

# MAINE MONTHLY OVERDOSE REPORT

## For December 2025

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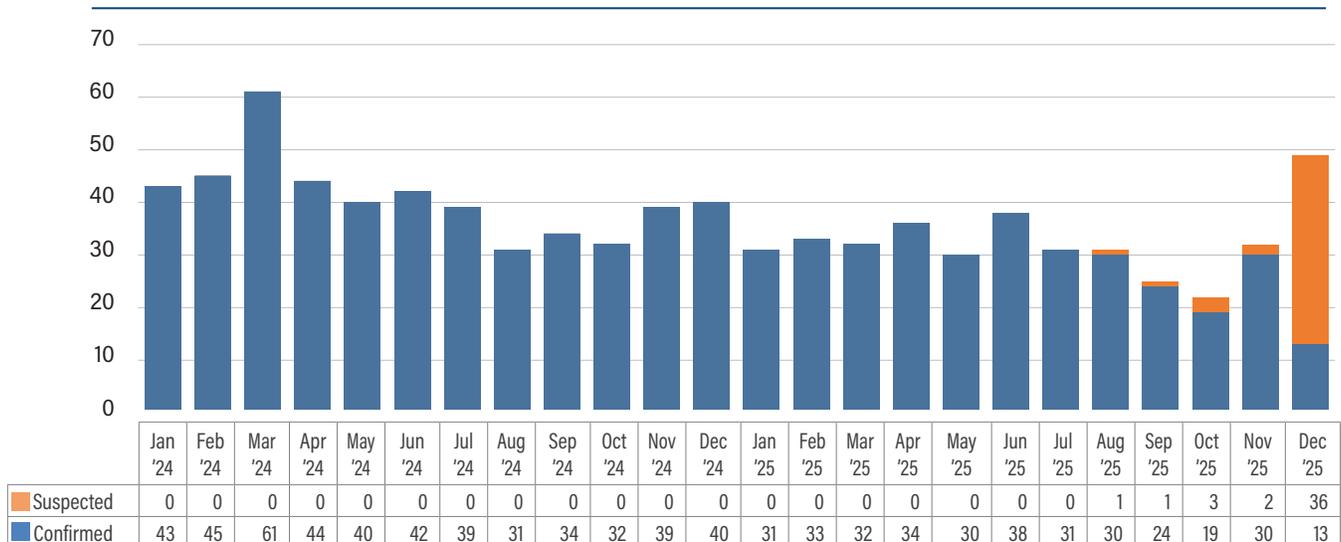
### Overview

This report documents suspected and confirmed fatal and nonfatal drug overdoses in Maine during December 2025 as well as for the period January 2024–December 2025 (Table 1). The total number of confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses during 2025 is 390, 20.4% lower than the total confirmed fatal overdoses for 2024, 490. The total number of nonfatal overdoses during January–December 2025 is 7,313, 9.0% lower than the total reported nonfatal overdoses for January–December 2024, 8,040. Monthly proportions of 2025 fatalities averaged 5.1%, lower than the 5.7% in 2024 and the 6.1% in 2023. Monthly proportions in 2025 ranged from a high of 7.5% in December to a low of 3.2% in September.

Data derived from multiple statewide sources were compiled and deduplicated to calculate fatal and nonfatal overdose totals (Table 1). These include nonfatal overdose incidents reported by hospital emergency departments (ED), nonfatal emergency medical service (EMS) responses without transport to the ED, overdose reversals reported by law enforcement in the absence of EMS, and overdose reversals reported by community members or agencies receiving state-supplied naloxone through the Maine Naloxone Distribution Initiative. There are also an unknown number of private overdose reversals that were not reported and an unknown number of community-reported reversals that may have overlapped with emergency response by EMS or law enforcement. The total number of fatal overdoses in this report includes those that have been confirmed, as well as those that are suspected but not yet confirmed for August, September, October, November, and December 2025 (see Figure 1).

The total number of suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses and reported nonfatal overdoses for December 2025, 657, is displayed in Table 1. Of those 657, there were 49 (7.5%) confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses, 318 (48.4%) nonfatal emergency department visits, 178 (27.1%) nonfatal EMS responses not transported to the emergency department, 104 (15.8%) reported community overdose reversals, and 8 (1.2%) law enforcement reversals in incidents that did not include EMS.

