

ADVOCACY RESOURCE CENTER

Advocating on behalf of physicians and patients at the state level

Issue brief: State Snapshot of Overdose Epidemic Updated June 2024

The nation's drug overdose and death epidemic has killed more than one million Americans in the past 25 years. The epidemic affects every state and continues to be driven by illicitly manufactured fentanyl, methamphetamine, and cocaine, often in combination or in adulterated forms. More than 106,000 deaths were reported in the United States between May 2022 to May 2023. The AMA continues to urge policymakers' action to increase access to evidence-based care for substance use disorders, pain and harm reduction measures. The research, news articles, state health department reports and other information below cite data from multiple and varied sources, including national, state and local public health agencies, law enforcement, emergency medical services, hospitals, treatment centers, and medical journals. Relevant AMA advocacy, resources and recommendations to end the epidemic also are below.

- Recommendations from the <u>AMA Substance Use and Pain Care Task Force</u> and the <u>2023 AMA Overdose</u>
 <u>Epidemic national report</u> highlight physicians' actions and other steps that must be taken to have a
 meaningful impact on reducing drug-related mortality and improving patient outcomes.
- Additional AMA resources include:
 - Issue Brief from the AMA Advocacy Resource Center, <u>Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder</u> Parity Enforcement: What will it take for patients to receive the benefits of their premium dollars?
 - AMA research collaboration with Manat Health: <u>Improving Access to Care for Pregnant and</u>
 Postpartum People with Opioid Use Disorder: Recommendations for Policymakers
 - AMA-Manatt Health 2022 state policy toolkit provides more than 400 specific laws, regulations, policy guidance and other actions being implemented to help reduce mortality and improve outcomes.
 - The Fight to End the Nation's Overdose Epidemic and Restore Compassionate Care: Profiles in Leadership profiles the work of more than 25 practicing physicians, policymakers, researchers and advocates working daily to reduce drug-related mortality and improve patient outcomes.
 - <u>Dispelling Myths of Bystander Opioid Overdose</u> is a new issue brief to provide relevant clinical information regarding bystander overdose as well as AMA policy regarding harm reduction initiatives.
- The AMA continues to urge states, pharmacy chains, and payers to remove all reference to the 2016 U.S.
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention opioid prescribing guidelines and replace them with the updated
 <u>CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain—United States, 2022</u>, which CDC said
 "updates and replaces" the 2016 guideline. Additional, constructive guidance is available in the newly
 updated Federation of State Medical Boards Strategies for Prescribing Opioids for the Management of Pain
- AMA Education on Substance Use Disorders and Addiction Education to Meet new DEA Requirements of the MATE Act.

See below for state-by-state news and other reports. A national snapshot can be found here.

For more information, please contact Daniel Blaney-Koen, JD, Senior Attorney, AMA Advocacy Resource Center, at daniel.blaney-koen@ama-assn.org.

