



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
Bureau of Health Professions Licensure  
Drug Control Program  
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## ADVISORY

**TO:** Medication Administration Program Administrators and Registered Sites  
**FROM:** David E. Johnson, Director, Drug Control Program  
**DATE:** June 19, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Valid Health Care Provider Orders – MAP Sites

All medications and dietary supplements prescribed for administration by Licensed Staff and Medication Administration Program (MAP) Certified Staff require a Health Care Provider (HCP) order. Prescription medications ordered for administration by MAP Certified staff may not be experimental and must be currently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for marketing in the United States.

### Prescriber Signature

All HCP orders must include the signature of a Valid Authorized Prescriber, registered with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to prescribe. Acceptable HCP signatures include:

- A “wet” signature (i.e. order is signed with pen and ink by HCP);
- An “image” of the HCP’s signature (i.e., the order, as received, depicts a representation of the HCP’s actual signature); or
- An “electronic” signature.
  - When HCP orders are received, unaltered, through an electronic system:
    - Only the last page of the HCP order needs to be (electronically) signed and dated by the HCP; and
    - All HCP order pages must be fastened together as one unit.

### Order Expiration

HCP orders, including standing orders/protocols, are valid for one year, typically corresponding with an annual preventive health care visit (e.g. annual physical). If an annual visit cannot be scheduled before the order expires, the order may remain valid until the day after the annual visit actually occurs, under the following circumstances:

- An individual’s health insurance plan requires a predetermined amount of time between annual physicals (e.g. one year and one day); and
- The Service Provider has made a good faith effort to obtain an appointment with the HCP on the earliest practical date permitted by the insurer.