



CDPH Statewide Naloxone Standing Order Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Updated June 2023



1. What is naloxone?

Naloxone is a life-saving medication used to reverse an opioid overdose, including heroin, fentanyl, and prescription opioid medications. With a fentanyl overdose, two or more doses of naloxone may need to be given. Naloxone works by blocking the opioid receptor sites, reversing the toxic effects of the overdose. Naloxone is administered when a patient is showing signs of opioid overdose. Naloxone can be quickly given by intranasal spray, intramuscular (into the muscle), subcutaneous (under the skin), or by intravenous injection. Naloxone is safe and easy to use, works almost immediately, and is not addictive. Naloxone has very few negative effects, no effect if opioids are not in a person's system, and no potential for abuse. Naloxone requires a prescription but is not a controlled substance.

Learn more about [naloxone](#).

2. What is the purpose of the CDPH statewide naloxone standing order (CDPH standing order)?

The CDPH standing order was issued in 2017 by the state Public Health Officer (authorized by [California Civil Code Section 1714.22](#)) to:

- 1) Allow community organizations and other entities in California (see response to question #4 for examples) that are not currently working with a physician, to distribute naloxone to a person at risk of an opioid-related overdose or to a family member, friend, or other person in a position to assist; and
- 2) Allow for the administration of naloxone by a family member, friend, or other person to a person experiencing or reasonably suspected of experiencing an opioid overdose.

3. Why is a CDPH standing order needed in California?

Many community organizations and entities in California can help reduce deaths associated with opioid overdose by distributing naloxone but find it difficult to obtain the required standing order from an appropriate health care provider. CDPH issued the standing order to address this need and support equitable naloxone access.

4. How can community organizations and entities in California apply for the CDPH standing order?

The application is online. To apply, visit the CDPH [statewide standing order for naloxone webpage](#) for the application instructions, Terms and Conditions, and a [training video](#) on how to give naloxone.

5. Who is eligible to use the standing order?

Community organizations or entities in California are eligible to use the CDPH standing order if they can provide naloxone to those at risk of opioid overdose or to individuals in a position to respond during an opioid overdose. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- First responders
- Emergency medical services
- Fire authorities
- Law enforcement, courts, and criminal justice partners
- Veteran organizations
- Homeless programs
- Schools and universities
- Libraries
- Religious entities
- Community organizations
- Substance Use Disorder Recovery Facilities
- Hospital Emergency Departments
- Public health departments
- Harm reduction and syringe exchange/services programs

6. Once an online application is submitted, how long does the applicant have to wait to receive the standing order?

Immediately after the application is submitted, the CDPH standing order is generated on the application webpage. Be sure to save the CDPH standing order to a computer and print a physical copy for your records.

7. Does CDPH maintain copies of applications?

CDPH maintains a record of applicant data submitted, but does not maintain copies of each applicant's standing order. When completing an application, be sure to save the standing order to a computer and print a physical copy for your records. If a copy is needed, a new application must be completed online.



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8. Do California pharmacists need to apply for the standing order to distribute naloxone?

No, California pharmacists do not need to apply for the CDPH standing order. Pharmacists can dispense naloxone without a prescription from a health care provider as authorized and in compliance with [California Business and Profession Code Section 4052.01](#).

9. What are the data reporting requirements for applicants?

When reapplying for the CDPH standing order, organizations and entities are required to report the number of doses of naloxone distributed, and, if known/available, the number of overdose reversals that occurred using naloxone distributed under the CDPH standing order.

10. Does the standing order expire?

Yes, the CDPH standing order expires two years from the signature date of the state Public Health Officer. Prior to expiration, CDPH renews the standing order and emails all current applicants with a courtesy notification to reapply. It is the responsibility of the organization and entity to reapply. Review the CDPH standing order [Terms and Conditions](#) to learn more.

11. Is training required to distribute naloxone?

Yes, anyone who distributes naloxone under the CDPH standing order must complete opioid overdose prevention and treatment training, and also provide training to individuals who they distribute naloxone to. Minimum training requirements and a [training video](#) are included on the [CDPH standing order for naloxone webpage](#).

For additional training resources, visit the website [getnaloxonenow.org](#) and the Harm Reduction Coalition's [Overdose Prevention and Naloxone Manual](#).

12. Can the CDPH standing order be used to purchase or sell naloxone?

No, the CDPH standing order cannot be used to purchase or sell naloxone (see question #2 for the purpose of the CDPH standing order).

13. How can community organizations and entities in California receive naloxone?

Qualified organizations and entities can request free naloxone from the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) through the Naloxone Distribution Project (NDP). The NDP aims to reduce opioid overdose deaths through the provision of free naloxone.



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Visit the [NDP webpage](#) for a list of eligible organizations and application requirements. The applying organization must provide a copy of their standing order or a physician's prescription.

14. Do individuals need to apply for the CDPH standing order to obtain naloxone?

No, individuals are not eligible for the CDPH standing order. However, there are many options for individuals to obtain naloxone:

- 1) Get a naloxone prescription from a health care provider and fill it at a pharmacy.
- 2) Purchase naloxone from a pharmacist without a prescription from a health care provider (authorized by [California Business and Professions Code Section 4052.01](#)). A pharmacist can determine if naloxone is covered by an individual's health care insurance and can bill for this cost as appropriate.
- 3) Request naloxone from a local community organization working to reduce the number of opioid-related overdose deaths. Local overdose prevention coalitions and [harm reduction programs](#) may have naloxone available for individuals.
- 4) Get free naloxone from California's [syringe services programs](#) through the California Harm Reduction Supplies Clearinghouse.
- 5) Learn more about online and mail-based harm reductions services, including naloxone, offered by [NEXT Distro California](#).

15. Have other states issued statewide standing orders for naloxone?

As of August 2020, all 50 states and the District of Columbia have some form of a naloxone access law. The laws vary by state. Source: [Naloxone Access: Summary of State Laws](#).