

Health Canada Section 56(1) CDSA Exemption and TPP Updates

In March 2020, Health Canada issued exemptions for the prescribing and provision of controlled substances under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA) and its regulations.

In June 2021, these exemptions were extended until **Sept. 30, 2026**. The Health Canada exemption information can be found in [Section 56\(1\) Class Exemption](#).

The exemptions for drugs/substances under the CDSA permit:

1. Pharmacists to extend or renew existing prescriptions.
2. Pharmacists to transfer prescriptions to other pharmacists.
3. Prescribers to verbally prescribe (e.g., by phone).
4. Pharmacy employees or individuals authorized by the pharmacist to deliver controlled drug prescriptions to patients (at their homes or other locations where they may be).

Health Canada issued a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document to provide further information and clarity on these exemptions. The Alberta College of Pharmacy has developed related [exemption guidelines for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians](#).

TPP Alberta

When the initial exemptions were issued, TPP Alberta indicated the Program remained active and prescribers and pharmacists should continue to adhere to the Program policies and procedures as outlined in the [TPP Alberta Guide](#).

For prescriptions for type 1 TPP Alberta drugs that were issued verbally by prescribers or extended/renewed by pharmacists, the need to provide copies of these prescriptions to TPP Alberta was waived.

Despite this and to help prevent diversion and protect the public, prescribers are encouraged to fax a secure TPP prescription form directly to the pharmacy whenever practical, rather than provide a verbal prescription.

At their recent meeting, the TPP Alberta Steering Committee determined that copies of **prescriptions for type 1 TPP drugs in compounds and “for office use”¹ must be forwarded to TPP Alberta**, since these prescriptions are not adequately tracked through Netcare. This includes prescriptions issued verbally by a prescriber or extended/renewed by a pharmacist.

Verbally-issued prescriptions (for the above purposes only) and pharmacist prescriptions for a compound that contains a type 1 drug do not require a TPP prescription form for this

¹ For office use prescriptions are discouraged in general and should be written for minimum quantities when required.

purpose but a copy of the transcribed prescription must be sent to TPP Alberta as soon as possible. This copy must be legible with all necessary information including:

- Prescription number,
- Date dispensed,
- Quantity dispensed,
- Drug Information Number,
- Indication for therapy,
- Pharmacy license number,
- Pharmacist signature and registration number, and
- A signature from the patient indicating medication was received.

As a reminder, please **do not** submit duplicate copies of the prescription to TPP Alberta.

A copy of the initial prescription is all that is required.

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