

# Delaware Hosts Prescription Drug Take-Back Day: Delawareans Encouraged to Dispose of Unused Medication

**DOVER (Oct. 20, 2021)** – Delaware will hold its 21st Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, Oct. 23, 2021. Delawareans can discard their expired or unused medications at [locations statewide](#) between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Organized nationally by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), this twice-a-year event is aimed at reducing the risk of prescription medications being diverted for misuse and has resulted in more than 100,000 pounds of medications being collected in Delaware since 2010.

According to the DEA, during the last Prescription Drug Take-Back Day held in April, Delawareans visited 25 participating locations, in coordination with 19 law enforcement agencies, and returned 5,167 pounds of unused medications.

Medications being disposed of on Prescription Drug Take-Back Day must be in a container such as a pill bottle, box, blister pack, or zipped plastic bag, with personal information removed. Liquid medications must be in their original containers. Needles, aerosols, biohazard materials, medical equipment and batteries will not be accepted. Delaware residents can search for the nearest participating Drug Take-Back Day sites at [takebackday.dea.gov](http://takebackday.dea.gov).

Properly discarding unused medications is an important component of addressing the nationwide opioid epidemic. It reduces the risk of addiction by keeping prescription medications out of the hands of people who may misuse, abuse or sell them, and it helps reduce the risk of drug overdoses.

In 2020, 447 people died in Delaware from a drug overdose, a 3.7 percent increase from the 431 reported in 2019 by the Delaware Division of Forensic Science (DFS). In the first half of 2021, 266 people have died in Delaware from a suspected drug overdose, according to DFS.

“The abundance of unused drugs in our medicine cabinets and communities has helped to fuel the opioid epidemic,” said **DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay**. “By turning in your no-longer-needed prescription medications safely on Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, you can help fight the epidemic in Delaware while also making your home safer.”

In 2020, 45.2 retail opioid prescriptions were dispensed for every 100 people in Delaware, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The rate of retail opioid prescriptions dispensed for every 100 people was 53.2 in Sussex County, 46.8 in New Castle County and 29.7 in Kent County, according to the CDC.

According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 9.7 million people misused prescription pain relievers, 4.9 million people misused prescription stimulants, and 5.9 million people misused prescription tranquilizers or sedatives in 2019. The survey also showed that a majority of misused prescription drugs were obtained from family and friends, often from the home medicine cabinet.

In addition to the sites participating in October’s Prescription Drug Take-Back Day activities, there are 28 permanent medication drop-off locations across the state available year-round. Six of Delaware’s permanent drop-off sites are in Walgreens pharmacies, and the other 22 are located in local law enforcement agencies. For a list of permanent collection sites, visit <https://www.helpisherede.com/Get-Help/Prescription-Drug-Drop-Box>.

If you or a loved one is struggling with addiction in Delaware, call the Delaware Hope Line at 833-9-HOPEDE. To search online for treatment and recovery services in Delaware or nearby states, visit [HelpisHereDE.com](http://HelpisHereDE.com). To search online for treatment and recovery services in Delaware or nearby states, visit [HelpIsHereDE.com](http://HelpIsHereDE.com).