEP](#)); and
- (b) Prior to prescribing, the pharmacist completes a training program that provides at least 2 hours on the prescribing of HIV prevention medications as well as the key components of HIV risk assessment; recognition of possible signs and symptoms of acute retroviral syndrome or chronic acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS); indications and limitations of different PEP and PrEP modalities; and other HIV prevention strategies. The course must have ACPE / ICPE accreditation or AMA PRA Category 1 Credit. Documentation of completed training must be provided upon request.

****NOTE:** A program that only provides education about the pharmacology of HIV prevention medications is not sufficient.

Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Prevention and Treatment

A pharmacist may prescribe medications for the prevention of STIs after a potential exposure, as well as for the treatment of STIs, provided that:

- (a) Prescribing is in accordance with the [STI Prevention](#) or [STI Treatment](#) statewide guidance, as applicable; and
- (b) Prior to prescribing, the pharmacist completes a training program on STI prevention or STI treatment, as applicable. The course must have ACPE / ICPE accreditation or AMA PRA Category 1 Credit. Documentation of completed training must be provided upon request.

Contact Information

Please direct any questions or concerns to the Drug Control Program: dcp.dph@mass.gov