

21 NCAC 46 .2516 EMERGENCY CLOSURE

(a) The pharmacist-manager of a pharmacy has the responsibility and authority to cease some or all of the pharmacy operations when doing so is necessary to fill the pharmacist-manager's responsibility (a) for the safe, lawful and secure receipt of prescription orders and delivery of prescription drugs under Rule .1804(a) of this Chapter, or (b) to ensure that adequate qualified personnel are in place to properly render pharmaceutical service in compliance with state and federal law under Rule .1601(a)(1) of this Chapter.

(b) In the event that a pharmacist-manager anticipates that a pharmacy will be closed for more than two hours, either to receive prescription orders or to dispense prescription drugs, during the regular hours that it has posted that it is open under Rule .1601(a)(2) of this Chapter, the pharmacist-manager shall take the following actions before closing:

- (1) Post a notice in a location conspicuous to the public of (a) which services the pharmacy has ceased providing, and (b) the date and time that the pharmacist-manager anticipates that the pharmacy will resume providing those services. The pharmacist-manager shall change the posted notice in the event that the pharmacist-manager determines that it is no longer accurate.
- (2) Send an e-mail to emergencyclosure@ncbop.org with the information provided in Paragraph (b)(1) of this Rule, including any changes to the required notice.
- (3) Offer to transfer any prescriptions at the patient's request during any time when the pharmacy is not dispensing prescription drugs, and post a notice in a location conspicuous to the public of the process for having those prescriptions transferred. This includes prescriptions that have been filled but not delivered before the pharmacy is closed. However, the pharmacy is not required to transfer prescriptions at any time at which there is no pharmacist or certified technician who is able to transfer prescriptions. For the purposes of this rule, a pharmacist or certified technician is able to transfer prescriptions if that person either:
 - (A) is present at the pharmacy, or
 - (B) has remote access to the pharmacy's systems, either because that person is employed by the pharmacy, or employed by a pharmacy with a remote medication order processing services arrangement with the closed pharmacy under Rule .1816 of this Section.

(c) In the event that the pharmacist-manager is unable to exercise the authority in this Rule, a pharmacist who is on duty at the pharmacy has the responsibility and authority set out in Paragraph (a) of this Rule if the pharmacist follows the procedures set out in Paragraph (b) of this Rule.

(d) This Rule does not apply in the following circumstances:

- (1) Permanent closures or temporary closures lasting more than 14 consecutive days, which are instead governed by the provisions of Rule .2502(h) and (i) of this Section;
- (2) Pharmacies located outside the State of North Carolina, which should follow any closure rules of their home states; or
- (3) During the duration of time when the Governor or any county or municipality has declared a state of emergency in the pharmacy's location pursuant to Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes.

(e) In the event that the either (a) the pharmacist-manager suffers an emergency that renders the pharmacist-manager unable to exercise the responsibilities in Paragraph (b) of this Rule, or (b) the pharmacist-manager is unavailable and the only pharmacist(s) on duty suffers an emergency that renders the pharmacist unable to exercise the responsibilities in Paragraph (b) of this Rule, the exercise of the responsibilities in Paragraph (b) of this Rule shall be excused until such time as an employee authorized by the pharmacist-manager or permit holder can exercise those responsibilities.

History Note: *Authority G.S. 90-85.6; 90-85.15A; 90-85.21; 90-85.25; 90-85.32;*
 Eff. August 1, 2024.