

Physician Requirements to Prescribe Buprenorphine

- **Qualifications and Training**

In order to qualify for the waiver, licensed physicians must either hold a subspecialty board certification, or obtain eight hours of specialized training on buprenorphine therapy. This training can be web-based or obtained through a live program offered through one of four approved sponsors. For upcoming training events, [click here](#). In addition, the physician must also have the capacity to refer patients to appropriate counseling or other non-pharmacological therapies.

- **Applying for a Waiver**

In order to begin prescribing buprenorphine, eligible physicians must submit a [waiver notification form](#) documenting the physician's qualifying information to the [Center for Substance Abuse Treatment \(CSAT\)](#). Once the notification is received, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) issues an identification number, known as a waiver or "X," which is to be included on all buprenorphine prescriptions, in addition to the physician's regular DEA number. For more information on certification requirements, [click here](#).

- **Patient Limits**

An additional requirement for physicians includes a limit on the number of patients each provider can treat at any one time with buprenorphine. Previously, this number was 30, however, Congress passed bill H.R. 6344 in December 2006 that allows certified physicians, who have been prescribing for at least 12 months, to treat up to 100 patients. Under the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (ONDCPRA), physicians must again notify CSAT of their intent or "need" to treat additional patients.