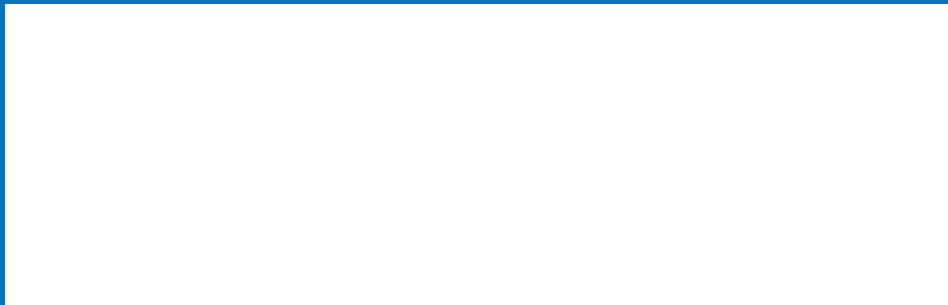


# MEDICATION TAKE BACK

## EVENT GUIDE

An organizational and planning resource  
for hosting a successful event.

As of July 2021.



Disclaimer: This document is not intended to take the place of local, state or federal laws or guidelines. This is a general guide to assist in the planning and management of an event. Although the information contained in this publication has been researched and presented with care and attention, we are not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from the use of this information. Information in this guide is subject to change at any time. Use of this guide does not create nor establish any contractual or other relationship with Michigan OPEN, the University of Michigan, or its Board of Regents.

For up-to-date and further information, refer to <https://michigan-open.org/safe-opioid-disposal/take-back-events/>

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# INTRODUCTION

## History of the Opioid Epidemic

The United States is currently experiencing an epidemic of prescription drug misuse and abuse. 12.5 million people, ages 12 and older, misused opioids (and pain medications) in the past year (Hughes et al., 2016). Since 1999, overdose deaths involving prescription opioids have quadrupled. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 134 Americans die every day from an opioid-related overdose — that is higher than the number of people killed in car accidents or by guns.

Opioids are a broad group of medications that relieve pain by affecting how your brain and central nervous system process pain. They are often prescribed during acute care episodes, such as following a surgery or dental procedure. A recent study (Hill et al. *Annals of Surgery*, September, 2016) found that approximately 70% of the opioids prescribed for surgery go unused, making them vulnerable to diversion and misuse.

## Why Should We Host a Take Back Event?

Prevention is key. To turn the tide of the opioid epidemic, we need to prevent opioid abuse before it begins. Creating safe and convenient opportunities for community members to dispose of their unused and leftover medications is essential. Approved year-round opioid collectors, such as pharmacies and law enforcement, and community take back events are the safest and most environmentally-friendly means of disposing unneeded medications.

Take back events are a great opportunity for community organizations and individuals to come together to make a difference in their local community. These events not only remove unused medications, but equally important, they provide an opportunity to educate the public on safe storage and disposal of prescription medications.



## About This Medication Take Back Event Guide

This take back event guide has been designed to assist you and your community partners in successfully organizing and running a take back event. While this guide highlights many key issues to consider when organizing your event, these are recommendations. Many communities have successfully adapted these recommendations to fit their specific location, event size, and law enforcement partners accordingly.

Michigan OPEN is available as a resource to advise on planning and implementation processes. It remains, however, the event organizer's responsibility to seek additional information where required, ensure that all approvals have been obtained and adherence to all Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) regulations.

# GETTING STARTED



Michigan OPEN is available as a resource to advise further on the following:

- How to obtain a law enforcement partnership for your event.
- Ideas for promoting the event in your community (templates available upon request).
- Volunteer recruitment ideas.
- General questions and troubleshooting.

We encourage seeking additional support from both your organization and others in your community. Suggestions include engaging with your:

- Marketing department
- Community Relations department
- Leadership of your organization

Michigan OPEN contact information: [michiganOPEN@umich.edu](mailto:michiganOPEN@umich.edu)

# IDENTIFYING YOUR TEAM

A strong team and group of partners will ensure a successful event.



## 2.1 EVENT ORGANIZER

A well-managed and safe event requires careful planning. It is critical to appoint a lead event organizer for your take back event. The organizer will be responsible for organizing, managing, and directing the event process.

Given the complexity of this role, it is helpful to maintain detailed records of each of these steps. (see [Section 8.0 – Organizing the Event](#))

Event Organizer Responsibilities:

- Review and familiarize yourself with this guide.
- Review, determine, and manage the budget specific to your event size.
- Connect with law enforcement and other organizations for partnerships.
- Recruit volunteers and delegate tasks from the Volunteer Task List (see [Section 8.1](#)).
- Determine and distribute promotional and educational materials within the community.

## 2.2 VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are key to running a successful event. If you need additional volunteers, consider reaching out to local medical, pharmacy, or nursing students. Michigan OPEN's [Volunteer Guide](#) is a useful resource for your volunteers.