**Figure 1. Suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses, all drugs, January 2024 through December 2025**



**Table 1:** Composite reported overdose totals, all drugs, January 2024–December 2025

	Nonfatal				Total nonfatal overdoses	Total confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses	Total overdoses
	Emergency Dept.	EMS not transported to emergency	Community reversals with naloxone	Law enforcement nonfatal overdose response without EMS			
January 2024	269	226	139	26	660	45	705
February 2024	305	242	136	28	711	43	754
March 2024	379	233	119	27	758	61	819
April 2024	252	205	190	14	661	44	705
May 2024	311	257	165	24	757	40	797
June 2024	344	232	202	12	790	42	832
July 2024	293	235	166	23	717	39	756
August 2024	287	215	119	10	631	31	662
September 2024	318	199	114	6	637	34	671
October 2024	299	198	86	17	600	32	632
November 2024	261	177	58	18	514	39	553
December 2024	353	190	49	12	604	40	644
2024 YTD total	3671	2609	1543	217	8040	490	8530
% of 2024 YTD total	43.0%	30.6%	18.1%	2.5%	94.3%	5.7%	100%
January 2025	234	193	53	15	495	31	526
February 2025	254	159	74	18	505	33	538
March 2025	375	202	71	31	679	32	711
April 2025	295	212	90	18	615	36	651
May 2025	311	202	88	13	614	30	644
June 2025	399	233	96	21	749	38	787
July 2025	321	247	70	15	653	31	684
August 2025	272	191	76	13	552	31	583
September 2025	386	244	118	13	761	25	786
October 2025	254	194	100	11	559	22	581
November 2025	267	177	70	9	523	32	555
December 2025	318	178	104	8	608	49	657
2025 YTD Total	3686	2432	1010	185	7313	390	7703
% of 2025 YTD Total	47.9%	31.6%	13.1%	2.4%	94.9%	5.1%	100%

### Law Enforcement Response to Fatal and Nonfatal Overdose Incidents

Due to the method used to deduplicate nonfatal overdose incidents to derive a composite number of overdoses for the month, the total activity of both law enforcement officials and EMS agencies is underrepresented in Table 1 because of the overlap between them. The process used to deduplicate overdoses begins by removing fatal overdoses from the emergency department and EMS overdose incidents. Then the number of patients transported to emergency departments by Maine EMS are removed from the EMS overdose incidents. Finally, EMS involvement and fatal overdose incidents are removed from law enforcement responses.

Table 2 shows the public safety response to fatal and nonfatal overdose events in January–December 2025 as well as January–December 2024. Monthly averages in 2025 are lower for fatal EMS and law enforcement incidents than in 2024. During 2024, law enforcement officers responded to a reported 1,156 overdose incidents (451

fatal; 705 nonfatal), and Maine EMS responded to a reported 9,507 incidents (385 fatal; 9,122 nonfatal). During 2025, law enforcement officers responded to a reported 859 incidents (325 fatal; 534 nonfatal), and Maine EMS responded to a reported 9,148 incidents (272 fatal; 8,876 nonfatal).

**Table 2:** Fatal and nonfatal overdose emergency response counts from law enforcement and EMS, including overlapping cases

	Fatal overdose response Jan-Dec 2024	Nonfatal overdose response Jan-Dec 2024	Total overdose response Jan-Dec 2024	Fatal overdose response Jan-Dec 2025	Nonfatal overdose response Jan-Dec 2025	Total overdose response Jan-Dec 2025
Maine EMS	385	9122	9507	272	8876	9148
Monthly average	32	760	792	23	740	762
Law Enforcement	451	705	1156	325	534	859
Monthly average	38	59	96	27	45	72

\*Please note numbers will fluctuate from month to month as public safety agencies catch up their reporting. Due to methodological convention, alcohol-only cases are excluded from this table. However, we recognize that alcohol is a large part of substance misuse epidemic. Cases with both drugs and alcohol are included. Please note these numbers may fluctuate higher than the data in Table 1. This is due to the fact that some EMS overdoses responses, once the patient is transported to the hospital, are deemed to be non-overdose emergencies such as cardiac arrest or diabetic coma.

