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# **2023-2024 Delaware County Overdose Fatality Review Annual Report**

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## Overview and Purpose

The Delaware Public Health District (DPHD) is the lead agency tasked with convening and facilitating the Delaware County Suicide & Overdose Fatality Review (SOFR) Team. In 2021, suicide and overdose fatality reviews were formalized in Ohio Revised Code (ORC), thus the Delaware County Commissioners appointed the Delaware County Health Commissioner to establish a hybrid suicide and overdose fatality review committee under the authority of ORC 307.6410. The purpose of the Delaware County SOFR Team is to decrease the incidence of preventable suicide and overdose deaths through review of fatalities conducted by a multidisciplinary team of professionals and subject matter experts. The reviews are used to generate data driven prevention recommendations, which are shared with stakeholders involved with the Delaware County Suicide Prevention Coalition and The Partnership for a Healthy Delaware County.

### *Objectives and Guiding Principles*

- Identify specific barriers and systems issues involved with suicide and overdose deaths.
- Identify risk factors and trends in suicide and overdose deaths for future prevention and intervention efforts.
- Identify strategies for enhancing protective factors.
- Recommend policy, system, and environmental changes and evidence-based strategies for local implementation.
- Promote cooperation, collaboration, and communication between all agencies engaged in suicide and overdose prevention, education, and treatment efforts.

Each SOFR meeting is conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- The goal of the SOFR team is to reduce deaths due to overdose and suicide.
- Overdose and suicide deaths are preventable.
- Substance use is a chronic, treatable disease.
- Use of multi-sector data will inform response strategies.
- Continually evaluate and improve SOFR processes.
- Use of person-first language to create an environment of dignity and hope.
- Respect for ALL.

### *SOFR Meeting Frequency and Structure*

The Delaware County SOFR Team meets on a quarterly basis and held meetings on 9/18/24, 10/23/24, 3/5/25, and 3/12/25 to review the outstanding 2023 suicide and overdose deaths and complete the reviews for the 2024 suicide and overdose deaths.

The Delaware County Suicide & Overdose Fatality Review Team Protocol, including a Team Charter, has been developed and is currently under review with plans to finalize the protocol by April 2025.

### ***Team Members and Partner Agencies***

The Delaware County SOFR Team consists of the following key community partners:

- Jen Keagy, Deputy Health Commissioner at Delaware Public Health District
- Dr. Mark Hickman, Physician at Central Ohio Primary Care and Delaware County Coroner
- Charles Carlson, Chief Medicolegal Death Investigator at Delaware County Coroner's Office
- Monica Weaver, Detective at Delaware County Sheriff's Office
- Mike Bolen, Detective Sergeant at Delaware Police Department
- Kristan Warren, Community Impact Director at Delaware-Morrow Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
- Emily Lipp, Epidemiologist at Delaware Public Health District
- Aly Hillier, Community Health Specialist at Delaware Public Health District and representative of the Delaware County Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Rachel Held, Probation Officer at Delaware County Adult Court Services
- Bob Peterson, Investigator at Delaware County Prosecutor's Office
- Jeff Sell, Protective Services Administrator at Delaware County Job & Family Services
- Bridget Robinson, Crisis Engagement Coordinator at HelpLine
- Gabbie Schilling, Hotline Supervisor at HelpLine
- Kim Tuner, Coordinator at Mid-Ohio Traumatic Loss Response Team
- Alicia Cowles, Field Responder at Mid-Ohio Traumatic Loss Response Team

### ***Review Process and Utilization of Specific Data Sources***

The suicide and overdose deaths for Delaware County residents are extracted through the ODH Data Warehouse by the DPHD Epidemiologist monthly and are cross-checked with suicide and overdose deaths on file with the Delaware County Coroner's Office. Once the list is finalized, it is sent to the SOFR Team members to review and gather any relevant information prior to the meeting. DPHD staff submit records requests to law enforcement, hospitals, out of jurisdiction coroner's offices, and local health department vital statistics offices as needed. The Delaware County Coroner sends all autopsy and toxicology reports to DPHD. The DPHD maintains a Microsoft TEAMS group for the SOFR that is HIPAA-compliant and secure where all files are uploaded and organized.

The SOFR Team has access to the following data sources: death investigation reports, autopsy reports, coroner/medical examiner reports, toxicology reports, law enforcement incident reports, birth/death certificates, and obituaries. Access to information related to criminal history, probation, criminal history, and social services provided are limited to Delaware County agencies regardless of whether the decedent received services outside of the county. Medical and mental health records have been challenging to obtain due to non-response of the health systems and/or the fact that the decedent could have contact with multiple health systems. The Delaware-Morrow Mental Health and Recovery Services Board only has access to case information for clients that have accessed services within their network of providers; this information is limited to dates of service and reason for service and does not include any detailed visit information.

