

Medication-Assisted Treatment

The [SUPPORT Act of 2018](#) gives practitioners more flexibility in providing medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and extends the privilege of prescribing buprenorphine in office-based settings to qualifying advanced practice nurses until October 1, 2023. The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) was signed into law in 2016 to help address the opioid epidemic. The Act endorses the use of MAT for the treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD) and amends the Controlled Substances Act. This law authorizes the nurse practitioner to seek a DATA Waiver to offer buprenorphine for the treatment of OUD.

In order to be eligible for the prescribing waiver, the APRN must complete at least 24 hours of initial training which is offered through organizations such as American Association of Nurse Practitioners and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Recent [Practice Guidelines](#) have allowed qualified APRNs to forego the required training when treating up to 30 patients for OUD. Practitioners utilizing this training exemption are limited to treating no more than 30 patients at any one time and applies only to the prescription of Schedule III, IV, and V drugs or combinations of such drugs.

Qualified practitioners who undertake the required training can treat up to 100 patients using buprenorphine for the treatment of OUD in the first year if they possess a DATA 2000 Waiver and meet certain conditions. More information on treating up to 100 patients can be found [here](#).

APRNs who have an approved Notification of Intent (NOI) Buprenorphine Waiver from SAMHSA or have completed the 24 hours of required training may seek to obtain the DATA 2000 Waiver. The APRN must submit a copy of their approval email from SAMHSA or evidence of 24 hours buprenorphine waiver training, DATA 2000 collaborative practice agreement, and supply evidence that your collaborating physician also has a DATA Waiver. The ASBN will notify the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) once the criteria is met and the DEA will then assign a special identification number to be included on all buprenorphine prescriptions for opioid dependency treatment. This is in addition to the APRN's regular DEA number.

In order to qualify, the Arkansas APRN must:

- **Submit a [Buprenorphine Notification of Intent Application](#) through SAMHSA**
- **Have an approval letter from SAMHSA indicating waiver level and certification date or have completed the 24 hours of required training**
- **Hold prescriptive authority through the Arkansas State Board of Nursing**
- **Have a DATA 2000 Waiver collaborative practice agreement with a practicing physician who is licensed under the Arkansas Medical Practices Act and holds a DATA 2000 Waiver**
- **Hold an active, unrestricted DEA registration**
- **Only prescribe to populations included in the APRN's area of education and certification**
- **Address medication assisted treatment for opioid use disorder in prescribing protocols**

Please submit a copy of the waiver to the Arkansas State Board of Nursing Advanced Practice Department via the Arkansas Nursing Portal.

Resources:

[FAQs](#) about updated practice guidelines

[Waiver Training](#)