State reports

1. Alabama

- New Alabama law expands mental health treatment for substance use disorders
 https://www.cbs42.com/alabama-news/new-alabama-law-expands-mental-health-treatment-for-substance-use-disorders/ May 6, 2024
- Deaths from 'gas station heroin' users bring renewed fears for parents, medical experts https://abcnews.go.com/US/deaths-gas-station-heroin-users-bring-growing-fears/story?id=108712857 April 2, 2024
- Statistical Models vs. Front-Line Workers: Who Knows Best How to Spend Opioid Settlement Cash? https://kffhealthnews.org/news/article/opioid-settlement-cash-alabama-mathematical-models-helios/ March 5, 2024
- Can a mathematical model decide best how to spend opioid settlement cash?
 https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2024/02/27/1234114404/opioid-settlement-money-artificial-intelligence-helios-predictive-model February 27, 2024
- Majority of Alabamians support boosting mental health services, poll finds.
 https://alabamians-support-boosting-mental-health-services-poll-finds/ January 24, 2024
- Opioid prescriptions trend down for 10th year in Alabama
 https://www.wsfa.com/2023/12/10/opioid-prescriptions-trend-down-10th-year-alabama/
 10, 2023
- Alabama Champion: Doctor saves lives with naloxone distribution.
 https://abc3340.com/news/local/alabama-champion-doctor-saves-lives-with-naloxone-distribution
 November 3, 2023
- UA bringing overdose prevention training and Narcan to Tuscaloosa residence halls. https://www.apr.org/news/2023-10-10/ua-bringing-overdose-prevention-training-and-narcan-to-tuscaloosa-residence-halls October 10, 2023
- Alabama overdose deaths increase since 2019, experts worry summer season may increase drug use. https://www.wkrg.com/mobile-county/alabama-overdose-deaths-increase-since-2019-experts-worry-summer-season-may-increase-drug-use/ May 18, 2023
- Central Alabama overdose crisis worsens. https://www.wvtm13.com/article/the-overdose-crisis-in-central-alabama-is-worsening/43775495 May 2, 2023
- "Odds Are Alabama" Shines Light on Dangers of Fentanyl. https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/blog/2023/03/nr-fentanyl.html March 16, 2023
- Alabama 2023 Drug Threat Assessment. 2023.
 https://druguse.alabama.gov/assets/files/2023AlabamaDrugThreatAssessment.pdf
- New overdose dashboard shines a light on the issue in Alabama.
 https://www.wbrc.com/2022/12/09/new-overdose-dashboard-shines-light-issue-alabama/ December 8, 2022
- Montgomery County, DA warns of rising fentanyl overdoses.
 https://www.wsfa.com/2022/06/14/montgomery-county-da-warns-rising-fentanyl-overdoses/ June 14, 2022
- Anniston police investigating several likely fentanyl overdoses.
 https://www.wbrc.com/2022/04/02/anniston-police-investigating-several-likely-fentanyl-overdoses/
 April 1, 2022
- Baldwin County drug overdose deaths tripled over 2 years.
 https://mynbc15.com/news/local/baldwin-county-drug-overdose-deaths-tripled-over-2-years
 4, 2022
- As drug overdose deaths increase, law enforcement carrying life-saving medicine. https://www.waaytv.com/content/news/HPD-now-carrying-Narcan-other-law-enforcement-agencies-do-as-well-575625151.html October 28, 2021

- What's up with all those purple flags planted beside a Huntsville street?
 https://www.al.com/news/huntsville/2021/08/whats-up-with-all-of-those-purple-flags-planted-beside-a-huntsville-street.html August 31, 2021
- Fatal overdoses skyrocket in Alabama. https://www.waff.com/2021/07/15/fatal-overdoses-skyrocketing-alabama/ July 14, 2021
- Overdose deaths are up 31.3% in Alabama. https://whnt.com/news/overdose-deaths-are-up-31-3-in-alabama/ May 21, 2021
- Opioid overdoses increased 20% in Ala. in 2020. https://www.wbrc.com/2021/04/21/opioid-overdoses-increased-ala/ May 4, 2021
- Health officials raise the alarm over overdose deaths in Birmingham area.
 https://www.al.com/news/2021/05/health-officials-raise-the-alarm-over-overdose-deaths-in-birmingham-area.html May 4, 2021
- Opioid deaths increased in Jefferson County in 2020. https://www.wbrc.com/2021/02/25/opioid-deaths-increased-jefferson-county/ February 25, 2021
- Drug overdoses climbed in Alabama during pandemic. https://www.al.com/news/2021/01/drug-overdoses-climbed-in-alabama-during-pandemic.html January 25, 2021
- Overdoses on the rise in pandemic. https://mountaineagle.com/stories/overdoses-on-the-rise-in-pandemic,28650 September 30, 2020
- Opioid overdoses on the rise since pandemic began. https://www.wbrc.com/2020/08/18/opioid-overdoses-rise-since-pandemic-began/ August 18, 2020
- **Drug Overdoses Increase During the Pandemic.** https://wbhm.org/feature/2020/drug-overdoses-increase-during-the-pandemic/ July 20, 2020
- Madison County seeing a spike in overdoses, deaths amid pandemic.
 https://www.rocketcitynow.com/article/news/local/madison-county-seeing-a-spike-in-overdoses-deaths-amid-pandemic/525-021e43d6-44de-4c50-99ee-a326f2394a22 May 13, 2020