### County Distribution of Suspected Nonfatal Overdoses with EMS Response

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of nonfatal overdoses to which EMS responded at the county level. Overdose reversal totals reported by community partners and emergency departments are not reported by county; only EMS case data include county frequencies. The December 2025 monthly proportions in the rightmost column can be compared to the percentage of the census population on the leftmost, or to the percentage of nonfatal overdoses for the year in 2025 or in 2024. Caution must be exercised viewing single counties, especially for a single month, due to small numbers. These may fluctuate randomly, without reflecting any statistically significant trend.

The 2025 percentages for most counties fall within 0 to 2 percentage points of the 2020 census distribution. Compared to the 2020 census proportion, Cumberland County is 5 percentage points higher, and Androscoggin County is 3 percentage points higher. York County is 4 percentage points lower.

**Table 3: County of EMS incident among suspected and confirmed nonfatal overdoses**

	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2024 Est. N = 9122	Jan-Dec 2025 Est. N = 8876	Dec 2025 Est. N = 662
Androscoggin	8%	913 10%	1004 11%	75 11%
Aroostook	5%	488 5%	372 4%	28 4%
Cumberland	22%	2309 25%	2374 27%	169 26%
Franklin	2%	165 2%	152 2%	6 1%
Hancock	4%	242 3%	236 3%	24 4%
Kennebec	9%	907 10%	799 9%	70 11%
Knox	3%	262 3%	257 3%	20 3%
Lincoln	3%	171 2%	165 2%	12 2%
Oxford	4%	334 4%	331 4%	19 3%
Penobscot	11%	1139 12%	1147 13%	74 11%
Piscataquis	1%	101 1%	96 1%	4 1%
Sagadahoc	3%	152 2%	144 2%	11 2%
Somerset	4%	399 4%	358 4%	36 5%
Waldo	3%	197 2%	194 2%	14 2%
Washington	2%	225 2%	217 2%	16 2%
York	16%	1118 12%	1030 12%	84 13%

\*EMS nonfatal overdose counts include incidents where a patient may have died after admission to the ED. Please note numbers will fluctuate from month-to-month as public safety agencies catch up their reporting. Due to methodological convention, alcohol-only cases are excluded from this table. However, we recognize that alcohol is a large part of substance misuse epidemic. Cases with both drugs and alcohol are included.

### Age and Gender Distribution of Suspected Nonfatal Overdoses with EMS Response

Table 4 displays the age composition of individuals suspected of experiencing nonfatal overdoses involving EMS response in December 2025, 2025 year to date, and 2024. Overdose reversal totals reported by community partners and emergency departments are not categorized and reported by age; only EMS case data include monthly age frequencies. Age group proportions can be compared to the 2020 census proportion in the leftmost column. Caution must be exercised as the small number of cases in each month is vulnerable to random fluctuation that may not reflect a significant statistical trend. The age distribution for both 2024 and 2025 year to date compared to the 2020 census proportion shows a disproportionately large impact of suspected nonfatal overdose victims with EMS involvement for those aged 25–54. This impact is illustrated by looking at the 25–54-year age groups, which constitute 36% of the population in the 2020 census compared to 62% of the nonfatal overdose population in 2025. In 2025, there are 14 percentage points fewer overdose victims among those under the age of 18 compared to the percentage of the census population in that age group. Similarly, there were 4 percentage points fewer overdose victims among those aged 55–64 and 10 percentage points fewer overdose victims among those 65 and older compared to the percentages of the census population for those age groups.

