



Pennsylvania
Department of Drug and
Alcohol Programs



Pennsylvania
State Police



Pennsylvania
Department of Military
and Veterans Affairs



Pennsylvania
Department of Aging



Pennsylvania
Fish and Boat Commission

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Shapiro Administration, PA Office of Attorney General Encourage Participation in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day This Weekend

*Since Pennsylvania's program began 9 years ago, 700 tons – **the weight of two 747s** - of prescription medication has been destroyed across the 888 take-back boxes in Pennsylvania.*

*"Every day – not just Saturday – is a take-back day in Pennsylvania." - **DDAP Deputy Secretary Kelly Primus***

Harrisburg, PA – Today, the **Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP)**, **Pennsylvania State Police (PSP)**, **Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA)**, and **Department of Aging (PDA)** joined officials from the **Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General** to encourage Pennsylvanians to take part in the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day initiative this Saturday, October 26.

The DEA has offered National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day since 2010 with the goal of fighting prescription drug misuse by creating convenient ways to dispose of medication that could otherwise be at risk of misuse.

In addition to the DEA's Prescription Drug Take-Back Days, the Shapiro Administration offers year-round opportunities to dispose of medication through [DDAP's Prescription Drug Take-Back Program](#). Today's event was held at the **Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's** headquarters in Harrisburg, which houses one of DDAP's drug take-back boxes.

"This event is tailor-made to dispose of expired, unused and unwanted prescription medications in a safe manner. It's a simple three-step process: clean out your medicine cabinet, find the nearest take-back box, and drop off the medications," said **DDAP Deputy Secretary Kelly Primus**. "In addition to the DEA's boxes, there are nearly 900 DDAP drug take-back boxes

available throughout Pennsylvania year-round for residents to use, including at buildings throughout the Shapiro Administration. Every day – not just Saturday – is a take-back day in Pennsylvania.”

During the most recent National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day in April 2024, the DEA collected more than 31,000 pounds of unused medication in Pennsylvania alone across 263 collection sites.

Since the inception of Pennsylvania’s drug take-back program in 2015, more than **1.4 million, or 700 tons, of prescription medication have been destroyed across 67 Pennsylvania counties.**

The PSP aims to provide a safe and convenient means of disposal year-round by collecting unwanted prescription medications at **65 stations** across the Commonwealth. No personal information is required, and drop-off boxes are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **More than 4,400 pounds of medications were collected at PSP stations last year.**

“Drug take-back boxes are safe, free of charge, easy to use, and conveniently located at a state police station near you,” said **PSP Commissioner Colonel Christopher Paris**. “Please make sure prescription medications do not end up in the wrong hands or used the wrong way by disposing of them properly and responsibly.”

The DMVA’s Counterdrug Joint Task Force (CJTF) is operated by the Pennsylvania National Guard (PNG) and, along with narcotics agents from the Attorney General’s office, is responsible for collecting and weighing discarded prescription drugs through Pennsylvania’s drug take-back program. In addition, the CJTF provides counterdrug support and training to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, community-based organizations, and educational and government organizations that request assistance at no cost to the agency supported. The PNG is part of the DMVA’s dual mission, which also includes supporting Pennsylvania’s more than 700,000 veterans.

“Safeguarding our communities is a priority for the DMVA, and that starts with eliminating threats and harmful temptations like the use of unused prescription drugs,” said **Brigadier General John Pippy, Acting Adjutant General and head of the DMVA**. “We are proud to partner with DDAP and other agencies on Saturday. Together, as one team, with one mission, we will properly transport and dispose of these drugs assuring that they will not fall into the wrong hands.”

“We thank our friends at DDAP for partnering on this proactive measure that will save lives,” **Attorney General Michelle Henry** said. “This partnership will offer everyone a chance to do their part in fighting the opioid epidemic by conveniently disposing of their expired and unwanted prescriptions.”

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 83 percent of adults 65 and older report they are currently taking prescription medicine and older adults are also more likely to be taking multiple prescription medications. This can lead to a higher rate of exposure to potentially addictive medications. The increased availability of prescription medication in the homes of older adults makes it vitally important to regularly clean out and dispose of old, unwanted, or unneeded prescription medication.

“An older adult’s prescription needs may change over time, resulting in either taking a different medication or stopping a particular one altogether. This could generate unused or unwanted prescriptions that remain in their home and potentially getting into the wrong hands, leading to misuse, developing a substance use disorder or lethal overdose,” said **Secretary of Aging Jason Kavulich**. “To protect both the older adults and the persons who may come across those prescriptions, we encourage everyone to consider the risks and to take proper action to discard those unused or unwanted medications.”

For more information on National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, visit takebackday.dea.gov.

You can find one of Pennsylvania’s year-round drug take-back locations at ddap.pa.gov/drugtakeback.

Photos and video of the event are available through [PA Cast](#).

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**Election Day
Nov. 5, 2024**



Election day is Nov. 5. Find your polling place or return your mail ballot by 8 p.m. Nov. 5.
Visit vote.pa.gov for trusted election information.