## SOFR Data and Findings

**Note:** The data shared in this report reflects cases that are complete and closed or otherwise noted. Data for 2024 is still considered preliminary and may change as Coroners have six months to complete reports. Any additional 2024 overdose death cases that are confirmed and finalized will be reviewed at future meetings.

The following table provides an overview of the total overdose deaths among Delaware County residents from 2023 to 2024.

### Total Overdose Deaths

	Total	2023	2024*
Number of OD deaths		20	19
Number of OD deaths involving opioids		16	15
Number of OD deaths reviewed by team		20	17
Number of OD deaths involving opioids reviewed by team		16	14
Number of OD deaths <b>not</b> reviewed by the team		0	2
Number of OD deaths involving opioids <b>not</b> reviewed by the team		0	1

\* **Note:** For 2024 deaths, 2 cases were confirmed as overdoses by the Coroner's office but the law enforcement reports were still in the process of being finalized. Once law enforcement reports are finalized, these cases will be reviewed at the following meeting.

The following tables provide a summary of demographic information for the deaths reviewed, including age, sex, race, and ethnicity.

### Age of Overdose Deaths

Age Groups	2023 (n)	2023 (%)	2024 (n)	2024 (%)
0-14	0	0%	0	0%
15-24	4	20%	1	5%
25-34	6	30%	1	5%
35-44	5	25%	4	32%
45-54	2	10%	7	37%
55-64	2	10%	4	21%
65+	1	5%	0	0%

### Sex of Overdose Deaths

Sex	2023 (n)	2023 (%)	2024 (n)	2024 (%)
Male	9	45%	9	58%
Female	11	55%	8	42%

## Race/Ethnicity by Sex of Overdose Deaths

Race/Ethnicity x Sex	2023 (n)	2023 (%)	2024 (n)	2024 (%)
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0	0%	0	0%
Male	0	0%	0	0%
Female	0	0%	0	0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0%	0	0%
Male	0	0%	0	0%
Female	0	0%	0	0%
Black	1	5%	2	12%
Male	0	0%	1	6%
Female	1	5%	1	6%
Hispanic	1	5%	0	0%
Male	1	5%	0	0%
Female	0	0%	0	0%
White	19	95%	15	88%
Male	9	45%	8	47%
Female	10	50%	7	41%

### 2023 Delaware County Annual Accidental Overdose Report

The 2023 Delaware County Annual Accidental Overdose Report, which provides an in-depth graphical review, can be found on the next three pages. Since 2018, this report has been published annually in July to kick-off International Overdose Awareness Month.

These reports can be accessed at <https://www.delawarehealth.org/data/>

# 2023 ANNUAL ACCIDENTAL OVERDOSE REPORT

JAN 1 - DEC 31, 2023

*Created with data from Ohio Department of Health Vital Statistics pulled on 7/11/2024.  
Data is considered preliminary and may change as coroners have 6 months to complete reports.*



