

MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN PHARMACY

*Newsletter to Promote Pharmacy
and Drug Law Compliance.*

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Pharmacist License Renewal

It's a pharmacist license renewal year! Before you can renew, you must create a new account by clicking the "Create Account" button found below the "Sign In" button on the new [eLicensing System web page](#). Once your account is created, you will need to use your license type, license number, date of birth, and Social Security number to link your license to your account. Video tutorials with step-by-step instructions on creating your account, linking your license, and renewing your license are available via the online [Licensing System User Guide](#). If you need additional assistance, please contact the Help Desk at 800/414-0168 or [eLicensing Support Request](#).

After linking your license, you may renew it online as early as October 2. Paper renewal forms are no longer issued, so be sure to keep a current

email address in the licensing system so you can receive an electronic notification. Your profile can be updated at any time with a new physical address, email address, and other demographic information.

Don't forget to complete your continuing education (CE)! General CE guidance can be found in the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Pharmacy's [CE policy](#). If you are wondering if you need complex nonsterile compounding CE credits, review the [nonsterile compounding policy](#). In general, if you practice in a typical retail setting and only add flavorings or make "simple" compounds, like mixing two creams together, then you probably do not need those specialty credits. The nonsterile compounding policy provides examples of complex nonsterile compounds.

Vaccine Preparation Outside a Sterile Compounding Area

Since pharmacy personnel are now frequently called upon to **administer certain injections** in the retail setting, great attention must be given to keeping the practice safe for patients. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued **injection guidance** to assist with this.

Vaccines should be drawn up in a designated clean area that is away from sinks or other water sources. Water droplets can spread more than

a meter away from a sink and can carry microbial contaminants. Be sure to clean and disinfect the area regularly.

Wash your hands properly prior to drawing up injectable medications. Always use a new sterile syringe and sterile needle and make sure they do not touch nonsterile materials or areas. Disinfect the rubber septum of the vial with alcohol prior to piercing it.

The safest practice is to prepare an injection as close as possible to the time of administration to reduce the risk of microbial contamination. It should be drawn up no more than one hour prior to use.

It is **never** acceptable to leave a needle inserted in a vial for multiple medication draws. This leaves the vial open to the ambient air, allowing microbes to easily enter and cause contamination.



Nonresident Inspections

Once the new licensure regulations are promulgated, all nonresident pharmacies (except nuclear) dispensing in Massachusetts will be required to have a nonresident drug store pharmacy license. If the nonresident pharmacy would also like to dispense sterile or complex nonsterile preparations, additional

licensure and inspections would be required.

The mandatory “satisfactory inspection” is defined as an on-site pharmacy inspection revealing substantial compliance with required standards, provided that any identified deficiencies do not have an impact on patient safety

and there is a documented plan of correction.

An application for a **nonresident drug store (retail) pharmacy** will require a report of the most recent inspection that must have been conducted within two years of the application submission date.

Nonresident Inspections

(continued)

Acceptable inspections include the following:

1. an inspection conducted by a resident state inspector utilizing the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy® (NABP®) Universal Inspection Form, General Pharmacy Inspection;
2. an inspection conducted by a resident state inspector utilizing that state's general pharmacy compliance inspection form; or
3. an inspection conducted by a Board-approved inspector* utilizing their approved general pharmacy compliance inspection form.

*A list of Board-approved inspectors will be provided on the website once available.

Nonresident drug stores that intend to compound and dispense complex nonsterile preparations (as defined in [Board policy](#)) must also apply for a **nonresident complex nonsterile compounding pharmacy** license. Inspections for this license type must have been conducted within one year of the application

submission date. Inspection of United States Pharmacopeia (USP) <800> standards must also occur if the pharmacy is engaged in the compounding of hazardous drugs. Acceptable inspections include either:

1. a satisfactory inspection conducted by a resident state inspector utilizing the NABP Universal Inspection Forms: Nonsterile Compounding Inspection for USP <795> and Hazardous Drugs – Handling in Healthcare Settings USP <800> inspection form, if applicable; or
2. a satisfactory inspection conducted by a Board-approved inspector utilizing their approved nonsterile compounding inspection form and USP <800> inspection form, if applicable.

