

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)
City of Chicago Licensure and Regulation of Pharmaceutical Representatives
City Ordinance in Section 4-6-310 of the Municipal Code

1. What is a Pharmaceutical Representative License and where can I learn about it?

To apply for a license, you must go through the City of Chicago Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) Department. Implementation of this Ordinance began July 1, 2017. The Pharmaceutical Representative (Pharma Rep) license requires that:

- A. No person shall conduct business as a pharmaceutical representative without first having obtained a pharmaceutical representative license unless the pharmaceutical representative conducts business in the City of Chicago as a pharmaceutical representative for fewer than fifteen days per calendar year.
- B. In order to become initially licensed, a pharmaceutical representative shall complete a professional education course as determined by the Commissioner of Public Health prior to application for the license and affirm that this training was completed on the application for the license.
- C. To maintain a license, a pharmaceutical representative must complete minimum continuing education in accordance with subsection (f) in ordinance.
- D. A model disclosure log is on the website for completion by the pharmaceutical representatives to be submitted, upon request or at time intervals as designated that the Commissioner of Public Health, or his designee requires.

City of Chicago **Business Affairs and Consumer Protection** (BACP) manages the Pharma Rep license and fee payment processes. Website:

https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/bacp/supp_info/pharmaceutical_representative_licensing.html or call: 312-74-GOBIZ (744-6249)

Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) manages the education approval process for continuing education (CE) courses available to Pharma Reps to meet the annual education requirements.

- a. CDPH page with information about the Education program:
www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/healthy_living/svcs/pharmaceutical-representative-license.html
- b. CDPH page with approved CE coursework
https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/supp_info/healthy-living/2018-approved-continuing-education-courses.html

2. What is the definition of a qualifying pharmaceutical representative who may apply for a license in Chicago? What is the definition of a pharmaceutical?

A “**pharmaceutical representative**” means a person who markets or promotes pharmaceuticals to health care professionals and **excludes** Medical Science Liaisons, Wholesale Distributors, and pharmaceutical representative managers, or supervisors, who do not interact directly with health care professionals while in the City of Chicago

A “**health care professional**” means any physician or other health care practitioner who is licensed to provide health care services or to prescribe pharmaceutical or biologic products.

The definition of a “**pharmaceutical**” is a “medication that may be legally dispensed only with a valid prescription from a health care professional.”

3. What department issues this license? What is the timeframe for qualifying?

The pharmaceutical license is acquired from the Office of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP). Prior to doing business in the City of Chicago for fifteen days or more within a calendar year, you should obtain a license from this office. The license application is available year round and the license expires one year from the date of receiving the license.

To apply for a license, visit here:

https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/bacp/supp_info/pharmaceutical_representative_licensing.html or call: 312-74-GOBIZ (744-6249)

4. When does the year begin and end for a pharmaceutical representative license?

The expiration date is listed on the actual pharmaceutical representative license and is one year after the date the license was obtained.

5. What is the fee for the application? What are the methods of payment?

See the BACP site (listed above) for updates on license fees and payment options.

6. How is the license renewed?

This is an annual license. Pharmaceutical representatives working in Chicago at least 15 days per year will need to reapply for a license annually. During the renewal process, representatives will be asked to confirm that they completed 5 hours of approved continuing education in the

previous year. Pharmaceutical representatives will receive an automatic reminder email 45 days prior to your license renewal.

7. How many continuing education (CE) hours are necessary to obtain a license? Where do I obtain the CE? What is the cost?

For the initial license, a representative must complete an ethics course that is available as part of the application process. During each year of holding a license, five (5) continuing education (CE) hours are required to maintain the licensure requirement. Only CEs from CDPH-approved courses qualify to meet this requirement. Courses offered by individual pharmaceutical companies do not qualify.

Approved courses can be found here:

https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/supp_info/healthy-living/2018-approved-continuing-education-courses.html). CDPH approves the courses, but does not set the cost for the courses, therefore the cost for the courses vary. Courses (including free courses) are listed by education organization and course title. All questions specific to the individual courses should be sent to the educational provider directly.

8. How do I obtain my CEs for this licensure?

See question 7 and select courses. You will need 5.0 CEs from our listing. After completing each course, make sure you receive a printable “certificate” from the educational provider. If you have problems obtaining your certificate, you must contact the education provider directly.

Review of Instructions:

- **Review** the list of approved courses; listed in sections by Education Provider
- **Note:** Each Education Provider has an email listed for any problems or questions with specific courses
- **Select** your course(s) and the **follow the course link** to access selected course(s) with cost and delivery details (as applicable).
- **Take** the course(s).
- Make sure you obtain your **certificate of completion** for each course taken (contact the provider immediately with problems).

9. Do I submit my CE certificates to the city of Chicago licensing (BACP) and/or to the CDPH offices?

Keep all CE certificates in your personal records (for at least 5 years) in the event that your education record is audited by the city in the future. CDPH will request records from a random sample of pharmaceutical representatives each year. Failure to complete required CE can result in a fee of not less than \$1,000.00 nor more than \$3,000.00 for each offense.

10. What is the start date for the first disclosure period?

You are required to maintain a Disclosure Log in the assigned format, found here: https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/healthy_living/svcs/pharmaceutical-representative-license.html. (Go to the section on Disclosure and download the disclosure log).

The Health Department determines which drugs and classes of drugs must be disclosed in any given year. In 2018, the Health Department is requesting only Schedule II drugs be reported. The first disclosure submission collection period started October 15, 2017 and continues through June 30, 2018.

11. When do I submit the Disclosure Log 2018?

You can find the Disclosure Log template here:
Review question 10 to ensure that the required dates are covered in your reporting. Disclosure Logs may be submitted between July 1 and July 31, 2018 to the Pharma Education office via email: pharmareplicense@cityofchicago.org. Subject line: **Disclosure Log 2018**

12. Are oncology medications considered pharmaceuticals?

Yes, all medications that have to be prescribed by a health care professional are considered pharmaceuticals.