



On March 30th 2020, Governor Phil Scott signed Act 91 (H. 742) that enumerated allowed emergency procedures for the state in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Several sections have particular relevance to pharmacists. These provisions will be in effect during the declared state of emergency in Vermont as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key provisions for pharmacists

Early Refills

- All health insurance plans shall allow their members to refill prescriptions for chronic maintenance medications early to enable members to keep a 30-day supply of each prescribed medication at home.
- Does not apply to controlled substances

Extension of maintenance medications

- If it is not feasible to obtain a new prescription or refill authorization from the prescriber, a pharmacist may extend a previous prescription for a maintenance medication if the patient has no refills remaining.
 - A medication is considered a maintenance medication if it is one taken on a regular basis over an extended period of time to treat a chronic or long term condition
 - The pharmacist must notify the prescriber in a timely manner if the prescription was extended.
- Does not apply to controlled substances

Therapeutic substitution

- If a medication is unavailable and if the patient agrees, a pharmacist may substitute an available medication in the same therapeutic class that in the judgment of the pharmacist would have a substantially equivalent therapeutic effect.
 - Example: since ranitidine and famotidine are unavailable, nizatidine would be able to be substituted if it were available, was discussed with the patient, and the patient agrees.
- As soon as reasonably possible, this substituted medication, dose, and quantity dispensed must be communicated to the prescriber

Temporary Licenses

- Temporary licenses may be approved for graduates of an approved education program when licensing examinations are not reasonably available
- These will last for 90 days (or until the end of the state of emergency) or may be extended if the state of emergency is ongoing

Licensure extensions and reinstatement of retired licensees

- The following may also be permitted to practice in Vermont after notifying the Office of Professional Regulations
 - A pharmacist in good standing who is licensed in another jurisdiction
 - A pharmacist who has retired no more than 3 years ago
- If the professional has been retired 4-10 years, they may apply for a temporary license
- See attached visual aid for additional information