2. Alaska

- Alaska lawmakers pass HB 202 to address opioid crisis in schools
 https://www.webcenterfairbanks.com/2024/05/07/alaska-lawmakers-pass-hb-202-address-opioid-crisis-schools/ May. 6, 2024
- 2023 was Alaska's deadliest year for opioid overdoses and the state saw the highest increase in deaths in the nation <a href="https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2024/04/18/2023-was-alaskas-deadliest-year-for-opioid-overdoses-and-the-state-saw-the-highest-increase-in-deaths-in-the-nation/April 18. 2024

 April 18. 2024
- CVS to pay Alaska \$10M in settlement for role in opioid crisis
 https://alaskapublic.org/2024/03/14/cvs-to-pay-alaska-10-m-in-settlement-for-role-in-opioid-crisis/
 March 14, 2024
- \$1.7 million of meth and fentanyl seized in Ketchikan, Alaska National Guard briefs community https://www.krbd.org/2024/02/09/1-7-million-of-meth-and-fentanyl-seized-in-ketchikan-alaska-national-guard-briefs-community/ February 9, 2024
- Dozens more charged in deadly drug trafficking ring prosecutors call one of Alaska's biggest ever https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/crime-courts/2024/01/25/dozens-more-charged-in-deadly-drug-trafficking-ring-prosecutors-call-one-of-the-biggest-in-alaska-history/ January 26, 2024
- Demand for drug test strips indicates 'zombie' opioid additive xylazine is spreading in Alaska https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/mat-su/2023/12/07/test-strips-for-zombie-opioid-additive-xylazine-now-available-in-alaska/ December 7, 2023
- More than 200 died of drug overdoses in Alaska last year, down from 2021.
 https://www.thecordovatimes.com/2023/10/27/more-than-200-died-of-drug-overdoses-in-alaska-last-year-down-from-2021/ October 27, 2023

- Drug overdose deaths ravaging Alaska men and Natives.
 https://alaskawatchman.com/2023/10/16/drug-overdose-deaths-ravaging-alaska-men-and-natives/
 October 16, 2023
- 2022 Drug Overdose Mortality Update (September 2023)
 https://health.alaska.gov/dph/VitalStats/Documents/PDFs/DrugOverdoseMortalityUpdate_2022.pdf
 September 2023
- As opioid overdose deaths continue surging in Alaska, the availability of a lifesaving drug grows. https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2023/09/14/as-opioid-overdose-deaths-continue-surging-in-alaska-the-availability-of-a-lifesaving-drug-grows/ September 19, 2023 (subscription required)
- Troopers warn of lethal batch of drugs in Mat-Su after 3 overdose deaths in 24 hours. https://alaskapublic.org/2023/04/10/troopers-warn-of-lethal-batch-of-drugs-in-mat-su-after-3-overdose-deaths-in-24-hours/ April 10, 2023
- How Alaska became one of fentanyl's deadliest frontiers.
 https://www.cbsnews.com/news/fentanyl-alaska-overdoses-native-population-law-enforcement-addiction/ March 1, 2023
- Rise in fentanyl in Alaska prompts switch to stronger overdose reversal drug. https://www.ktoo.org/2022/12/02/alaska-officials-hope-switch-to-stronger-opioid-reversal-drug-will-help-quell-rise-in-fentanyl/ December 2, 2022
- Report details Alaska demographics hurt most by 2021 spike in drug overdose deaths.
 https://alaskapublic.org/2022/08/01/report-details-alaska-demographics-hurt-most-by-2021-spike-in-drug-overdose-deaths/
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- Governor Dunleavy Addresses Fentanyl Crisis in Alaska.
 https://gov.alaska.gov/newsroom/2022/05/03/governor-dunleavy-addresses-fentanyl-crisis-in-alaska/
 May 3, 2022
- Juneau fire department is distributing opioid overdose rescue kits.
 https://www.ktoo.org/2022/04/18/juneau-narcan-opioid-overdose-kits/ April 18, 2022
- Alaska overdoses and deaths rise as global pandemic overshadows state opioid epidemic. https://www.ktoo.org/2021/09/01/alaska-overdoses-and-deaths-rise-as-global-pandemic-overshadows-state-opioid-epidemic/ September 1, 2021
- Alaska reports increase in drug-related overdoses. https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/northwest/alaska-reports-increase-in-drug-related-overdoses/ May 22, 2021
- Overdose deaths in Alaska have been on the rise since the pandemic began, report says.
 https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2020/12/23/overdose-deaths-in-alaska-have-been-on-the-rise-since-the-pandemic-began-report-says/