Volunteers are needed to:

- Distribute flyers and help advertise in advance of the event.
- Contribute towards other tasks leading up to the event (e.g., ordering food, etc.).
- Set up and clean up on the day of the event.
- Run the medication take back workstations on the day of the event (approximately 1-2 volunteers per workstation).
- Direct traffic, greet participants, answer questions, etc.

**NOTE:** It is important to educate volunteers on guidelines and laws pertaining to the event.

## 2.3 LAW ENFORCEMENT

To host a take back event, you will need to identify a law enforcement partner. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) requires minimally, one law enforcement officer, unless the event uses a permanent disposal box location.

Michigan OPEN strongly recommends the presence of at least two officers at your take back event, especially for larger events.

**NOTE:** Payment for law enforcement coverage should be discussed when identifying a law enforcement partner.

# EVENT WORKFLOW



### 3.1 PURPOSE

The take back event's purpose is twofold: remove unused medications from the community and educate the public about safe storage and disposal.

**NOTE:** The Michigan OPEN [website](#) has free, downloadable educational materials available for widespread use. Find resources within your community for distribution at your event (e.g., information on established year-round disposal sites, etc.).

### 3.2 QUESTIONNAIRE (OPTIONAL)

Michigan OPEN recommends creating a short questionnaire to be completed by event participants. The completed questionnaires will provide valuable information about the effectiveness of your event. Consider asking questions such as, "Where did you hear about today's event?" and "Where do you store medications in your home?" to gauge where you will focus your marketing or educational efforts for future events.

### 3.3 MEDICATION COLLECTION

The event organizer, in collaboration with the established law enforcement partner, will determine the placement of the medication disposal box to facilitate the anticipated participant volume.

### 3.4 WORKSTATION SETUP

Workstations are where the greatest number of volunteers are needed. The number of workstations you will need will depend on the anticipated size of the event. Typically, 1-2 volunteers are needed at each workstation.

On the following page is an example workstation diagram:

