

# How a prescription can be given

Supply of a Schedule 4 medicine using digital image of a prescription ceased 31 March 2022\*

## Methods for giving a prescription

In South Australia, the legal form of a prescription is the **written/paper or electronic prescription**.

The requirements for how a prescription for a medicine is given are set out in the [Controlled Substances \(Poisons\) Regulations 2011](#), regulation 33:

*A prescriber must give a prescription for a drug:*

- a) *in writing OR*
- b) *in an approved electronic form\*\**

*A prescriber may, if of the opinion that good reason exists to do so, give a prescription for a drug to a pharmacist by:*

- a) *telephone or*
- b) *fax*

## Prescriptions given to a pharmacist by telephone or fax

There are provisions under regulations 33(8) and 33(9) for prescriptions given by telephone and fax, which have long been in place in South Australia.

If the prescription is given to a pharmacist by telephone or fax, the prescriber is required to forward the original prescription to the pharmacist; as soon as practicable if the prescription is for a S4 drug, or within 24 hours if the prescription is for a drug of dependence.

For prescriptions given by fax, where the prescriber has endorsed the fax prescription with **the name and address of the single pharmacy that may dispense the prescription**, this is sufficient for state legislation purposes.

However, since the temporary PBS Special Arrangement for digital image prescriptions has now ceased for community prescribers and pharmacists, **prescribers are required to forward the original prescription to pharmacies for purposes of PBS claiming**.

\*The Commonwealth's [National Health \(COVID-19 Supply of Pharmaceutical Benefits\) Special Arrangement 2020](#) has been extended for use by approved hospital authorities only, until 31 March 2023

\*\* This means an electronic prescription using approved electronic prescribing software

## For more information

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