## DELAWARE COUNTY RESIDENT DEATHS

**20**  
TOTAL  
DEATHS



## AGE RANGE

**19-65 YEARS**

Average Age: **37**

## RACE

**95%** White

**5%** Black/African American

## LEVEL OF EDUCATION

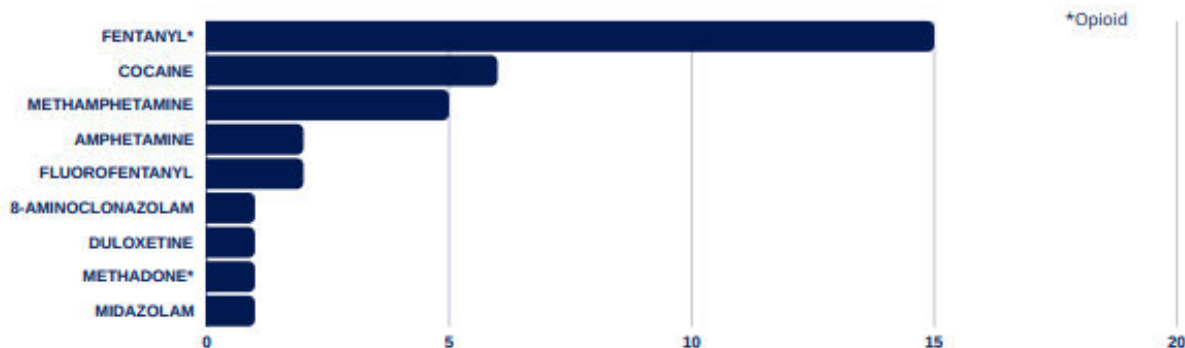


**5%** Bachelor's Degree

**20%** Some college credit/no degree

**75%** High School Graduate, or GED Completed

## SUBSTANCES FOUND IN THOSE THAT DIED OF AN OVERDOSE



## NUMBER OF RESIDENT DEATHS DUE TO OVERDOSE



## PLACES OF OVERDOSE DEATHS

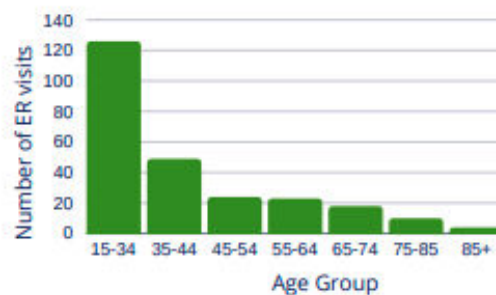
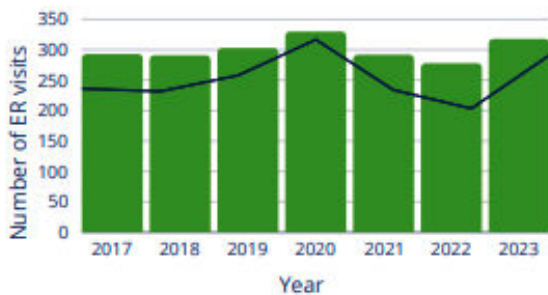


\*Residence includes decedent's home, friend or partner's home, house/apartment

Citation: These data were provided by the Ohio Department of Health. The Department specifically disclaims responsibility for any analyses, interpretations or conclusions

## DELAWARE COUNTY EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS FOR SUSPECTED DRUG OVERDOSE

- The group with the highest amount of ER visits with suspected overdoses were individuals 15-34 years old.
- 40% of ER visits were individuals aged 15-34 years old.
- There was a total of 318 ER visits of Delaware County individuals for suspected drug overdose.



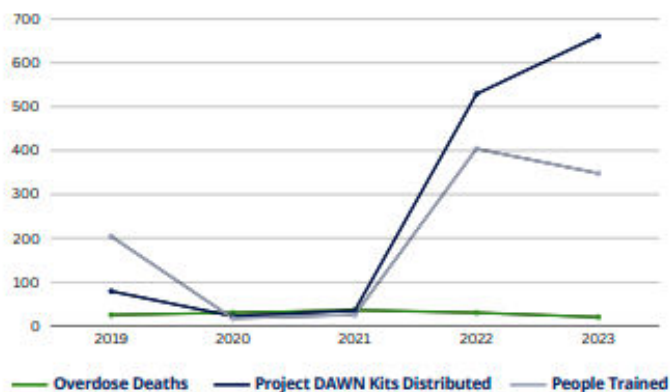
Data Source: EpiCenter- Syndromic Surveillance System; analysis by ODH Violence and Injury Prevention Section. [odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/Suspected-OD-Dashboard2](https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/Suspected-OD-Dashboard2)

## HEALTH DISTRICT PROJECT DAWN | 2023

- Distributed 661 individual Project DAWN kits.
- Trained 348 individuals in Project DAWN opioid education and Naloxone distribution.
- Distributed 99 First Responders kits to Law Enforcement and security personnel.
- Provided Naloxone in 256 first-aid kits, AED kits, and Naloxoboxes.
- There were 29 overdose reversals by first responders in 2023.\*

\*This data was collected from Delaware County law enforcement offices. It does not include any overdose reversals that may have occurred from interventions outside of law enforcement.

## OVERDOSE DEATHS COMPARED TO NALOXONE KITS DISTRIBUTED & PEOPLE TRAINED 2019-2023



## Identified Trends

- Male deaths were slightly higher than female deaths.
- 25 – 34 years old was the most affected age group followed by 35 – 44 years old.
- White residents comprised 90% of the deaths compared to Black residents at 9%; however, a disparity exists because Blacks only make up 5% of the total population in Delaware County compared to 84% of Whites.
- Over 90% of the overdose deaths contained Fentanyl.

## Recommendations

- Finalize and implement the Delaware County Suicide & Overdose Fatality Review (SOFR) Team Protocol.
- Improve data collection and reporting, with a focus on risk and protective factors.
- Conduct more in-depth review of Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS) reports to identify over-prescribing trends.
- Focus education efforts on appropriate prescribing with chronic pain and co-occurring substance use disorder (SUD) or co-occurring mental health diagnosis.
- Increase availability of harm reduction tools – Naloxboxes, Project DAWN Naloxone and Fentanyl Test Strips – especially among family members/friends.
- Increase awareness of the national 988 hotline and local 211 hotline, which anyone can call, text, or chat if they are worried about themselves or a loved one who may need crisis support.

## Next Steps

The DPHD staff will access the ODH Data Warehouse monthly to pull suicide and overdose deaths, verify the cases with the coroner, and will establish a quarterly schedule for review meetings. New members will be added to the Delaware County SOFR Team as appropriate. As the Delaware County SOFR Team moves forward, recommendations and strategies will be put into action with the overall goal to reduce suicide and overdose deaths among Delaware County residents.