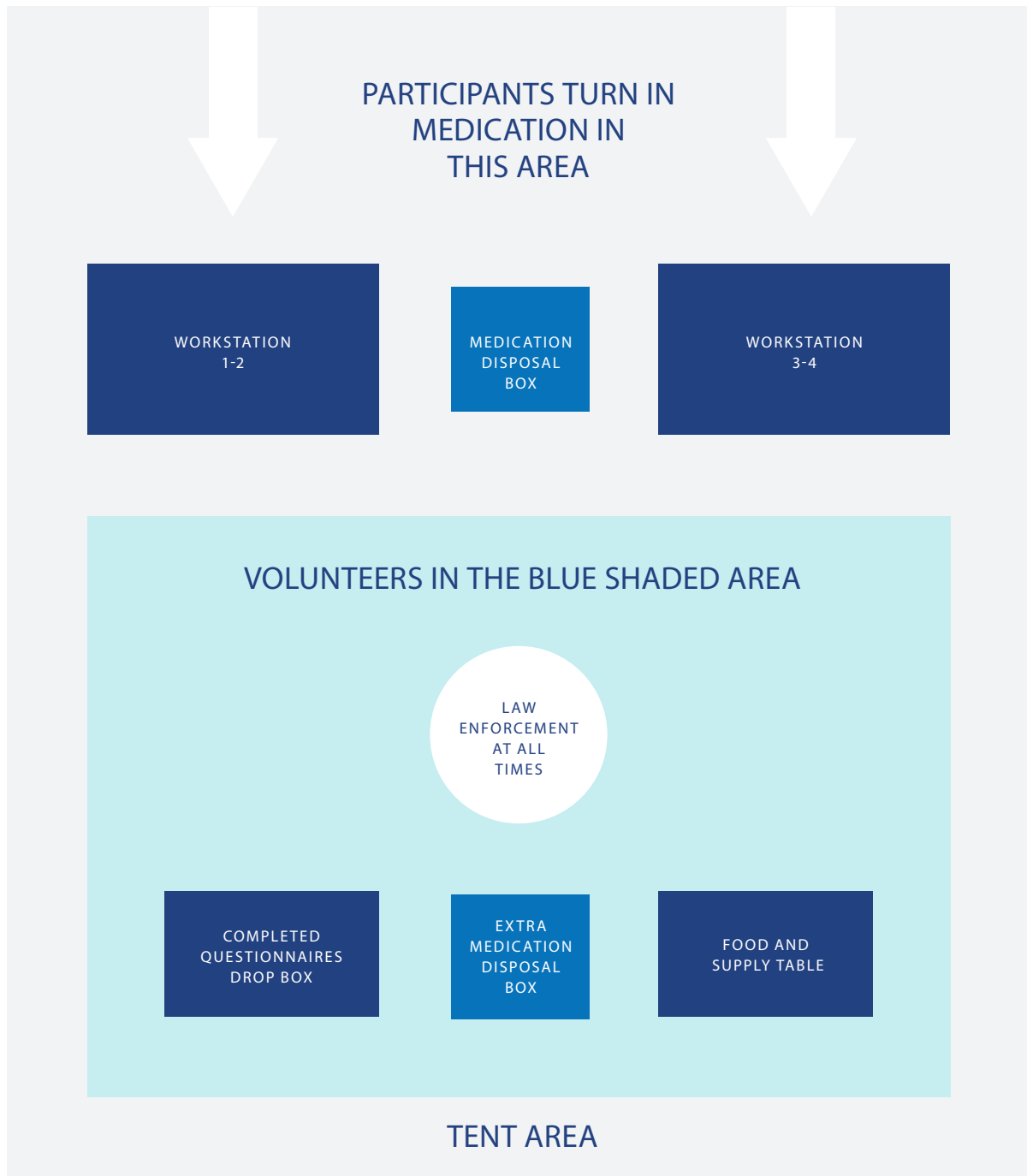
# EXAMPLE WORKSTATION DIAGRAM

## EXAMPLE TENT SET-UP

## SHAREABLE ITEMS



# EXAMPLE WORKSTATION DIAGRAM



CONES AROUND PERIMETER TO BLOCK VEHICLES FROM ENTERING THE AREA



## SECTION 4.0

# SUPPLIES LIST

This supplies list contains a few optional items. Check your office, home, or the venue for these items before purchasing. Pricing estimates are provided in [Section 7.0 – Budget](#).

### General Supplies:

- Scissors (for set-up/tear-down of event)
- Clear shipping/heavy-duty packing tape (to secure tablecloths)
- Zip ties/rope (for tying banners - optional)
- Trash receptacle bins and liners
- Medication disposal box and lid w/ hole
- Hazardous waste box liners for medication disposal box

**NOTE:** Coordinate with your law enforcement partner on the type of box required. If your law enforcement partner registers with the DEA for your event, the DEA will supply the medication disposal box.



### Workstation Setup:

- Plastic table cloths
- Clipboards (**optional** — for participant questionnaires and an additional clipboard for the event organizer)
- Ink pens (for filling out questionnaires)
- King-sized black permanent markers (for participants to mark off personal information on pill bottles)
- Hand sanitizer
- Quart-sized, resealable bags (some participants wish to keep their pill bottles)
- Disinfectant wipes
- Box of disposable gloves (for safety purposes)
- Paper towels
- Stapler (depending on length of questionnaire)

### Rental Supplies:

- Tent with canopy sides (**optional** — only needed if event is held outside)
- Folding chairs (1 for each workstation)
- 1 banquet table per 2 workstations
- 1 additional banquet table for shared supplies

### Optional:

- Container for completed questionnaires
- Balloons
- Volunteer apparel (coordinating t-shirts, pins, nametags, or hats to differentiate the volunteers)
- Assorted candy and candy bowl for participants
- Food for volunteers (examples below):
  - Donuts, coffee, bottled water (morning setup)
  - Pizza and soda (lunch)

# THE VENUE



## 5.1 CHOICE OF LOCATION

In collaboration with your law enforcement partner, determine a suitable venue to meet the following criteria:

- Easy entrances and exits for participants to access and participate in the event safely
- A well-known location in the community

**NOTE:** Think long-term. Using the same location for each subsequent event will increase participation over time.

- Visibility

**NOTE:** A site in a location that receives a lot of foot or car traffic helps with publicity and offers increased promotional visibility of your event.

- Space to set up a tent, if holding the event outdoors

**NOTE:** The potential impact of weather should be considered if hosting outside.

- Sufficient parking and/or accessibility via public transportation
- Safe perimeter around the event

**NOTE:** Law enforcement officers must be able to easily secure and control the site for safety. If the event is in a busy area, be sure it is clearly separated from other events by using cones, barricades, or rope.

- Access to restrooms

Examples of locations:

- Parking lots of a church, mall, retail center, pharmacy, or school
- Community parks, or shared common areas (e.g. a pavilion area)
- Fire department parking lot or one of the bays if inclement weather occurs
- Hospital lobby
- During other community events – Farmers Market, Health Fair, etc.

## 5.2 THINGS TO CONSIDER

Consider additional features of the venue, specific to volunteering, such as:

- Volunteer parking
- Food and beverage locations
- Restrooms
- Banners, yard signs, and balloons setup

# EVENT PROMOTION

## 6.1 PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

It takes advanced planning to successfully promote a take back event. Look around your community for ways to promote your event. Suggestions include:

- Calendars located on newspaper and community websites
- Radio spots/mentions
- Newspaper stories or ads
- Places of worship newsletters
- Flyers distributed to local businesses – Michigan OPEN has free flyer templates available upon request.  
*NOTE: Be sure to customize the flyers with information specific to your event (e.g., are you accepting sharps or liquids?).*
- Email blasts
  - Contact the superintendent or principal of each local school district and request to send email blasts to parents/guardians.
  - Contact state, county, and local law enforcement agencies to request advertising through their Nixle ([www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com)) or community email blast accounts.
  - Neighborhood email lists.
- Social media – Michigan OPEN has free templates available, upon request, for Facebook or Twitter posts.
- These can be used by the marketing and communication departments of potential partners, as seen below.
- Post on your personal social media site and ask all volunteers to do the same.
- Self-promotion – tell family and friends, and ask all volunteers to do the same.

