



Naloxone Distribution Guidance for Social Service Providers

Naloxone saves lives by reversing the effects of an opioid overdose. Local agencies play a key role in distributing this medication to the community and at-risk populations.

Acquire Naloxone – Request free naloxone from the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) using [this form](#). If you plan to regularly distribute naloxone, BPHC can help your agency join the [Community Naloxone Program \(CNP\)](#)—email OD2A@bphc.org. Naloxone is also covered by many health insurance plans and available over the counter in pharmacies.

HOW TO DISTRIBUTE NALOXONE

Train Staff: Request live overdose rescue training from BPHC using [this form](#). Share BPHC’s online, self-paced overdose training (available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)). See these [short videos](#) for a quick way to learn about overdose response.

Make Naloxone Visible – Encourage staff to wear naloxone on lanyards or keep it visible in [wall cabinets](#)—email OD2A@bphc.org if you’re interested in getting free cabinets. Hang up posters to raise awareness and distribute wallet cards explaining overdose response. Order free posters and wallet cards from the MA [Clearinghouse](#) (available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese).

Engage in Conversation: Tips for talking with clients, families, and community:

- Framing: “I’m not here to judge or get anyone in trouble. Safety is most important.”
- Start with Questions: “Do you know about naloxone, what it does, or how to use it?”
- Non-Stigmatizing Language: Say “people who use drugs” or “people with opioid use disorder” instead of “addict.” Say “drug use” instead of “drug abuse.”
- Safety: “Naloxone is like a fire extinguisher. Many times, you won’t need it. But when you need it, this tool could save someone’s life or yours.”
- Unregulated Drug Supply: “Sometimes, fentanyl is in cocaine or methamphetamine. For people who don’t have opioid tolerance, the fentanyl hits them hard, and they overdose.”

Collect Impact Data: Share data with the City and State to help track naloxone usage!

- # of doses distributed
- # of people who received naloxone
- # of overdose reversals

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about Boston OD2A or visit
boston.gov/bphc-od2a.



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Listen to Feedback: Regularly discuss with staff and clients whether your naloxone distribution is effective and how you could improve.

Priority populations – Prioritize distributing naloxone to populations experiencing disproportionate burden in overdoses, such as Black and Latinx communities, and unhoused individuals or people leaving incarceration. Also prioritize distributing to anyone practicing abstinence and/or those with decreased tolerance. These are risk factors for overdose.

Storage: Store naloxone at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. If naloxone freezes, thaw it before use. Check expiration dates regularly.

MORE RESOURCES

- Rescue Breathing Masks: Ensure safe rescue breathing. [Order them here at no cost.](#)
- Fentanyl Test Strips: Help people check their drugs for fentanyl and make more informed decisions. [Get them at no cost here.](#)
- Training Videos: [Short videos](#) about overdose and other substance use topics are available from the Grayken Center for Addiction.
- Stay Safe with Overdose Spotting: When using drugs, buddy up if possible or call the SafeSpot Overdose Hotline: 1-800-972-0590. This hotline provides support and emergency help if needed. Order free [wallet cards](#) here.
- Interested in Treatment? Call the MA Substance Use Helpline at 1-800-327-5050 or text “HOPE” to 800327 to find treatment in Massachusetts. You can order [wallet cards](#) at no cost (available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese)
- Stay Informed: Stay updated with the [latest scientific evidence](#) on naloxone.

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