**Table 4:** Reported age group among suspected nonfatal overdose victims involving EMS response

	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2024 Est. N = 9166	Jan-Dec 2025 Est. N = 8886	Dec 2025 Est. N = 665
< 18	18%	384 4%	367 4%	22 3%
18-24	7%	829 9%	726 8%	63 9%
25-34	12%	1784 19%	1585 18%	115 17%
35-44	12%	2346 26%	2423 27%	172 26%
45-54	12%	1484 16%	1532 17%	114 17%
55-64	16%	1231 13%	1091 12%	82 12%
> 64	23%	1108 12%	1162 13%	97 15%

Table 5 displays the reported gender of individuals experiencing nonfatal overdoses involving EMS response in December 2025, 2025 year to date, as well as 2024. Overdose reversal totals reported by community partners and emergency departments are not categorized by gender; only EMS case data include monthly gender categories. Gender group proportions in the EMS data can be compared to the 2020 census proportion by gender in the leftmost column or the January–December 2024 proportions in the center column. When comparing January–December 2025 with 2024, as well as with the census population proportion, caution must be exercised as the small number of cases in each month is vulnerable to random fluctuation that may not reflect a significant statistical trend. Males represent 49% of the 2020 estimated census population, 58% of the nonfatal overdose victims with EMS involvement in 2024, and 59% in 2025.

**Table 5:** Reported gender among suspected nonfatal overdose victims involving EMS response

	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2024 Est. N = 8813	Jan-Dec 2025 Est. N = 8572	Dec 2025 Est. N = 641
Male	49%	5124 58%	5076 59%	348 54%
Female	51%	3688 42%	3492 41%	293 46%
Transgender	Not collected	1 0.0%	4 0.05%	0 0%

### County and City Distribution of Suspected and Confirmed Fatal Overdoses

Table 6 shows the frequency distribution of fatal overdoses at the county level including some metro cities.<sup>1</sup> Other nonmetropolitan areas or cities have not been included in this table due to lack of significant statistical relevance and confidentiality purposes. The December 2025 monthly percentages in the rightmost column can be compared either to the percentage of the census population in the leftmost column, the percentages for 2024, or the 2025 year-to-date percentages. Caution must be exercised when viewing single counties or cities with small numbers for a single month. These may fluctuate randomly, without reflecting any significant statistical trend. The 2025 percentages for most counties fall within 0 to 2 percentage points of the 2020 census distribution. Compared to the 2020 census proportion, Penobscot County is 6 percentage points higher. At the city level, Lewiston is 4 percentage points, Bangor is 7 percentage points, and Portland is 8 percentage points higher than the 2020 census population.

<sup>1</sup> This table reports the county/city of death rather than the county/city of residence.

**Table 6:** County/city of death among suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses

	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2024 Est. N = 490		Jan-Dec 2025 Est. N = 390		Dec 2025 Est. N = 49	
Androscoggin	8%	46	9%	40	10%	4	8%
Lewiston	3%	26	5%	29	7%	3	6%
Aroostook	5%	39	8%	27	7%	4	8%
Cumberland	22%	90	18%	86	22%	12	24%
Portland	5%	50	10%	49	13%	5	10%
Franklin	2%	6	1%	6	2%	1	2%
Hancock	4%	15	3%	7	2%	1	2%
Kennebec	9%	47	10%	27	7%	3	6%
Knox	3%	22	4%	8	2%	0	0%
Lincoln	3%	18	4%	9	2%	2	4%
Oxford	4%	20	4%	13	3%	1	2%
Penobscot	11%	64	13%	67	17%	9	18%
Bangor	2%	29	6%	35	9%	8	16%
Piscataquis	1%	5	1%	3	1%	0	0%
Sagadahoc	3%	7	1%	2	1%	0	0%
Somerset	4%	22	4%	11	3%	2	4%
Waldo	3%	18	4%	15	4%	2	4%
Washington	2%	16	3%	15	4%	2	4%
York	16%	55	11%	54	14%	6	12%

### Age and Sex Distribution of Fatal Overdose Victims

Table 7 displays the age and sex composition<sup>1</sup> of the fatal overdose population for December 2025, 2025 year to date, and 2024, compared to the 2020 estimated census population. When comparing the December 2025 data with 2024 as well as with the census population proportion, caution must be exercised as the small number of cases in each month is vulnerable to random fluctuation that may not reflect a significant statistical trend.

