

REQUIRE DOMAIN NAME REGISTRIES/REGISTRARS TO LOCK & SUSPEND ILLEGAL ONLINE DRUG SALES

Today, online criminals peddling poison for profit are winning. Domain name registries and registrars must reduce online availability of illicit opioids and other counterfeit, falsified, substandard, or unapproved prescription drugs. This includes:



Domain name registries and registrars must immediately, on notice from a credible party, lock and suspend any domain name that is used to sell harmful medicines and illicit drugs.



Detect and remove social media posts, individual and group pages, advertisements, and other listings offering or facilitating harmful, illegal and illicit drug sales via the Internet.

WHAT ARE DOMAIN NAME REGISTRIES & REGISTRARS?

A domain name registry (DNR) company creates, operates and can enforce requirements for domain extensions such as .ca, .com, .edu, .org, and .tech.

Examples of registries include Canadian Internet Registry Authority (CIRA), Verisign, Radix, Neustar, etc.

A domain name registrar is an accredited company that sells domain names to the public.

Examples of registrars include Rebel and Tucows (Canada-based), and GoDaddy.

REGULATORY OVERSIGHT CREATING BARRIERS TO ENFORCEMENT

Domain takedowns can only be done at the registrar level. The registrar who created the domain name is the party responsible for having it removed or deactivated when needed. However, registries and registrars often will not act against these illegal and dangerous online drug sellers without court orders.

Obtaining a court order is very difficult. The current regulatory oversight is cumbersome and unclear and comes under the jurisdiction of:

Health Canada - Regulates health products.

CBSA - Prevents importation of illegal health products.

RCMP - Conducts investigations and manages the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

Without a streamlined approach, with one regulator to enforce compliance of registrars to take down harmful sites, the online sale of illicit drugs will continue to cause harm to Canadians.

WHY INCLUDE ILLICIT DRUG SALES IN DEFINITIONS OF ONLINE HARM?

As Canada introduces legislation to combat online harm, it is crucial that illegal online sale and distribution of controlled substances (opioids) and other drugs be included in the definition of 'online harm' to protect public health and safety.

Including the online sale of illegal drugs (controlled substances and other drugs) in the definition would be consistent with the DNS Abuse Framework that has been signed by 48 registrar or registries from around the world.¹

WHO DOES THIS APPLY TO?

Domain name registries and registrars that:



Are operated or involved in commerce in Canada; or



Offer to register or assign domain names for any legal or natural person in Canada; or



Registers or assigns, or offers to register or assign, domain names that are used to market or sell goods or services to, residents of Canada.

WHO ARE TRUSTED NOTIFIERS?

- Health Canada
- RCMP
- CBSA
- Provincial Regulatory Authority of Pharmacy
- National Association of Boards of Pharmacy
- Intellectual property rightsholders of one or more products being offered or advertised via a reported domain name.
- A Canadian-based website ([narpa-pharmacy](https://narpa-pharmacy.com)) linked to a "bricks and mortar" pharmacy that is licensed by the regulatory authority in the province/territory.

¹ https://dnsabuseframework.org/media/files/2020-0529_DNSAbuseFramework.pdf