



Board of Pharmacy

DEA Regulations for Emergency Medical Services

Revised Guidance Issued: 3/13/2026

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) officially published its final [rule](#) implementing the Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medications Act of 2017 (PPAEMA) on February 5, 2026. The rule, effective March 9, 2026, requires all EMS agencies that are not owned or operated by a hospital to obtain a controlled substance registration from the DEA.

DEA created a new "Emergency Medical Services Agency" registration category, with a three-year fee equal to other dispenser registrations (\$888). ***Please be advised that there are fee waivers for EMS agencies operated by state and local governments (see guidance below).*** The rule also includes federal requirements for the security and recordkeeping of controlled substances by EMS agencies. To apply for a new EMS registration, visit: <https://deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drugreg/registration.html>

Fee Waiver Guidance from DEA for State and Local Government EMS Agencies

This information is taken directly from the [Final Rule notice](#) published by the DEA.

Issue: An anonymous commenter had a question regarding the exemption from DEA application fees for EMS agencies. This commenter understood the proposed rule as exempting fire department EMS from paying the application fees, but not EMS-only agencies, and asked why this was so.

DEA Response: Pursuant to the existing provisions of [21 CFR 1301.21\(a\)\(1\)](#), "any hospital or other institution which is operated by an agency of the United States, . . . of any State, or any political subdivision or agency thereof" is exempt from application fees. If an EMS agency were operated by the fire department, and the fire department is operated by the local government, it would be exempt from application fees. Even if the EMS agency is not operated by a government fire department, if the EMS agency itself is operated by the local government, it would also be exempt from application fees. A privately-owned EMS agency, which is not operated by the local government, is therefore not exempt from paying application fees due to its non-governmental affiliation.

For more information on fee waivers, please contact DEA directly:

- Call: 1-800-882-9539 (8:30 am-5:50 pm ET)
- E-mail: DEA.Registration.Help@dea.gov

To assist EMS agencies in complying with these new federal regulations, the Board developed the following guidance document: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/EMSDEA.

If you need additional information, the most expedient way to have your questions answered will be to e-mail the Board office by visiting: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/contact.



People call, text, and chat the 988 Lifeline to talk about a lot of emotional needs—not just thoughts of suicide. Whatever your reason, the #988Lifeline is there to help. There is hope.



Ohio Board of Pharmacy
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