



Washington State Department of Health Now Offering Free Naloxone Kits to All Public High Schools

Public High Schools, Alternative High Schools, and Specialized Programs Serving Grades 9-12 Can Order Naloxone from Educational Service Districts (ESDs)

Between 2016 and 2022, there has been an alarming rise in opioid-related drug overdose deaths in Washington, particularly among young people. The rate of opioid-related deaths more than doubled over this period, according to the State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System. Much of this surge is attributed to the increase of synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl, in the illegal drug supply.

In response, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is now offering free naloxone to all public high schools, alternative high schools, and specialized programs serving high school students (e.g., Open Doors) across the state. Naloxone (also known by the brand name Narcan®) is a safe and effective medication that temporarily reverses the effects of an opioid overdose, including fentanyl overdose. [Washington law](#) requires school districts with 2,000 students or more to have opioid overdose reversal medication doses (e.g., naloxone) in each of their high schools.

Overdose events on school property are rare. Still, preparing to recognize and respond to an overdose is just as important as preparing for any other emergency. Proactively ordering naloxone for your school is one way to increase safety and decrease the impact of opioid overdoses in your community.

This new initiative aligns with a [recent letter](#) from the U.S. Department of Education and the White House drug policy office urging schools to keep naloxone on hand and train staff and students on its use. Our program repurposes the successful infrastructure that was built between DOH and ESDs to distribute COVID-19 tests to schools. This initiative is only possible because of the partnership between DOH, the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and ESDs across Washington.

How to Order Naloxone for your School

All public high schools, alternative high schools, and specialized programs can request two kits of intranasal naloxone (containing two doses per kit) through their ESD. This naloxone will support your response to potential opioid overdose events at your school or during school events.

This offer is voluntary. No ESD, school district, or school is required to participate. This effort is a complement, not a replacement, for any existing efforts related to naloxone in schools.

Public high schools, alternative high schools, and specialized programs serving high school students: Place an order for two kits of naloxone through [your Educational Service Districts \(ESDs\)](#). They will be your point of contact for distribution, including your initial order and any refills.

Private schools and any schools seeking additional naloxone doses: While this program serves public high schools and alternative schools, other resources can help you supply naloxone at your school.

- Schools and libraries can request Narcan® (one formulation of nasal naloxone) from the [Narcan Community Donation Program](#) run by Direct Relief and Emergent Biosolutions.
- Narcan is now available to purchase over the counter and at many retail pharmacies (e.g., Walgreens, CVS, Rite Aid). For more information about over-the-counter naloxone, please visit [Over the Counter Naloxone FAQ](#).
- To purchase Narcan directly from the manufacturer, visit [NARCANDirect.com](#). Schools may qualify to purchase Narcan Nasal Spray directly from Emergent Devices at the public interest price (currently \$41/two-dose kit).
- Organizations may also be able to purchase naloxone from medical distributors, such as [Cardinal Health](#) and [McKesson](#).

How to Use Naloxone

Visit the [CDC's website](#) for text and video instructions on how to use naloxone.

For More Information

Have questions about the program? [Contact your ESD](#).

Have questions about how to use naloxone or store it? Contact your ESD or [OSPI](#), or reference the [Stop Overdose website](#).

Have questions about how to return expired naloxone? Contact your ESD or naloxoneprogram@doh.wa.gov.

Have broader questions or comments about DOH engagement? Contact DOH at k12engagement@doh.wa.gov.

Additional Resources for Schools

[Local Health Jurisdictions](#) and [School Nurse Corps](#) can help with other ways of obtaining naloxone.

[OSPI's resource document](#) contains information on opioid related overdose training for schools.

For help talking to the media about naloxone in schools, reference our Naloxone in High Schools Media Talking Points.

For help talking with families about naloxone in schools, reference our Family Naloxone Education Materials. This can be sent to families as it is or act as a starting point for your own communications.

The [Prevent Overdose WA](#) campaign has more information on how to prevent and respond to drug overdoses.