## 6.2 POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Consider reaching out to the following community organizations to ask if their marketing department would consider promoting your event.

- City and community leadership
- Local businesses
- Healthcare clinics
- Private and public school districts
- Hospices
- Dentist offices
- Non-profit organizations
- Environmental groups
- Universities or colleges
- Religious organizations
- Pharmacies
- Libraries

## 6.3 BANNERS/SIGNAGE

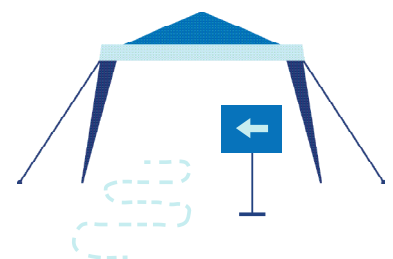
Having clear and strategically placed signage on the day of the event will help with promotion, as well as coordinating traffic and parking. Consider the use of directional signs at heavily trafficked intersections as well.

*NOTE: Document the location of all signage distributed throughout your community, to ensure it is all collected at the end of the event.*

Michigan OPEN has free templates for creating event signage, including banners and yard signs.

Some communities may require approval of banners, yard signs, etc. Please be sure to check your community's regulations/restrictions.

We recommend placing at least one banner in front of the tent/high traffic area and yard signs at event entrances.



## SECTION 7.0

# BUDGET

Take back events are a service to your community. Organizations in your community may be willing to assist with costs associated with hosting an event. Many of these costs are optional and modifiable to fit the size of your event.

## SAMPLE BUDGET

General Supplies				
Item	Comments	Qty	Cost	Total
Set-up and Tear-down				
Scissors		1	\$ 6.00	\$ 6.00
Heavy duty shipping tape w/dispenser		2	\$ 4.00	\$ 8.00
Zip ties/bundling straps or rope		1	\$ 6.00	\$ 6.00
Medication disposal box	DEA supplies if law enforcement is registered, otherwise please contact Michigan OPEN.	1	\$ 70.00	\$ 70.00
Total General Supplies				\$ 90.00

Workstation Setup - for one table with 2 workstations				
Item	Comments	Qty	Cost	Total
Plastic table cover		1	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.00
Stapler		1	\$ 6.00	\$ 6.00
Clipboard	additional clipboard for the event org.	3	\$ 6.00	\$ 18.00
Ink pens		2	\$ 1.00	\$ 2.00
King size black permanent marker		2	\$ 6.00	\$ 12.00
18x11 clear plastic tray	Party City SKU 257440	2	\$ 4.00	\$ 8.00
Hand sanitizer		1	\$ 4.00	\$ 4.00
Resealable bags		1	\$ 6.00	\$ 6.00
Disinfecting wipes		1	\$ 5.00	\$ 5.00
Disposable gloves		1	\$ 6.00	\$ 6.00
Paper towels		1	\$ 1.50	\$ 1.50
Total Workstation Setup				\$ 70.50

SECTION 7.0  
**BUDGET**

**SAMPLE BUDGET (CONT'D)**

Promotional Expenses				
Item	Comments	Qty	Cost	Total
Printing of questionnaire and educational information.	Pricing varies.	1	\$ 2.00	\$ 300.00
Banner	6x9 w/grommets	1	\$ 55.00	\$ 55.00
Yard sign and metal frame	24x36	1	\$ 40.00	\$ 40.00
Total Promotional Expenses				\$ 395.00

Rental Supplies (may be optional depending on venue)				
Item	Comments	Qty	Cost	Total
6 ft. banquet table	1 table for 2 workstations	1	\$ 8.00	\$ 8.00
6 ft. banquet table	table for supplies	1	\$ 8.00	\$ 8.00
Folding chairs	1 per volunteer, estimated 7	7	\$ 1.50	\$ 10.50
Tent w/canopy sides	10x15 framed canopy tent w/sides and set-up fees	1	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Total Rental Supplies				\$ 326.50

Rental Supplies (may be optional depending on venue)				
Item	Comments	Qty	Cost	Total
Balloons	bring attention to the event	12	\$ 1.00	\$ 12.00
Small plastic bin	for completed questionnaires	1	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Volunteer T-shirts	approx. cost for 7 volunteers			\$ 125.00
Donuts and coffee				\$ 35.00
Water				\$ 8.00
Pizza plus drinks				\$ 45.00
Assorted candy & candy bowl	for participants			\$ 10.00
Total Optional				\$ 245.00

# ORGANIZING THE EVENT

## 8.0 DOCUMENTATION

The event organizer should have all important documentation readily accessible on the day of the event. This might include:

- List of volunteers, including cell numbers and hours they agreed to work
- Contact information for rental companies, if applicable (e.g. tent)
- Copies of all contracts
- All receipts for reimbursement, if applicable
- All Checklists (See [Section 9.0](#))

## 8.1 VOLUNTEER TASK LIST

The event organizer can use this Volunteer Task List to delegate all, or some, of the items to volunteers. Be sure to organize your volunteers' availability to cover activities prior to the event, during, and after the event.