Similarly, nonresident drug stores that intend to compound and dispense sterile preparations must also apply for a **nonresident sterile compounding pharmacy** license. A report of the most recent inspection that has been conducted within one year of the application submission

date must be submitted. Inspection of USP <800> standards must also occur if the pharmacy is engaged in the compounding of hazardous drugs. Acceptable inspections include the following:

1. if the state is part of NABP's Multistate Pharmacy Inspection Blueprint Program, a satisfactory inspection conducted by a resident state inspector utilizing:
 - a. NABP's Universal Inspection Forms: Inspection for USP <797> and Hazardous Drugs – Handling in Healthcare Settings USP <800> inspection form, if applicable; or
 - b. the state's NABP-approved sterile compounding inspection form and USP <800> inspection form, if applicable; or
2. a satisfactory inspection conducted by a Board-approved inspector utilizing their approved sterile compounding inspection form and USP <800> inspection form, if applicable.

Getting to Know Your Board Members – Sami Ahmed

Board Member Sami Ahmed has always wanted to make an impact on patients' lives by being involved in their health care. While working as a pharmacy technician, he found his

calling. Sami was assisting a patient with the time-consuming process of obtaining prior authorization when he saw how much that patient appreciated his attention and care.

This cemented his decision to pursue a career as a pharmacist. When Sami was nearing graduation from Rutgers University's pharmacy school in New Jersey, a professor

Getting to Know Your Board Members – Sami Ahmed

(continued)

suggested exploring residency programs. Sami felt fortunate to land a postgraduate year one placement with the excellent program at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) back in his home state.

During his residency, Sami realized that he enjoyed the clinical setting and loved the team approach, leading him to accept a full-time position at MGH after completing his residency program. He has now been at MGH for over 20 years and happily continues to learn new things every day.

Sami feels that there are two main challenges facing the profession: technician shortages and medication shortages. Technicians are the backbone of any pharmacy and are essential to function effectively. Not having enough support has led to burnout for many pharmacy professionals. Medication

shortages lead to frustration for both patients and health care personnel. It is heartbreaking for Sami to hear stories from parents calling dozens of pharmacies hunting for their children’s medications with no resolution in sight.

Sami wanted to be a Board member so he could more fully appreciate the breadth and depth of the field of pharmacy. Being a Board member has opened Sami’s eyes to all the issues that pharmacy professionals face in areas outside the hospital pharmacy arena. He finds it humbling to learn about the challenges facing the retail pharmacy environment.

Since Board members come from various areas of pharmacy and health care, there are bound to be differences of opinion. Sami views this as wonderful since it fosters a wide and varied discussion. All are

encouraged to share their thoughts and voice their opinions.

Sami is grateful for all the opportunities that the field of pharmacy has afforded him, but, most of all, he values the amazing colleagues he’s met along the way who have shaped and influenced him as a person and a professional. Expressing his gratitude, Sami states, “I would not be where I am without such a strong network; it really does take a village.”

He explains to interns, “You won’t have all the answers. You won’t get every question right. There will be bumps in the road, setbacks, and failures, but don’t give up. Use those opportunities to learn and move towards your goals. The road isn’t easy, but that’s why a career in pharmacy is so rewarding!”



Did You Know?

- **Pharmacist Prescribing of Certain Hormonal Contraceptives for MassHealth Members:** The [MassHealth Nonbilling Provider Application](#) has been updated to facilitate enrollment of pharmacists who wish to [prescribe hormonal contraceptives](#) under provider type 90, labeled as “Pharmacist – Other.” This type is for pharmacists who have not entered into a [collaborative drug therapy management](#) agreement. Pharmacists must possess a valid National Provider Identifier to enroll. Please visit the [MassHealth website](#) for more information on enrolling, or contact MassHealth Customer Service at 800/841-2900, TDD/TTY: 711.

Did You Know?

(continued)

- Please take advantage of a free, one-credit CE program offered by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, *Responsive Practice: Providing Health Care and Screenings to Individuals with Disabilities*.
- Certificates of Achievement for the American Pharmacists Association's (APhA's) *Pharmacy-Based Immunization Administration by Pharmacy Technicians* training program expire after three years. There is a two-hour APhA home study program that **immunizing pharmacy technicians** can take to get an updated certificate.

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