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3. Arizona

- Education Department wants more schools to have fentanyl overdose medication https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona-education/2024/05/08/tom-horne-wants-more-schools-to-have-fentanyl-overdose-medication/73589059007/ May 8, 2024
- Arizona begins to distribute part of \$1 billion opioid settlement to fight fentanyl crisis https://www.fox10phoenix.com/news/arizona-begins-to-distribute-part-of-1-billion-opioid-settlement-to-fight-fentanyl-crisis April 12, 2024
- New campaign highlights the life-saving impact of naloxone in reversing an opioid overdose https://directorsblog.health.azdhs.gov/new-campaign-highlights-the-life-saving-impact-of-naloxone-in-reversing-an-opioid-overdose/ March 18, 2024
- Narcan vending machine opens at south Phoenix health clinic https://kjzz.org/content/1871411/narcan-vending-machine-opens-south-phoenix-health-clinic
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- Opioid overdose deaths trending down in Arizona for first time in decade
 https://www.azfamily.com/2024/01/19/opioid-overdose-deaths-trending-down-arizona-first-time-decade/ January 18, 2024
- Arizona to receive 55,000 units of naloxone over next 2 years as part of national opioid settlement https://ktar.com/story/5554231/arizona-to-receive-55000-units-of-naloxone-over-next-2-vears-as-part-of-national-opioid-settlement/ December 21, 2023
- Fentanyl is Poisoning Arizona's Teens. Students Are Reducing Overdoses, One PSA at a Time. https://www.the74million.org/article/fentanyl-is-poisoning-arizonas-teens-students-are-reducing-overdoses-one-psa-at-a-time/ October 12, 2023
- Maricopa County Office of Communications: Maricopa County Invests \$2M in Opioid Settlement Funds to Support 12 Local Organizations. https://www.maricopa.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2811 August 31, 2023
- AZ makes significant strides in opioid crisis. https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2023/05/15/az-makes-significant-strides-in-opioid-crisis/ May 15, 2023
- Overdose inside Arizona prison points to larger problem, concern for state leaders.
 https://ktar.com/story/5476053/overdose-inside-arizona-prison-points-to-larger-problem-concern-for-state-leaders/ March 28, 2023
- Arizona health officials warn of rising fentanyl doses in cocaine, other drugs.
 https://kjzz.org/content/1840944/arizona-health-officials-warn-rising-fentanyl-doses-cocaine-other-drugs
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 https://www.azmirror.com/blog/gop-proposal-that-would-make-a-fentanyl-deaths-first-degree-murder-moves-forward/ March 7, 2023
- As cartels turn to social media to push fentanyl, experts teach parents how to keep kids safe. https://news.azpm.org/p/newsc/2022/12/3/213986-as-cartels-turn-to-social-media-to-push-fentanyl-experts-teach-parents-how-to-keep-kids-safe/ December 3, 2022
- New report shows opioid deaths increased despite state initiatives.
 https://news.azpm.org/p/healthnews/2022/9/12/212845-new-report-shows-opioid-deaths-increased-despite-state-initiatives/
 September 12, 2022. The full report is available here:
 https://www.azdhs.gov/opioid/documents/opioid-surveillance-report-2020-2021.pdf
- 'We can't ell how much is manufactured': How much fentanyl is not getting seized in Arizona? https://www.12news.com/article/news/local/arizona/over-half-of-the-nations-fentanyl-pills-are-seized-in-arizona/75-9574d508-6cb2-47e7-b4a4-171f2a74007b August 5, 2022
- Cops: 500,000 fentanyl pills found in Arizona traffic stop.
 https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/cops-500000-fentanyl-pills-found-arizona-traffic-stop-84973436
 May 25, 2022
- "Super Meth" makes its mark in Tucson. https://www.kgun9.com/news/local-news/super-meth-makes-its-mark-in-tucson April 6, 2022
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- The Connection Between Snapchat and Fentanyl.
 https://www.maricopacountyattorney.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=844 August 30, 2021
- Arizona teens are overdosing at alarming rates.
 https://www.azfamily.com/news/investigations/opioid_crisis/arizona-teens-dying-of-fentanyl-overdoses/article_bbc50ce6-e022-11eb-8f1b-97acac350276.html
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 https://www.azfamily.com/news/investigations/opioid_crisis/lost-in-phoenix-gives-raw-glimpse-into-phoenixs-opioid-epidemic/article_4ebe7b06-8e96-11eb-b810-f7545cc89522.html March 26, 2021
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 https://www.nogalesinternational.com/news/sheriff-s-office-saw-increase-in-overdose-calls-in-2020/article_fc562b58-64f0-11eb-b516-9f0d5427fc43.html
 February 2. 2021
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 https://www.kgun9.com/news/coronavirus/pima-county-reaches-record-of-overdose-deaths-this-year
 December 4, 2020
- 1/4 of Arizona voters say the opioid crisis has become less important to them following the
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 October 28, 2020
- Amid COVID-19 pandemic, the opioid epidemic rages on: Here are resources to get help. https://www.abc15.com/news/rebound/keeping-you-safe/amid-covid-19-pandemic-the-opioid-epidemic-rages-on-here-are-resources-to-get-help September 16, 2020
- Flagstaff police report spike in fentanyl overdoses, deaths.
 https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona/2020/09/01/flagstaff-police-report-spike-fentanyl-overdoses-deaths/5657984002/