The cumulative proportion of males in 2025 (65%) is slightly lower than 2024 proportion (66%) but 17 percentage points higher than the census population (49%). The age distribution for 2025 compared to the 2020 census proportion shows a disproportionately large impact of fatal overdoses in those aged 35–64, as was true in 2024. That group includes 40% of the 2020 estimated census population, compared to 75% of the fatal overdose population in 2025 and 2024. Those ages 18–24 constitute 7% of the 2020 census population but 2% of 2025 fatal overdoses. Those 65 and older constitute 23% of the census population but only 11% of the 2025 fatal overdoses.

<sup>1</sup> Note that death certificate reports sex as male or female without gender categories.

**Table 7:** Decedent reported age group and sex among suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses\*

	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2024 Est. N = 490	Jan-Dec 2025 Est. N = 390	Dec 2025 Est. N = 49
Male	49%	322 66%	255 65%	28 57%
< 18	18%	5 1%	0 0%	0 0%
18-24	7%	13 3%	6 2%	0 0%
25-34	12%	65 13%	48 12%	5 10%
35-44	12%	143 29%	115 29%	11 22%
45-54	12%	126 26%	100 26%	13 27%
55-64	16%	98 20%	79 20%	13 27%
> 64	23%	40 8%	42 11%	7 14%

\*Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Table 8 displays the reported race and ethnicity of confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses in December 2025, 2025 year to date, and 2024 compared to the 2020 estimated census population. Note that race and ethnicity are not finalized until the full death certificate is entered into Vital Records, and a small number of decedents' records currently lack information about these variables. Out of 390 decedents for whom race was reported in 2025, 96% of the victims were identified as White, 2% as Black/African American, and 1% as American Indian/Alaska Native. Out of 383 decedents for whom Hispanic ethnicity status was reported, 1% were identified as Hispanic.

**Table 8:** Decedent race and ethnicity among suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses\*

A: Race	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2024 Race N = 490	Jan-Dec 2025 Race N = 390	Dec 2025 Race N = 49
White alone	94%	452 92%	374 96%	47 96%
Black/African American alone	2%	19 4%	7 2%	1 2%
American Indian/Alaska Native alone	1%	10 2%	3 1%	0 0%
Other race and 2+ races combined	3%	9 2%	6 2%	1 2%
B: Ethnicity	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2024 Ethnicity N = 483	Jan-Dec 2025 Ethnicity N = 383	Dec 2025 Ethnicity N = 43
Hispanic/Latinx alone	2%	9 2%	4 1%	0 0%

\*Race and ethnicity data for some cases are unavailable until drug deaths are confirmed. †Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

### Military Status and Housing Stability of Fatal Overdose Victims

Out of the 386 cases for which military background was reported in 2025, 28 (7.3%) were identified as having a military background. Out of the 45 cases in December 2025 where military background was reported, 5 (11%) cases were identified as having a military background.

Of the 390 total suspected and confirmed fatal overdose cases year to date in 2025, undomiciled or transient housing status was reported for 49 (13%) victims. Among those 49, the largest proportions of undomiciled persons were found in Androscoggin County (11, 22%), Cumberland County (12, 24%), Kennebec County (5, 10%), Penobscot Count (5, 10%) and York County (6, 12%). In December 2025, 4 fatal overdose victims (8%) were identified as undomiciled.

### Basic Incident Patterns of Fatal Overdoses

Table 9 reports basic incident patterns for fatal overdoses. December 2025 can be compared to 2025 year to date or to 2024. Caution must be exercised interpreting a single month of data as numbers may fluctuate randomly and not reflect a statistically significant trend. In addition, data totals may change slightly as suspected cases are confirmed or eliminated.

Both EMS and police responded together to most fatal overdoses (55%) in 2025, much less than in 2024 (71%). Law enforcement was more likely to respond to a scene alone (27%) than EMS (14%). The majority (89%) of confirmed fatal drug overdoses were ruled as, or suspected of being, accidental manner of death.

Of the 350 confirmed or suspected fatal overdoses in 2025 for which overdose history was known, 88 (25%) had a reported history of prior overdose, fewer than in 2024 (145, 30%).

