



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ★ DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION  
**DIVERSION CONTROL DIVISION**

## Diversion News: May 2025

### Justice Department Announces up to \$350M Settlement with Walgreens for Unlawful Opioid Prescriptions

On April 21, 2025, the Department of Justice, together with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General (HHS-OIG), announced a \$300 million settlement with Walgreens Boots Alliance, Walgreen Co., and various subsidiaries to resolve allegations that the national chain pharmacy illegally filled millions of invalid prescriptions for opioids and other controlled substances in violation of the Controlled Substances Act.

The company then sought payment for many of those invalid prescriptions by Medicare and other federal health care programs in violation of the False Claims Act.

The settlement amount is based on Walgreens's ability to pay. Walgreens will owe the United States an additional \$50 million if the company is sold, merged, or transferred prior to fiscal year 2032. [Read more](#) about the settlement.



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### DEA Takes Action Against Pharmacy that Could Not Account for Close to 50K Pills

Last month, DEA's Diversion Control Division signed an immediate suspension order (ISO) against Aspire RX in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The ISO alleges the pharmacy failed to account for more than 47,000 controlled substance tablets during an accountability audit (including 33,600 oxycodone 30 mg tablets, 4,981 oxycodone 15 mg tablets, 8,780 alprazolam tablets, and 169 promethazine with codeine bottles). DEA may issue an ISO and suspend a registration in cases where there is "imminent danger to the public health or safety." [21 U.S.C. 824\(d\)](#).

In April, the DEA charged two ISOs and 13 Orders to Show Cause (OTSC).

Read more on [administrative actions](#).

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## DEA Celebrates Another Successful Take Back Day

DEA asked individuals to empty their medicine cabinets – and the community answered. On April 26, 2025, DEA and its law enforcement partners hosted close to 4,500 Take Back Day sites across the country where the community dropped off unwanted, expired medications to help prevent drug misuse before it starts.



DEA's dedication to removing unwanted prescription medications from households across the country continues year-round.

Find a year-round [collection site](#) near you.

Take Back Day collection results are forthcoming.



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## DEA Releases New Ketamine Resources

DEA has a new webpage on the Diversion Control Division website dedicated to ketamine. Ketamine is a dissociative anesthetic that has some hallucinogenic effects. It distorts the perception of sight and sound and makes the user feel disconnected and not in control. It is referred to as a “dissociative anesthetic hallucinogen” because it makes patients feel detached from their pain and environment.

[Learn more](#) about ketamine trends, common street names, and enforcement related to the drug.



## Supply Chain Conference Brings Together Nearly 700 Professionals in the Pharmaceutical Drug Supply



In April, DEA's Diversion Control Division hosted the third annual Supply Chain Conference in Orlando, Florida.

The conference offered DEA registered manufacturers, distributors, pharmacists, importers, and exporters the opportunity to meet, share information, and discuss concerns.

DEA leadership addressed drug shortages, quota, regulatory changes, policy, and other initiatives aimed to reduce diversion of pharmaceutical controlled substances while ensuring an adequate and uninterrupted supply.

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## Diversion Control Division Leaders Reach out to the Community



In April, Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA) Matthew Strait addressed medical professionals at the Kentucky Association of Nurse Practitioners & Nurse-Midwives 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Coalition Conference in Covington, Kentucky. DAA Strait presented on overdose deaths and stimulants to roughly

600 conference attendees.

Also last month, DEA staff answered questions at 56<sup>th</sup> American Society of Addiction Medication Conference. More than 2,300 medical practitioners, researchers, students, and policymakers attended the conference to learn about new developments, best practices, new research, and policy changes in addictive medicine.





## DEA Diversion Experts Travel to Professional Conferences

Look for DEA diversion investigators and other experts at professional conferences across the country. You can expect to see Diversion Control Division exhibits and conference speakers from the DEA leadership team at upcoming conferences. Come see us at:

- National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) Annual Meeting, May 2025
  - American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA), May 2025
  - International Association for Healthcare Security and Safety, June 2025
  - Import Export Conference, June 2025
  - American Association of Nurse Practitioners, June 2025
  - American College of Emergency Physicians, September 2025
  - American Osteopathic Association (OMED Conference), September 2025
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## Diversion Control Division Enforcement

**DEA's Diversion Control Division** strives to prevent, detect, and investigate the diversion of controlled pharmaceuticals and listed chemicals from legitimate sources.

When the safety and health of the American people is in jeopardy, DEA takes action against those who violate the law.

### **Complaint Filed Against Houston Pharmacy and its Owners for Violations of the Controlled Substances Act**

April 28, 2025

### **Stamford Nurse Admits Stealing and Tampering with Hydromorphone and Fentanyl Vials**

April 25, 2025

### **Walgreens Agrees to Pay Up to \$350M for Illegally Filling Unlawful Opioid Prescriptions and for Submitting False Claims to the Federal Government**

April 21, 2025

### **Private Shipping Company to Pay \$400,000 to Settle Allegations of Transshipping Fentanyl Precursor Chemicals**

March 26, 2025

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