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- Tucson's rise in drug overdose deaths could be linked to pandemic.
 <a href="https://tucson.com/news/tucsons-rise-in-drug-overdose-deaths-could-be-linked-to-pandemic/article_ed773af2-5dfc-5fc6-85c1-2ddd0b9cde02.htmlhttps://tucson.com/news/tucsons-rise-in-drug-overdose-deaths-could-be-linked-to-pandemic/article_ed773af2-5dfc-5fc6-85c1-2ddd0b9cde02.html August 18, 2020
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 https://www.fox10phoenix.com/news/suicides-overdoses-are-up-amid-covid-19-pandemic-according-to-health-experts July 18, 2020
- Deaths escalated as opioids flooded tribal lands, report says. https://katu.com/news/recover-northwest/report-deaths-skyrocketed-as-opioids-flooded-tribal-lands June 30, 2020
- The battle of addiction during the time of novel coronavirus: Mental anguish, idle hands may be recipe for relapse. https://www.yourvalley.net/stories/the-battle-of-addiction-during-the-time-of-novel-coronavirus, 154044 April 20, 2020

4. Arkansas

- Local governments struggle to distribute their share of billions from opioid settlements https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/local-governments-distribute-opioid-settlements/3856196/ May 12, 2024
- Arkansas opioid abatement efforts go mobile, both on wheels and via a new app https://arktimes.com/arkansas-blog/2024/03/27/arkansas-opioid-abatement-efforts-go-mobile-both-on-wheels-and-via-a-new-app March 27, 2024
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 https://achi.net/newsroom/study-drug-overdose-deaths-up-among-pregnant-postpartum-women/
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 https://www.4029tv.com/article/new-arkansas-law-requires-opioid-rescue-kits-in-all-public-schools/44655337#:~:text=A%20new%20law%20set%20to,of%20children%20across%20the%20state.

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