

Syringe Access and Disposal Overview for CBOs

As of July 25, 2003, pharmacists may sell, and individuals aged 18 and older may possess, up to 20 hypodermic syringes and needles without a prescription. The Illinois General Assembly and Governor Rod Blagojevich approved this change in law in response to overwhelming scientific evidence demonstrating that access to sterile syringes prevents HIV infections without increasing drug use. The full text of the law – Public Act 093-0392 can be found at www.ilga.gov.

What the law says:

- A pharmacist may sell up to 20 hypodermic syringes and needles to an individual aged 18 years or older without a prescription.
- An individual 18 years and older may purchase and possess up to 20 syringes without a prescription.
- Pharmacists are not required to keep records of individuals purchasing syringes without a prescription and are not required to report these sales to the Illinois State Police.
- The law requires that syringes be kept behind the pharmacy counter and dispensed only by pharmacy staff.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health will provide educational materials to pharmacists that they must make available to individuals purchasing syringes without a prescription. AIDS Foundation of Chicago administers this program.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health will issue guidelines on household sharps disposal strategies that may be implemented by local communities.

How the Sharps Container Program works:

- CBOs enroll in the program by completing the registration form and signing the memorandum of understanding.
- CBOs can provide free household sharps containers and educational materials to non-prescription syringe users.
- CBOs are not required to keep any records of who receives a container or how many they give away.
- Participating CBOs order sharps containers and educational materials at no cost directly from the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.
- Clients can safely dispose of their filled sharps containers in the household trash and should not return them to the participating CBO.
- The AIDS Foundation of Chicago will manage the administrative details of the program and will provide information and support to participating CBOs.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago will pay for all sharps containers and educational materials distributed through this program.

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