Although most cases had bystanders or witnesses present at the scene by the time first responders arrived, the details about who was present at the time of the overdose were frequently unclear. However, responding family and friends or other bystanders administered naloxone for 38 (10%) of the 2025 fatal overdoses, lower than the proportion in 2024 (13%). Often, EMS and/or law enforcement administered naloxone in addition to bystanders or witnesses. During 2025, 23% of suspected and confirmed fatal overdose cases had naloxone administered at the scene by EMS, bystanders, and/or law enforcement, which is slightly lower than the cases in 2024 (26%).

Of the 272 suspected or confirmed drug death cases with EMS involvement during 2025, 113 (42%) victims were already deceased when EMS arrived. In the remaining 159 (58%) cases, resuscitation was attempted either at the scene or presumably in the ambulance during transport to the emergency room. Of those 159 who were still alive when EMS arrived, 68 (43%) were transported, and 91 (57%) did not survive to be transported. Thus, out of 272 ultimately fatal cases with EMS response, only 68 (25%) remained alive long enough to be transported but died during transport or at the emergency room. This outcome is likely due to a combination of the high number of cases with fentanyl as a cause of death and individuals using alone. Fentanyl acts more quickly than other opioids, and there is less time for bystanders to find an overdose victim alive, administer naloxone, and call 911.

**Table 9:** Incident characteristics among suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses

	2024 Jan-Dec Est. N = 490		Jan-Dec 2025 Est. N = 390		Dec 2025 Est. N = 49	
EMS response alone	35	7%	53	14%	12	24%
Law enforcement alone	96	20%	106	27%	15	31%
EMS and law enforcement	350	71%	216	55%	20	41%
Private transport to Emergency Dept.	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Naloxone administration reported at the scene	125	26%	89	23%	9	18%
Bystander only administered	48	10%	17	4%	1	2%
Law enforcement only administered	9	2%	8	2%	1	2%
EMS only administered	41	8%	38	10%	4	8%
EMS and law enforcement administered	2	0%	5	1%	0	0%
EMS and bystander administered	12	2%	13	3%	3	6%
Law enforcement and bystander administered	4	1%	5	1%	0	0%
EMS, bystander, and law enforcement administered	1	0%	2	1%	0	0%
Naloxone administered by unspecified person	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%
History of prior overdose	145	30%	88	25%	10	26%

Table 10 displays the frequencies of the most prominent drug categories causing death among confirmed drug deaths. As expected, within the confirmed drug death cases in 2025, nonpharmaceutical fentanyl was the most frequent cause of death, mentioned on the death certificate of 198 (57%) victims, lower than 2024 (69%).

Fentanyl is nearly always found in combination with multiple other drugs. Heroin involvement, declining rapidly in recent years, was reported as a cause of death in 8 (2%) of 2025 deaths, 12 (2%) of 2024 deaths, and 12 (2%) of 2023 deaths. Xylazine was identified as a co-intoxicant with fentanyl for the first time in 2021. Among 347 confirmed deaths in 2025, there were 29 cases (8%) with xylazine listed in addition to fentanyl as a cause of death, a lower proportion than in 2024, 15%.

Stimulants continue to increase as a cause of death, usually in combination with other drugs, particularly fentanyl. Cocaine-involved fatalities constituted 163 (47%) of confirmed cases so far in 2025, slightly higher than 2024 (43%), and an increase from 37% in 2023. Fentanyl is mentioned as a cause in combination with cocaine in 100 cases, 61% of 2025 year-to-date cocaine cases. Methamphetamine was cited as a cause of death in 116 (33%) of the confirmed fatal overdoses in 2025, lower than 2024 (38%); 75 (65%) of the methamphetamine deaths also involved fentanyl as a co-intoxicant cause of death. Cocaine and methamphetamine are named together on 41 (12%) death certificates in 2025, in most of those cases (29, 71%) as co-intoxicants of fentanyl.

