

CONSENT

Bill No: AB 1587
Author: Ta (R)
Amended: 3/18/26 in Assembly
Vote: 21

SENATE BUS., PROF. & ECON. DEV. COMMITTEE: 10-0, 6/8/26
AYES: Wahab, Choi, Archuleta, Arreguín, Caballero, Grayson, Menjivar, Niello,
Smallwood-Cuevas, Strickland
NO VOTE RECORDED: Umberg

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 74-0, 4/23/26 (Consent) - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Prescription drug refills: prescriber notifications

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill clarifies that a pharmacist who is dispensing an emergency refill of a medication to a patient is only required to inform the patient's prescriber if a prescriber is identified.

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Pharmacy Law which provides for the licensure and regulation of pharmacies, pharmacists, and dangerous drug or device wholesalers, and establishes the Board of Pharmacy (Board) to enforce the Pharmacy Law. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§ 4000 et seq.)
- 2) Authorizes a pharmacist to refill a prescription for a dangerous drug or dangerous device without the prescriber's authorization if the prescriber is unavailable to authorize the refill and if, in the pharmacist's professional judgment, failure to refill the prescription might interrupt the patient's ongoing care and have a significant adverse effect on the patient's well-being. Requires

the pharmacist to inform the patient that the prescription was refilled and requires the pharmacist to inform the prescriber within a reasonable period of time of any refills dispensed. (BPC § 4064)

This bill clarifies that a pharmacist is only required to inform the prescriber when a dangerous drug or device refill is dispensed if a prescriber is identified.

Background

The Board is estimated to regulate over 50,700 pharmacists, 1,300 advanced practice pharmacists, 4,400 intern pharmacists, and 65,700 pharmacy technicians across a total of 32 licensing programs. In addition to regulating personal professionals, the Board oversees, and licenses related business entities, including pharmacies, clinics, wholesalers, third-party logistic providers, and automated drug delivery systems.

The Pharmacy Law generally prohibits a pharmacist from refilling a prescription except upon authorization of the prescriber. This authorization may be given orally or at the time of the original prescription. If no refills were authorized when the prescription was written, the patient, or the pharmacist on behalf of the patient, may request a refill. However, the Pharmacy Law also allows a drug or device to be refilled by a pharmacist if the prescriber is unavailable to authorize the refill and if, in the pharmacist's professional judgment, failure to refill the prescription could result in harm to the patient. Last year, AB 1503 (Berman, Chapter 196, Statutes of 2025) amended the same section of Pharmacy Law as this bill, among other changes made by that measure, to eliminate a requirement that the pharmacist make every reasonable effort to contact the prescriber prior to refilling a prescription without a prescriber's authorization. The bill also deleted the requirement that the pharmacist make an appropriate record, including the basis for proceeding with an emergency refill. Under current law, a pharmacist is still required to subsequently inform the prescriber within a reasonable period of time of any refills dispensed. This bill only applies that requirement if a prescriber is identified.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 6/23/26)

Biocom California
California Access Coalition
California Pharmacists Association

California Senior Legislature
Western Center on Law & Poverty

OPPOSITION: (Verified 6/23/26)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: Biocom writes that AB 1587 makes a targeted, common-sense improvement to emergency prescription refill statute.

According to California Access Coalition, “Ensuring access to life-saving medication is a matter of basic human dignity and responsible governance. No individual should face preventable harm due to gaps in administrative processes or provider availability. AB 1587 represents a measured and necessary step to uphold the well-being of Californians, particularly those most at risk.”

The California Pharmacists Association notes that “Even short delays in therapy for conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, or epilepsy can result in significant harm, including hospitalization or worse. This bill ensures that pharmacists can use their clinical training to prevent these dangerous gaps in care.”

According to the California Senior Legislature, “AB 1587 promotes continuity of care, prevents avoidable health crises, and supports aging Californians in safely managing their health conditions.”

The Western Center on Law and Poverty writes that “People may lose their physician for various reasons, including when providers leave their medical group or changes in circumstance that results in health plan changes. This can lead to gaps of care for patients who cannot find a new provider before they run out of their medication. Finding and securing an appointment for a new provider can be a lengthy process, especially for Medi-Cal patients or patients located in rural areas... This bill strikes the right balance between patient access and safety by ensuring patients can continue to access medications they have already been prescribed while finding a new provider.”

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 74-0, 4/23/26

AYES: Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega,

Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Solache, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
NO VOTE RECORDED: Addis, Hadwick, Celeste Rodriguez, Sharp-Collins, Soria, Wicks

Prepared by: Sarah Mason / B., P. & E.D. /
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