

## Illinois Department of Public Health Launches Syringe Service Program Registry

In August 2019, Governor JB Pritzker signed the Overdose Prevention and Harm Reduction Act (Public Act 101-0356, see <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=101-0356>), which established a pathway for organizations and individuals to operate a syringe access program. It provides protection for employees, volunteers, or participants of these programs from being charged or prosecuted for possession of syringes or other drug consumption paraphernalia provided by the program, as well as materials associated with drug checking services offered by these programs.

The legislation authorizes the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to oversee the applications process for establishing a syringe access program. In February, IDPH launched an online Syringe Service Program Registry which will expedite the application process for any entity interested in providing these services.

Syringe Service Programs (SSP) are an important element of the continuum of services that reduce the harms associated with substance use. They provide access to sterile syringes, as well as creating a space for syringe disposal, naloxone distribution to reverse opioid overdoses, testing for infectious diseases, and linkage to mental health and substance use disorder treatment services.

**Learn more about IDPH's Syringe Services Program Registry and register at:**

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/opioids/prevention>

SSP provide an opportunity to engage community members who have been historically marginalized and driven away from sources of support. They support the goals of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (IDHS/SUPR) by improving the health and well-being of people who use drugs, increasing opportunities for engagement and referral to treatment if desired.

IDHS/SUPR encourages programs engaged in public health promotion, harm reduction services, and overdose prevention to consider applying to incorporate syringe access into their existing services. Interested individuals and organizations can apply at IDPH's SSP Registry:

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/opioids/prevention>