**NOTE:** Keep all receipts for reimbursement, if applicable, and consider prepaying whenever possible for ease of delegating.

TASK	ASSIGNED TO:
<p>Food items to order:</p> <p>Order and pick up breakfast items – <b>optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donuts or bagels, coffee, sweetener, creamer, cups, and napkins</li> <li>Hot cider and/or hot chocolate (in the fall)</li> </ul> <p>Order, pick up, or have lunch delivered – <b>optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pizza, sandwiches, etc. for all volunteers</li> </ul> <p>Purchase and pick up beverages – <b>optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ice, water, and cooler</li> </ul> <p>Purchase candy for participants – <b>optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring candy and candy bowl</li> </ul>	<p>_____</p>

# ORGANIZING THE EVENT

TASK	ASSIGNED TO:
<p>Balloons, streamers/ribbons, and dancing inflatables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider using something eye-catching around the perimeter of your event and near the entrance to help draw attention to your site.</li> <li>• Gather the items in advance of the event, as the total number will vary according to the number of signs, the location of the event, etc.</li> <li>• On the day of the event, strategically place balloons, streamers, or dancing inflatables near the entrance/along the road, etc.</li> </ul>	<hr/>
<p>Volunteer apparel</p> <p>Volunteers must be easily identified apart from participants. If you have a restricted budget, ask all volunteers to coordinate their shirt color, and/or purchase disposable name tags. If your budget allows, consider ordering t-shirts, hats, or large pins. If ordering items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm number of volunteers</li> <li>Collect t-shirt sizes, if applicable – <a href="#">optional</a></li> <li>Order apparel with enough advance planning</li> <li>Distribute apparel either on the day of the event, or in pre-event meeting(s)</li> </ul>	<hr/>
<p>Items to copy &amp; laminate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Questionnaire – One per participant – <a href="#">optional</a></li> <li><a href="#">Volunteer guide</a> – Email or print and distribute to all volunteers (2 pgs.)</li> </ul>	<hr/>

# ORGANIZING THE EVENT

TASK	ASSIGNED TO:
<p>Create/print handouts to distribute at the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educational brochures on safe storage and disposal of opioids. <a href="http://michigan-open.org/patient-resources/">http://michigan-open.org/patient-resources/</a></li> <li>Any local information or partnering organization's information for public distribution.</li> </ul> <p>Provide a 2-sided, ¼ sheet educational handout – <b>optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Side 1 – Your contact information</li> <li>Side 2 – Local community year-round drop-off locations</li> </ul>	<hr/>
<p>Assign volunteers to distribute flyers the week or two leading up to the event</p> <p>Location 1 – <hr/></p> <p>Location 2 – <hr/></p> <p>Location 3 – <hr/></p> <p>Location 4 – <hr/></p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Banners, yard signs, table poster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain law enforcement and other partners' logos</li> <li>Confirm number of banners; order; pick up or have delivered</li> <li>Confirm number of yard signs; order; pick up or have delivered</li> <li>Confirm number of table posters; order; pick up or have delivered – <b>optional for large events</b></li> </ul>	<hr/>



## SECTION 9.0

# EVENT PLANNING CHECKLISTS

This section outlines the checklists needed for pre-event, event day, and post-event protocols.

## SECTION 9.1 PRE-EVENT CHECKLIST

### 2 MONTHS BEFORE EVENT

Identify an event organizer	Begin reviewing and delegating tasks from the Volunteer Task List
Establish and confirm law enforcement partnership	Purchase supplies from Supplies List
Review guide and budget	Order rental furnishings if needed
Devise promotional plan and set into motion	If ordering volunteer apparel, connect with vendor for ordering timeline
Recruit volunteers	

### 1 MONTH BEFORE EVENT

Revisit promotional plan and continue implementation	Create, order and print promotional materials & signage
Revisit Volunteer Task List and continue implementation	Coordinate and prepare for volunteer meeting
Law enforcement obtains and weighs medication disposal bin(s)	Send reminder email to volunteers confirming their availability

### 2-3 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT

Increase promotional efforts	Check rental agreements if applicable
Ensure all supplies were delivered	

## SECTION 9.0

# EVENT PLANNING CHECKLISTS

## SECTION 9.1 PRE-EVENT CHECKLIST

### 1 WEEK BEFORE EVENT

Host volunteer meeting and distribute apparel; review what to wear

Finalize Volunteer Task List

Organize event organizer clipboard

## SECTION 9.2 EVENT CHECKLIST

### EVENT DAY

#### 2-3 hours prior

Rental company delivers and sets up equipment, if applicable (e.g., tent, tables, chairs)

Review Volunteer Task List verifying all items are at the venue

Distribute volunteer apparel (if applicable)

Set up workstations

Tape tablecloths to tables (if venue is outdoors)

Set out educational brochures on proper disposal and any local community flyers

Strategically place yard signs at entrances and closest intersections

Hang up banners – including one on tent if applicable

#### 1-hour prior

Host a short, informal briefing with volunteers regarding the process, including emphasizing that no one is to handle any medications.

