

Kentucky Drug Overdose Alert System

ESSENCE Drug Overdose Alert

Kentucky Department for Public Health Preparedness Region 13 and 14

For Public Dissemination

Date: 9/17/2025

Locations: Kentucky Department for Public Health Preparedness Region 13 and 14 Counties:

Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, and Woodford

Since September 11, 2025, **67** suspected nonfatal drug overdose emergency department visits have been reported by central Kentucky hospitals through ESSENCE (Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics), which represents an unusually high number in this time period. ESSENCE data is used to monitor hospital emergency department visit counts to identify possible clusters of drug overdoses in Kentucky. As a result, people who use drugs in or around Kentucky Department for Public Health Preparedness Region 13 and 14 counties should take caution to protect themselves.

What You Can Do:

- Always keep naloxone on hand and administer it if you suspect an overdose. Fentanyl has been found in all types of unregulated drugs, so naloxone may help regardless of the drug taken.
 - Visit your Local Health Department to obtain naloxone and other harm reduction supplies. If you do not know where the closest Syringe Services Program (SSP) is, visit <https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dehp/hab/Pages/kyseps.aspx> for a current list of Kentucky SSPs and their hours of operation.
 - Naloxone distribution sites and/or by mail for those without local access: <https://findnaloxonenowky.org>
- Don't use drugs alone.
- If you or someone you know needs help with Substance Use Disorder, visit <https://findhelpnowky.org/ky> to search for available treatment and recovery options (or call 1-833-859-4357 during business hours, or 1-800-854-6813 after business hours).
- Check in on friends, family members, neighbors, and others to share this information.
- Call 911 if you suspect an overdose.

