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# Press Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Attorney General Patrick Morrisey Announces Initiative to Expand Access to Disposal Locations For Unwanted Prescription Drugs**

West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey today announced that his Office will partner with local law enforcement agencies across West Virginia to help fight the state's prescription drug abuse epidemic by expanding access to secure disposal locations for unwanted or expired prescription drugs.

In the near future, the Attorney General will send a letter to law enforcement agencies in each county offering them the opportunity to apply for their own permanent prescription drug disposal boxes. Those boxes, which already are in place in several county sheriffs' departments, police departments, and courthouses, are supervised and regularly emptied by law enforcement.

"Fighting our state's prescription drug abuse epidemic is everyone's responsibility, and by making more drug disposal boxes accessible to all West Virginians, more people may clean out their medicine cabinets and prevent their unwanted medications from ending up in the wrong hands," Morrisey said.

Millions of pounds of prescription medications go unused every year, which makes them particularly at risk for abuse, especially for first-time drug users. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, almost 70 percent of new abusers of prescription pain relievers obtained their pills from a friend or relative for free or took them without asking.

"We should all be concerned with how easily people are able to get their hands on these prescription drugs, and it's a reminder that any measures we take as a state to fight our drug abuse epidemic must include plans to ensure these medications are disposed of securely and safely," Morrisey said. "Our Office has hosted a collection site here at the Capitol in conjunction with the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Division of Protective Services for the past several years. Now we're looking to expand on that success across West Virginia and really encourage people to safely dispose of their drugs."

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