

CHAPTER 5  
PHARMACY SUPPORT PERSONS

**657—5.1(155A) Definitions.** For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions shall apply:

“*Board*” means the Iowa board of pharmacy.

“*Delivery*” means the transport and conveyance of a finished, securely packaged prescription order to the patient or the patient’s agent.

“*Direct access*” means physical access, without direct supervision by a pharmacist, to opened, unpackaged, or unsecured stock containers or prescription vials containing prescription drugs.

“*Pharmacy clerk*” means a person whose duties within the pharmacy department include accessing filled prescription orders and processing payments for and delivering such orders to the patient or the patient’s agent under the supervision of a pharmacist.

“*Pharmacy support person*” means a person, other than a licensed pharmacist, a registered pharmacist-intern, or a registered pharmacy technician, who may perform nontechnical duties assigned by a supervising pharmacist under the pharmacist’s responsibility and supervision.

“*Pharmacy technician*” or “*technician*” means a person who is employed in Iowa by a licensed pharmacy under the responsibility of an Iowa-licensed pharmacist to assist in the technical functions of the practice of pharmacy, and who is registered pursuant to 657—Chapter 3, and includes a certified pharmacy technician, a pharmacy technician trainee, and an uncertified pharmacy technician.

“*Secure package*” means the prescription order is enclosed in tamper-evident packaging. An IV bag is considered tamper-evident packaging.

“*Supervising pharmacist*” means an Iowa-licensed pharmacist who is on duty in an Iowa-licensed pharmacy and who is responsible for assigning and supervising the duties performed by a pharmacy support person.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10; ARC 9009B, IAB 8/11/10, effective 7/23/10]

**657—5.2(155A) Purpose of registration.** A registration program for pharmacy support persons is established for the purposes of identification, tracking, and disciplinary action. The registration shall not include any determination of the competency of the registered individual. The use of pharmacy support persons to assist the pharmacist with nontechnical duties associated with the practice of pharmacy enables the pharmacist to provide pharmaceutical care to the patient.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.3** Reserved.

**657—5.4(155A) Registration required.**

**5.4(1) Effective date.** Beginning June 1, 2010, a pharmacy support person shall register with the board pursuant to the requirements of this chapter.

**5.4(2) Registration number.** Each pharmacy support person registered with the board will be assigned a unique registration number.

**5.4(3) Original application required.** Any person required to register and not previously registered with the board as a pharmacy support person shall complete an application for registration within 30 days of accepting employment in an Iowa pharmacy as a pharmacy support person. Such application shall be received in the board office before the expiration of this 30-day period.

**5.4(4) Employment terminated.** A registered pharmacy support person who discontinues employment as a pharmacy support person shall not be required to maintain a registration and shall request cancellation of the registration as provided in rule 657—5.14(155A).

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.5(155A) Exempt from registration.** Unless a person has direct access to prescription drugs, the following shall be exempt from registration as a pharmacy support person:

1. Delivery person.
2. Billing clerk, including a person who processes claims for third-party payments.

3. Data processing support, maintenance, or programming personnel.
  4. Facility maintenance personnel including but not necessarily limited to cleaning, sanitation, structural, and mechanical maintenance personnel. Facility maintenance personnel deemed exempt from registration shall be directly supervised by a pharmacist or a certified pharmacy technician who is responsible for the maintenance person's activities within the pharmacy department to ensure medication security and patient privacy.
  5. Any person not directly employed by or under contract to the pharmacy, and not under the direct supervision of a pharmacist, who provides data processing, billing, maintenance, or administrative support functions outside the pharmacy department.
  6. A registered pharmacist-intern or a registered pharmacy technician.
- [ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.6** Reserved.

**657—5.7(155A) Registration application form.**

**5.7(1) Required information.** The application form for a pharmacy support person registration shall require the following:

- a. Information sufficient to identify the applicant including, but not limited to, name, address, date of birth, gender, and social security number;
- b. Educational background;
- c. Work experience;
- d. Current place or places of employment;
- e. Any other information deemed necessary by the board.

**5.7(2) Declaration of current impairment or limitations.** The applicant shall declare any current use of drugs, alcohol, or other chemical substances that in any way impairs or limits the applicant's ability to perform the duties of a pharmacy support person with reasonable skill and safety.

**5.7(3) History of felony or misdemeanor crimes.** The applicant shall declare any history of being charged, convicted, found guilty of, or entering a plea of guilty or no contest to a felony or misdemeanor crime (other than minor traffic violations with fines under \$100).

**5.7(4) History of disciplinary actions.** The applicant shall declare any history of disciplinary actions or practice restrictions imposed by a state health care professional, licensure, or registration authority.

**5.7(5) Sworn signature.** The applicant shall sign the application under penalty of perjury and shall submit the application to the board with the appropriate fees pursuant to rules 657—5.9(155A) and 657—5.11(155A).

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.8** Reserved.

