



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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Director

### Department of Health Professions

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Healthcare Colleague:

The US Drug Enforcement Administration's 20<sup>th</sup> *National Drug Take-Back Day* is **Saturday, April 24, 2021**. The COVID-19 pandemic has been with us over a year. The link between COVID-19 and *National Drug Take-Back Day* is significant. According to the CDC, "the U.S. has seen an increase in overdose deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 83,544 Americans overdosing during the 12-month period ending July 1, 2020, the most ever recorded in a 12-month period. The increase in drug overdose deaths appeared to begin prior to the COVID-19 health emergency, but accelerated significantly during the first months of the pandemic."

As a member of the healthcare community, your leadership is needed. Please urge your patients and colleagues to visit the [DEA's website](#) to locate by zip code their nearest collection site.

For the safety of participants disposing of drugs and law enforcement managing the event, all *Drug Take-Back Day* sites in the Commonwealth will adhere to local COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Drugs brought to these locations will be disposed of in an environmentally friendly and safe manner.

This year, many people may *not be aware* they can safely dispose of prescription drugs forgotten in their medicine cabinet which may be susceptible to diversion and misuse. Please join me to spread the word that *National Drug Take-Back Day* is a safe, convenient, responsible way to dispose of unused prescriptions and other drugs.

For more information please contact Ralph Orr, Director of the Virginia Prescription Monitoring Program at 804-367-4514, or by email at [pmp@dhp.virginia.gov](mailto:pmp@dhp.virginia.gov).

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