



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

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MDHHS to provide free naloxone to community organizations and individuals statewide

Naloxone can be requested via online portal to reverse opioid overdoses and save lives

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has launched an [online portal](#) where community organizations can request free naloxone, a medication that reverses opioid overdoses and saves lives.

In 2018, opioid overdoses killed more than 2,000 Michiganders, or an average of five people every day. Turning the tide on the epidemic remains an urgent priority for Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, the Michigan Opioids Task Force and MDHHS. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have disrupted resources that people who use drugs rely on, access to naloxone is critical.

Naloxone saves thousands of lives each year by reversing the effects of an opioid overdose. However, a recent study found that only 25 percent of individuals using opioids in southeast Michigan had access to naloxone. Expanding naloxone access, especially for individuals at high risk of overdosing, is imperative and an integral part of Michigan's response to the opioid crisis.

"Getting naloxone into the hands of people who are most likely to be able to save a life is important," said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health at MDHHS. "MDHHS is proud to partner with community organizations to make it as easy as possible to access free naloxone, reducing the devastation caused by the overdose epidemic."

The portal is available to any community organization statewide, including substance use treatment providers, non-profits, harm reduction organizations, jails, first responders, local governments and small businesses. MDHHS will review organizations' plans for distributing naloxone, especially to individuals at high risk of overdose. If approved, the organization will receive naloxone by mail; shipments are in increments of 12 kits and organizations are expected to have a plan for distribution and training for individuals at risk of overdose on how to use naloxone.

Separately, NEXT Naloxone has also partnered with MDHHS to offer *individuals* free naloxone delivered by mail. Providing naloxone by mail-order will help people who cannot access naloxone in their area, have insurance barriers or other challenges.

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NEXT Naloxone is a free, online service that makes naloxone available to people who use drugs, their families and friends, and others who may witness and respond to an overdose. NEXT Naloxone is available in Michigan through funding from Vital Strategies and a partnership with the harm-reduction organization The Grand Rapids Red Project. Individuals can place an order for mail delivery at Naloxoneforall.org/michigan.

To help community organizations plan their naloxone distribution strategy, [MDHHS has also released a memorandum](#) on the state's strategy and guidance on naloxone distribution. To get naloxone into the hands of people who need it most and to save as many lives as possible, MDHHS recommends that organizations distributing naloxone:

1. **Target distribution to individuals actively using opioids:** Individuals actively using opioids are most likely to need naloxone – and are often best placed to respond immediately to overdoses.
2. **Ensure that individuals at highest risk of overdose have naloxone:** Some individuals face heightened risk of overdose and equipping them with naloxone is especially impactful, including individuals leaving incarceration, individuals leaving abstinence-based treatment or detoxification programs, individuals who experience a non-fatal overdose and post-partum women.
3. **Make it as easy as possible to access naloxone:** Providing easy access, by distributing naloxone at locations individuals using substances already visit and addressing stigma, maximizes the chances that an individual in active use will successfully obtain it.

For more information, please visit Michigan.gov/Opioids.

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