**657—5.9(155A) Registration fee.**

**5.9(1) Initial fee.** The fee for obtaining an initial registration shall be \$30.

**5.9(2) Renewal fee.** The renewal fee for obtaining a biennial registration shall be \$30.

**5.9(3) Timeliness.** Fees shall be paid at the time the new application or the renewal application is submitted for filing.

**5.9(4) Form of payment.** Fee payment shall be in the form of a personal check, certified or cashier's check, or money order payable to Iowa Board of Pharmacy.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.10(155A) Registration renewal.** A pharmacy support person registration shall expire on the second last day of the birth month following initial registration. Registration shall not require continuing education for renewal.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.11(155A) Late application.**

**5.11(1) Fee.** A person required to register or to renew the person's registration who files a late application shall pay an additional \$30 late payment fee.

**5.11(2) Timeliness of initial application.** An application for initial registration shall be assessed a late payment fee if not received within the applicable period specified in rule 657—5.4(155A).

**5.11(3) Timeliness of renewal application.** An application for registration renewal shall be assessed a late payment fee if not received by the expiration date of the registration. A late payment fee shall not be assessed on an expired registration if the person was not employed as a pharmacy support person during the period following expiration of the registration.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.12 Reserved.**

**657—5.13(155A) Registration certificates.** The original registration certificate issued by the board to a pharmacy support person shall be maintained by the pharmacy support person. Verification of current registration shall be maintained in each pharmacy where the pharmacy support person is employed in that capacity and shall be available for inspection by the board.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.14(155A) Notifications to the board.** A pharmacy support person shall report to the board within ten days a change of name, address, place of employment, or employment status.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.15(155A) Identification of pharmacy support person.**

**5.15(1) Name badge.** A pharmacy support person shall wear a name badge or other form of identification while on duty which clearly identifies the person as a pharmacy support person.

**5.15(2) Misrepresentation prohibited.** A pharmacy support person shall not, in any manner, represent himself or herself as a pharmacist, a pharmacist-intern, or a pharmacy technician.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.16 Reserved.**

**657—5.17(155A) Tasks a pharmacy support person shall not perform.** A pharmacy support person shall not perform any of the following judgmental or technical functions. Performance of any of these tasks by a pharmacy support person shall constitute the practice of pharmacy without a license in violation of Iowa Code section 155A.7. A pharmacy support person shall not:

1. Provide the final verification for the accuracy, validity, completeness, or appropriateness of a filled prescription or medication order.

2. Conduct prospective drug use review or evaluate a patient's medication record for purposes identified in rule 657—8.21(155A).

3. Provide patient counseling, consultation, or patient-specific drug information; make an offer of patient counseling on behalf of the pharmacist; or accept a refusal of patient counseling from a patient or patient's agent.

4. Make decisions that require a pharmacist's professional judgment, such as interpreting or applying information.

5. Accept by oral communication any new or refill prescription authorizations communicated to a pharmacy by a prescriber or by the prescriber's office or contact a prescriber to obtain prescription refill authorizations.

6. Provide a prescription or drug to a patient without a pharmacist's verification as to the accuracy of the dispensed medication and without the physical presence of a pharmacist.

7. Package, pour, or place in a container for dispensing, sale, distribution, transfer, vending, or barter any drug which, under federal or state laws, may be sold or dispensed only pursuant to the prescription of a practitioner authorized to prescribe drugs. This prohibited task includes the addition of water or other liquid for reconstitution of oral antibiotic liquids.

8. Affix required prescription labels upon any container of drugs sold or dispensed pursuant to the prescription of an authorized prescriber.

9. Process or enter pertinent patient or prescription information, including entry of that information into the pharmacy computer system, except as provided in rule 657—5.18(155A).

10. Prepackage or label multidose and single-dose packages of drugs, including dose picks for unit dose cart fills for hospital or long-term care facility patients.

11. Check or inspect drug supplies provided and controlled by an Iowa-licensed pharmacy but located or maintained outside the pharmacy department, including but not limited to drug supplies maintained in an ambulance or other emergency medical service vehicle, a long-term care facility, a hospital nursing unit, or a hospice facility.

12. Reconstitute prefabricated noninjectable medication, prepare parenteral products, or compound sterile or nonsterile drug products.

13. Communicate, transmit, or receive patient or prescription information to or from the pharmacy for the purpose of transferring a patient's prescription between pharmacies.

14. Assist with or witness the destruction or wastage of controlled substances pursuant to 657—subrule 10.18(2).

15. Perform any of the duties identified in 657—Chapter 3 as technical functions that may be delegated to a pharmacy technician.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.18(155A) Nontechnical pharmacy support tasks.** An appropriately trained and registered pharmacy support person may perform any of the following nontechnical functions that have been delegated to the pharmacy support person by the supervising pharmacist:

1. Perform the duties of a pharmacy clerk.

2. Process wholesale drug orders, including the submission of orders, the receipt and processing of drug deliveries from drug wholesalers, reconciling products received with packing slips or invoices, and affixing appropriate inventory or price stickers to drug stock bottles or containers.