**NOTE:** This briefing should be co-led by law enforcement and the event organizer.

Final review of the Volunteer Task List, answering any questions from the volunteers

# EVENT PLANNING CHECKLISTS

## SECTION 9.3 POST-EVENT CHECKLIST

### POST-EVENT

Law enforcement weighs collected medications and provides amount to event organizer.

Law enforcement removes collected medications off event site to dispose of medications per their department/DEA protocols.

Rental company disassembles tent, tables, etc. (if applicable)

Remove all banners and signage – including one on tent if applicable.

Wash all items that came into contact with medications.

Sort through signs and posters, storing any reusable items for future events.

### Closing Communications

Debrief with your volunteers, organization and any sponsors on amounts collected and thanking them for their support.

Evaluate your event's success in discussion with your volunteers. Michigan OPEN would appreciate any comments/ suggestions on what went well and what was challenging. Please email to [michiganOPEN@umich.edu](mailto:michiganOPEN@umich.edu).

# LAW ENFORCEMENT GUIDE

Please make a copy of Section 10.0 to give to your law enforcement officer(s)

Thank you for agreeing to support our community medication take back event. This guide, provided by Michigan OPEN, outlines the roles and responsibilities of your law enforcement officers at this medication take back event, in accordance with the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) guidelines\*

— found at [http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/index.html](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/index.html)

- An employed, and authorized, law enforcement officer must be present at all times during the take back event to maintain control and custody of all collected controlled substances. Michigan OPEN recommends minimally two officers to handle potentially larger volumes and officers' breaks.
- All DEA and departmental policies will be followed in the destruction of the collected controlled substances.
  - If working with the DEA, the law enforcement agency maintains custody of all collected medications until incineration by DEA. (The hand-off process will be coordinated between the law enforcement agency and the DEA directly.)
  - If working independent of the DEA, the law enforcement agency maintains custody of all collected medications until the final disposal process, per their departmental policies.

## PRIOR TO EVENT

In collaboration with the event organizer, confirm:

- Event location and traffic patterns
- Acceptable medications for collection
- Law enforcement details: number of officers at event; arrival and departure (Recommend 30 minutes before and after event)

Obtain a medication disposal box for the combined collection of controlled and non-controlled substances:

- If law enforcement agency is working with the DEA, the DEA will provide the medication disposal box. (Verify with your local DEA office when completing or modifying your DEA registration)
- If working independent of DEA, please notify Michigan OPEN to ensure a container will be available for the event.

Establish payment process, if required, for the law enforcement officer(s)' time and by whom (i.e., hosting org., other).

Consider promoting the take back event through your law enforcement's newsletters, website, social media, etc. (Michigan OPEN has available templates for promoting event)

# LAW ENFORCEMENT GUIDE

## DAY OF EVENT

The law enforcement officer will:

Arrive 30 minutes prior to event with the medication disposal box and traffic cones (if applicable).

- Provide security throughout event, ensuring the following:
  - An officer is positioned at the medication disposal box, maintaining visual contact, at all times.
  - Control and custody of collected medications is maintained by law enforcement officers.
  - Participants pour their pills directly into the medication disposal box.
  - If participants require assistance, the 2nd officer may assist.
  - Enforce that volunteers may not handle the controlled substances at any time during the event.

## CONCLUSION OF EVENT

The law enforcement officer will:

Weigh the medication disposal box's contents (minus weight of empty box).

Provide final weight to event organizer.

Maintain control and custody of medication disposal box contents, transporting off site per department policy.

Law enforcement agency will follow departmental or DEA policy for destruction of all medications collected.

## THANK YOU

for your partnership in our community-based take back event,  
without which this event would not be possible!

# VOLUNTEER GUIDE

In collaboration with Michigan OPEN, thank you for volunteering at our community medication take back event! Volunteers are essential for the success of our event! This Volunteer Guide is available in the appendix to be given to all volunteers, as applicable, along with any other appendices.

Please make a copy of Section 11.0 to give to your volunteers

Our goals are twofold:

- To take unused medications, especially opioids, out of people's homes where they can be misused and abused.
- To educate our community on how to safely store and dispose of opioids.

The overall process on the day of the event is the following:

- Participants (those bringing in their medications for disposal) need to be greeted enthusiastically.
- Volunteers will ask questions from the questionnaire. – [optional](#)
- Encourage participants to take any informational brochures on safe storage and disposal of opioids, or any other community brochures at the workstations.
- Direct participants to medication disposal box next to law enforcement.

## Greeter Volunteer

For larger take back events, the participants may be greeted by a volunteer who directs them to open workstations for medication disposal. This volunteer helps maintain an efficient flow of participant traffic.

