



Global Location Number Guidance for EMS

The EMS section is working with the DOH Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) team to provide information related to Global Location Numbers. The OEND team is distributing naloxone to EMS through the WA PDO (naloxone for rural EMS provider use) and naloxone leave behind (for EMS statewide).

An FDA law went into effect in November 2023 requiring a GLN (global location number) for anyone receiving prescription medications. The GLN is a unique number provided by GS1 that identifies your specific ship-to location.

The DOH purchases naloxone for first responders through McKesson Medical-Surgical, and beginning September 1, 2025, McKesson will require this number for any program receiving prescription medications from the DOH. The GLN you provide must match your EMS service name and the address to where the DOH ships naloxone.

More detailed information on this requirement and all the information you need to find or obtain a GLN for your EMS service is below.

What is a GLN?

A GLN (global location number) is a new FDA requirement for anyone receiving prescription medications that allows medications to be better traced through the supply chain. It's a unique number that identifies your specific ship-to location.

In November 2013, the US FDA Drug Supply Chain Security Act (DSCSA) was signed into law to address the dangers of counterfeit, contaminated, solen, or otherwise harmful drugs. Largely created in response to keeping illicit and counterfeit drugs out of the U.S. drug supply chain and protect public health, the act outlines steps for electronically tracking and tracing prescription drugs at the packaging level. It requires manufacturers, wholesalers, healthcare providers, and pharmacies to maintain and share certain prescription drug data in a secure format that can be transmitted between each of their systems.

When signed into law, the DSCSA was given a 10-year implementation timeline. Different milestone dates were set with requirements to help stakeholders prepare in a phased approach. The FDA requirement that all trading partners must share chain-of-ownership data back to the product's origin in a serialized way went fully into effect in November 2023.

Why do you need a GLN?

The Department of Health (DOH) purchases naloxone through McKesson Medical-Surgical and McKesson requires that the DOH has a GLN on file for any program receiving prescription medications.

The only naloxone that is currently over the counter is 4mg/dose intranasal naloxone (e.g., NARCAN® or its generic equivalent) – all other types are still considered prescription and so the Department of Health will need to obtain your GLN if you'd like to request anything other than 4mg/dose intranasal.

When do you need to provide your GLN?

If your service decides to apply for free naloxone from the Washington State Department of Health, the GLN will be requested as part of the application process with the Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution team.

How do you know if you already have a GLN?

If you receive medical supplies from a supplier such as McKesson, Cardinal, etc., you likely already have a GLN. A free lookup tool is available here: [GS1 Global Location Number Lookup](#). You can search by name or address.

If there is more than one GLN associated with your location in the lookup, please reach out to your medical director to confirm which one you should use.

If you cannot find a number associated with your location this way, we recommend you reach out to your medical director to confirm that you don't already have one on file under a different name.

How do you get a GLN?

If your service does not already have a GLN, you will need to purchase one for your EMS service from [GS1](#). The cost is a one-time \$30 and the link to purchase is here: [Global Location Number Purchase](#).

Links to more information

[Drug Supply Chain Security Act \(DSCSA\) | GS1 US](#)

[Drug Supply Chain Security Act \(DSCSA\) | FDA](#)

[Global Location Number \(GLN\) | GS1](#)



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