3. Perform routine clerical duties, such as filing processed, hard-copy prescriptions and other pharmacy records.

4. Update or change patient demographic information, excluding allergies and disease state information, in the pharmacy computer system or patient profile.

5. Receive from a patient the patient's request for a prescription refill, excluding the processing of the refill request.

6. Perform pharmacy drug inventory control duties, including checking pharmacy stock shelves for outdated drugs and assisting with annual inventory counts.

7. Deliver drugs to patient care areas, long-term care facilities, patient residences, or patient employment locations, excluding the restocking of automated medication distribution system components.

8. Perform any routine clerical or pharmacy support function not prohibited in rule 657—5.17(155A).

9. In nuclear pharmacy practice, perform nonjudgmental tasks under the direct supervision of a nuclear pharmacist pursuant to 657—Chapter 16.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.19** Reserved.

**657—5.20(155A) Training and utilization of pharmacy support persons.** All Iowa-licensed pharmacies utilizing pharmacy support persons shall develop, implement, and periodically review written policies and procedures for the training and utilization of pharmacy support persons. Pharmacy policies shall specify the frequency of review. Pharmacy support person training shall be documented and maintained by the pharmacy for the duration of employment. Such policies and procedures and

documentation of pharmacy support person training shall be available for inspection by the board or an agent of the board.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.21(155A) Responsibility of supervising pharmacist.** The ultimate responsibility for the actions of a pharmacy support person working under a supervising pharmacist shall remain with the supervising pharmacist.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.22(155A) Delegation of nontechnical functions.** A pharmacist may delegate nontechnical functions to an appropriately trained and registered pharmacy support person, but only if the pharmacist is present to supervise the pharmacy support person when delegated functions are performed, except as provided in 657—subrule 6.7(2) or 657—subrule 7.6(2), as appropriate.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.23** Reserved.

**657—5.24(155A) Denial of registration.** The board may deny an application for registration as a pharmacy support person for any violation of the laws of this state, another state, or the United States relating to prescription drugs, controlled substances, or nonprescription drugs or for any violation of Iowa Code chapter 124, 124A, 124B, 126, 147, 155A, or 205 or any rule of the board.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.25(147,155A) Unethical conduct or practice.** Violation by a pharmacy support person of any of the provisions of this rule shall constitute unethical conduct or practice and may be grounds for disciplinary action as provided in rule 657—5.26(155A).

**5.25(1) Misrepresentative deeds.** A pharmacy support person shall not make any statement tending to deceive, misrepresent or mislead anyone, or be a party to or an accessory to any fraudulent or deceitful practice or transaction in pharmacy or in the operation or conduct of a pharmacy.

**5.25(2) Confidentiality.** In the absence of express consent from the patient or order or direction of a court, except where the best interests of the patient require, a pharmacy support person shall not divulge or reveal to any person other than the patient or the patient's authorized representative, the prescriber or other licensed practitioner then caring for the patient, a licensed pharmacist, or a person duly authorized by law to receive such information the contents of any prescription or the therapeutic effect thereof or the nature of professional pharmaceutical services rendered to a patient; the nature, extent, or degree of illness suffered by any patient; or any medical information furnished by the prescriber.

**5.25(3) Discrimination.** It is unethical for a pharmacy support person to unlawfully discriminate between patients or groups of patients for reasons of religion, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, or disease state when providing pharmaceutical services.

**5.25(4) Unethical conduct or behavior.** A pharmacy support person shall not exhibit unethical behavior in connection with the pharmacy support person's pharmacy employment. Unethical behavior shall include, but is not limited to, the following acts: verbal abuse, coercion, intimidation, harassment, sexual advances, threats, degradation of character, indecent or obscene conduct, and theft.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

**657—5.26(155A) Discipline of pharmacy support persons.**

**5.26(1) Violations.** The board may impose discipline for any violation of the laws of this state, another state, or the United States relating to prescription drugs, controlled substances, or nonprescription drugs or for any violation of Iowa Code chapter 124, 124A, 124B, 126, 147, 155A, or 205 or any rule of the board.

**5.26(2) Sanctions.** The board may impose the following disciplinary sanctions:

a. Revocation of a pharmacy support person registration.

b. Suspension of a pharmacy support person registration until further order of the board or for a specified period.

- c.* Nonrenewal of a pharmacy support person registration.
- d.* Prohibition, permanently, until further order of the board, or for a specified period, from engaging in specified procedures, methods, or acts.
- e.* Probation.
- f.* Imposition of civil penalties not to exceed \$25,000.
- g.* Issuance of citation and warning.
- h.* Such other sanctions allowed by law as may be appropriate.

[ARC 8673B, IAB 4/7/10, effective 6/1/10]

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 147.55, 155A.3, 155A.18 and 155A.23 and 2009 Iowa Code Supplement section 155A.6B.

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