## Workstation Volunteers

The volunteers at the workstations greet the participant and initiates the questionnaire, if applicable.

SUGGESTED SCRIPT: "Hello! Thanks for coming out to our medication take back event. Can we ask you a few questions? We are collecting information to improve our future medication take back events."

[Participation is voluntary. If the participant declines, they do not have to answer any questions.](#)

Provide participants with available educational brochures and thank them for participating!

SCRIPT: "Volunteers cannot touch any of the medications, so we are asking that you take your pill bottles to the medication disposal box by the officer."

Prompt the participant to take their medication to the law enforcement officer standing at the medication disposal box. If the participant needs assistance with carrying their medications, ask the second officer to please assist. [Volunteers cannot take the medications to the law enforcement officer or the disposal box.](#)

For ease of carrying, the participant may use the plastic tray located at the volunteer workstation.

Participants may want to keep their pill bottles (provide a plastic baggie). Educate the participant that prior to discarding their bottle (in recyclables or household trash) they should mark off all personal and refill information from the bottle label to ensure no one can refill their prescription (provide a permanent marker).

The law enforcement officer will direct the participant to dispose of their medications directly into the medication disposal box.

## Other

Participants with questions regarding what is done with the collected medications can be directed to the law enforcement officer.

Participants may have questions related to disposal of items that are not accepted (such as liquids, sharps, or inhalers). If possible, be prepared with written materials at the workstation that identify locations/facilities that will take these items.

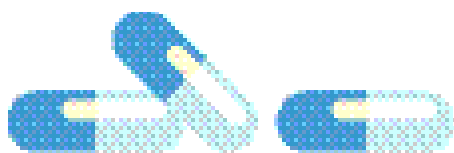
# VOLUNTEER GUIDE

## Quick Review: Drop-off pills and capsules

- Law enforcement remains at the drug disposal box at all times.
- Volunteers assist participants with questionnaires.
- Pills/capsules can only be touched by participants. They pour their medications directly into the disposal box.
- Depending upon your process, the pill bottle can be a) deposited directly into the disposal box, b) recycled, or c) thrown away.
- For options b) or c) above, please have participants use the permanent markers to black out personal and refill information.

## What's accepted?

- Pills/capsules – any and all
- Patches
- Inhalers after 2014
- Expired or unwanted prescriptions/controlled substances
- Pet medications in pill/capsule form



## What's not accepted?

- No liquids (as determined by your event)
- No EpiPens (as determined by your event)
- No creams and gels
- No needles, syringes, or lancets (as determined by your event)
- No thermometers
- No IV bags
- No sprays
- No vials
- No powders

## Summary of take back event scripting:

- Thank you for coming.
- In order to know how we can improve our future take back events, may I ask you a few quick questions?
- Help yourself to the educational brochures on the table (or candy, etc.).
- Thank you so much for coming today and doing your part to remove these unused pills from the community. Look for us again in the (fall/spring). Have a nice day!

Michigan OPEN contact information: [michiganOPEN@umich.edu](mailto:michiganOPEN@umich.edu)

# APPENDIXES

## OPTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL COLLECTION

While liquids and sharps are not accepted by law enforcement due to the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) guidelines, you will find that some of your take back event participants will arrive with these items, or may look to your event as a place to find answers on where, and how, to dispose of liquids and/or sharps safely.

While Michigan OPEN does not encourage or endorse the collection of liquids or sharps, each site must decide in advance of their event what they will accept. If the event chooses to do so, it is their sole responsibility, not their on-site law enforcement, to ensure safe collection and disposal. Please read all options very carefully before deciding to offer this additional service to your event participants. If you are affiliated with an organization that has access to legal counsel, Michigan OPEN advises that you consult with counsel.

As the hosting organization you can decide which of the below options is best suited to your event, considering available resources and your community needs:

1. Do not accept liquids/sharps which are noted, by default, on all of our template flyers.
2. Do not accept liquids/sharps. However, provide information on how to safely dispose of these items.

Michigan OPEN has "Liquids/Sharps Disposal" stock cards available for you to print and distribute.

Some permanent disposal sites will accept liquids in their original container.

- i. Locate a permanent disposal site near your event by visiting [www.michigan-open.org/takebackmap](http://www.michigan-open.org/takebackmap).
- ii. Call and ask if they accept liquids in the original container. You can then direct your event participants to the location.

3. Accept liquids and/or sharps.

- IMPORTANT: Be sure to add the following steps to your event:
  - i. Decide on whether to only accept one or both items. Based on your decision, edit all flyers to include the item(s) as acceptable.
  - ii. Designate a volunteer to own the additional disposal process as this will not be a part of the law enforcement role and responsibility.

NOTE: The following sections will provide details on how to offer this service to your community.



# APPENDIX A

## DISPOSAL OF LIQUIDS

### ACCEPTING LIQUIDS FOR DISPOSAL

Now that you have decided to collect liquid medications at your take back event, designate a volunteer to own the liquids disposal process:

- Purchase necessary items:
  - Several medium to large sized resealable plastic bags.
  - Bag(s) of kitty litter.

