



Important Changes to the Prescribing, Administering and Dispensing of Drugs for Physician Assistants

The Arizona State Legislature passed HB2250, amending portions of the Physician Assistant Practice Act (A.R.S. §§ 32-2501 et. seq.). **The effective date of the changes is August 3, 2018**, unless stated otherwise.

The full text of the bill can be found at:

<https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/53leg/2R/laws/0233.pdf>

With regard to prescribing, physician assistants should be aware of the following changes:

- **The bill eliminates the requirement that prescription orders from physician assistant contain the name, address and telephone number of the supervising physician. Instead, prescription orders are required to contain the name, address and telephone number of the physician assistant.**
- Consistent with the Opioid Epidemic Act, the bill requires physician assistants to obtain supervising physician approval before authorizing a refill of a schedule II or III medication that is an opioid or benzodiazepine.
- Requires drugs dispensed by a physician assistant to be prepackaged by a pharmacist, rather than a supervising physician, or a pharmacist acting on a supervising physician's written order.
- **Beginning October 1, 2018**, the Board will be authorized to certify physician assistants to prescribe schedule II and III medications that are not opioids or benzodiazepines for up to 90 days, upon the physician assistant meeting certain criteria. Previously, the Board was allowed to authorize the prescribing of controlled substances for up to 30 days.

**Frequently Asked Questions
Regarding Changes to the Physician Assistant Rules
Arizona Regulatory Board of Physician Assistants
Effective October 6, 2012 Revised March 1, 2013**

Diligent care has been taken to avoid any contradiction between the FAQs and the actual enacted legislation and proposed rules. Any inconsistency or conflict is unintentional. To the extent that there is an appearance of conflict or inconsistency, the actual rules shall take precedence over these guidelines, and the statutes shall take precedence over the rules.

I am a physician assistant licensed in Arizona. Do I need to have a Prescribing Authority Form on file at the Board?

No. A.A.C. R4-17-203.D states:

"When the Board (Arizona Regulatory Board of Physician Assistants) issues a regular license to an applicant, the Board is also approving the applicant to issue prescriptions or dispense or issue schedule II or schedule III controlled substances."

A physician assistant may prescribe up to 30 days of Schedule II and III controlled substances if the Board approves,¹ the Delegation Agreement on file at the practice site includes delegation by the PA's supervising physician(s) to prescribe Schedule II and III controlled substances, and the PA has a current DEA registration with matching authority. (A.R.S. 32-2532(A)(1)).

In order for the Board to comply with A.R.S. 32-2532.J, any modification to the Board-approved prescribing authority that is reflected in the Delegation Agreement must be on file with the Board.

Do I need to include the name of my supervising physician on written and/or electronic prescriptions?

Yes; all prescription orders issued by a physician assistant shall contain the name, address and telephone number of the supervising physician. (A.R.S. 32-2532(B)). This includes written and electronic prescriptions.

If I have multiple supervising physicians, who should be included on written and/or electronic prescriptions pursuant to A.R.S. 32-2532 (B)?

If the physician assistant is supervised by more than one supervising physician, only one name must appear on the prescription order.

¹ Under current law, the Board will approve physician assistants for thirty day prescription privileges if they are certified by a national commission on the certification of physician assistants at the time of licensure. (A.R.S. § 32-2504(A)(11)). Meeting this requirement is never an issue because A.R.S. § 32-2521(A)(2) requires all initial applicants to pass the certifying examination of the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants before a license is granted.