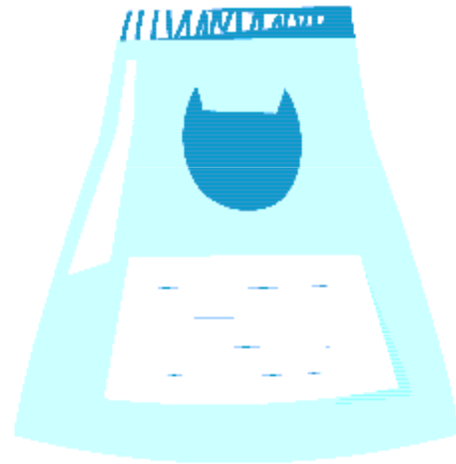
OR

If you have available funds, you may wish to purchase drug deactivation products for your event that provide medication neutralizing elements. To find several options, search online for "Home Drug Deactivation Kits."

- Prior to event:
  - Pre-fill the resealable bags with kitty litter.
  - Determine how many of the bags you wish to have and where they will be located (e.g., one at each workstation or a standalone "liquids disposal" section near the law enforcement officer).
- Post event:
  - Seal the kitty litter bags and throw into the garbage once filled with liquid medications.

OR

Follow instructions for the Drug Deactivation Kit disposal.



Remember:

- Include the purchased items into your budget and supply list for accounting purposes.
- Edit your flyers to include liquids as "acceptable."
- Include the process in your volunteer directions so that everyone understands how to collect these items.
- Print several copies of Michigan OPEN's "Liquids and Sharps Disposal" stock card for distribution.
- Do NOT flush liquid opioids down the toilet.

**NOTE: Remember that law enforcement will maintain control and custody of your medication disposal box contents only. You are responsible for the collection and the disposal of any liquids you receive!**

# APPENDIX B

## DISPOSAL OF SHARPS

### ACCEPTING SHARPS FOR DISPOSAL

Now that you have decided to collect sharps at your take back event, designate a volunteer to own the sharps disposal process:

- Ensure an appropriate container is available to collect lancets, needles, and syringes:
  - If your event is affiliated with a hospital, ask if you can use one of the hospital's sharps containers during the event.
    - Confirm with the hospital that upon conclusion of your event, the filled sharps container will be returned back to the hospital to be processed in the usual manner with the rest of their sharps containers.
  - If you have available funds, consider purchasing small red sharps containers from a local pharmacy. Read container for disposal instructions.
  - As a last resort, if you do not have a hospital-issued container make one from an empty household bottle (i.e. detergent, bleach) with these features:
    - Made of heavy duty plastic that cannot be punctured.
    - Lid that is tight-fitting and able to be screwed on.
    - Able to stand upright on its own.
    - Marked with a line at 2/3 full — do not fill beyond this line.
- Prior to event:
  - Determine how many sharps containers you wish to have (e.g., one at each workstation or a standalone "sharps disposal" section near the law enforcement officer).
  - Determine ahead of the event how to dispose of the sharps containers:
    - If using the hospital's containers, find out when, where, and how to return the filled container (i.e., taped and sealed shut, a location for drop off, or verify if they will take the sharps immediately after the weekend event).
    - If using the red purchased containers, read the instructions on how to pay to ship the filled container for incineration.
    - If using the "homemade" containers:
      - Visit [safeneedledisposal.org](http://safeneedledisposal.org) to find a disposal location in your area.
      - Contact your city, village, or township office and ask about household hazardous waste collection events.
      - Contact your regular garbage collector and ask about your container pick-up.
- Post event:
  - Follow the disposal method for the filled sharps containers as previously determined.

**CAUTION! DO NOT** use water bottles, metal cans, or glass jars for your sharps container!

**NOTE:** Remember that law enforcement will maintain control and custody of your medication disposal box contents only. You are responsible for the collection and the disposal of any sharps that you receive! It is very important that you determine the collection and disposal method prior to committing to offering this service.

# APPENDIX B

## DISPOSAL OF SHARPS (CONTINUED)

Remember:

- Include the sharps collection process into your volunteer directions so that everyone understands how to collect these items.
  - Keep sharps containers out of reach of all participants, especially children, until ready to use.
  - Participants must place their own sharps into the designated container. Volunteers may not touch the sharps!
  - instruct participants to avoid touching or breaking sharps while placing them in the container.
  - Do not overfill the containers:
    - Once the container is full, close and seal and start a new container.
- Include any purchased items into your budget and supply list for accounting purposes.
- Edit your flyers to include sharps as “acceptable.”
- Print several copies of Michigan OPEN’s [“Liquids and Sharps Disposal”](#) stock card for distribution.
- Do NOT throw sharps or the filled sharps containers into trash or recycling!





To learn more, please visit  
[Michigan-OPEN.org](https://Michigan-OPEN.org)

For all correspondences, please email:  
[MichiganOPEN@umich.edu](mailto:MichiganOPEN@umich.edu)