**Table 10: Key drug categories and combinations causing death among confirmed overdoses**

Cause of death (alone or in combination with other drugs) Sample size for confirmed cases only	Jan–Dec 2024 Est. N = 490	Jan–Dec 2025 Est. N = 347	Dec 2025 Est. N = 13
Fentanyl or fentanyl analogs	339 69%	198 57%	8 62%
Heroin	12 2%	8 2%	0 0%
Cocaine	213 43%	163 47%	11 85%
Methamphetamine	184 38%	116 33%	4 31%
Pharmaceutical opioids**	84 17%	81 23%	4 31%
Fentanyl and heroin	12 2%	8 2%	0 0%
Fentanyl and cocaine	161 33%	100 29%	4 31%
Fentanyl and methamphetamine	137 28%	75 22%	1 8%
Fentanyl and xylazine	72 15%	29 8%	0 0%

\*\*Nonpharmaceutical tramadol is now being combined with fentanyl in pills and powders for illicit drug use. When found in combination with fentanyl, and in the absence of a known prescription, tramadol is categorized as a nonpharmaceutical opioid.

## Highlight for December 2025

The year 2025 concluded with an estimated 390 fatal overdoses, a reduction of 100 from 2024. This drop of just over 20% from a year ago marks three years of improvement since the end of 2022. Because not all the toxicology tests have been completed for deaths in the closing months of 2025, these numbers remain subject to change. In this Highlight to accompany the December year-end report, we drill down deeper and explore the driving factors and discuss the challenges and opportunities going forward to sustain this positive trend.

Most states have seen an improvement in mortality in the last three years, although not all. This nationwide trend suggests changes in the global illicit drug supply as a significant factor. In other words, the drugs coming into Maine are not as lethal as the supply in the earlier period. While fentanyl was seen in nearly 80% of fatal overdoses in Maine in 2022, we have seen a gradual reduction to less than 60% in 2025.

Other explanations for the reduction include the saturation of the life-saving medication naloxone throughout our communities, with nearly 800,000 doses distributed by the state's Maine Naloxone Distribution Initiative and the Office of the Attorney General since August 2019. This distribution has led to over 12,000 successful rescues.

While most other states have also invested in naloxone, Maine has included in its Opioid Response Strategic Plan several strategies that are unique. Foremost among these strategies is the Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach Naloxone and Safety (OPTIONS) initiative, which includes both a media campaign and an on-the-ground response team of 32 behavioral health specialists, supported by seven full-time recovery coaches. Additionally, for the past seven years, Governor Mills has hosted a statewide Opioid Response Summit attracting well over 1,000 participants each year. The Summit has also spawned a monthly webinar series offering educational programming attracting hundreds of attendees each month.

In addition to the OPTIONS program, Maine has invested in more substance use treatment and recovery facilities, allowing thousands of Mainers to receive treatment appropriate to their condition and circumstances. Thousands of Mainers are now receiving methadone or buprenorphine as part of their treatment and the evidence is clear that the likelihood of sustaining long-term recovery is substantially increased with medication. Maine is also one of the leaders in the nation in the ability of incarcerated individuals to receive substance use disorder treatment in jails and prison systems. The state has also invested in recovery community centers, recovery coaches, and recovery residences, and is currently in the third year of a Recovery Friendly Workplace initiative. We expect to continue these programs and, when resources are available, to grow them in 2026. We anticipate that at least three new opioid treatment programs will open this year along with nearly 100 more treatment beds and two more crisis receiving centers. Many of these initiatives have been made possible by opioid settlement dollars distributed by the Maine Recovery Council, the Office of the Attorney General, and the 39 counties and municipalities annually receiving settlement funds.

Along with strong prevention and harm-reduction programs, the opioid response strategic initiatives noted above are working and saving lives. Despite the challenges of reductions in federal support, Maine continues to improve the services available to Mainers affected by substance use disorders and behavioral health conditions.

## Background Information about this Report

*This report, funded jointly by the Maine Office of Attorney General and the Office of Behavioral Health,<sup>1</sup> provides an overview of statistics regarding suspected and confirmed fatal and nonfatal drug overdoses each month. Data for the fatal overdoses were collected at the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and data regarding nonfatal overdoses were contributed by the Maine CDC, Maine Emergency Medical Services, Maine ODMAP initiative, Maine Naloxone Distribution Initiative, and Office of Attorney General Naloxone Distribution. Year-to-date numbers are updated as medical examiner cases are finalized, and their overdose status is confirmed or ruled out, and as occasional lagged EMS, ED, and ODMAP data totals are finalized. The totals are expected to shift as case completion occurs. In addition, due to the small sample size in each month, expect totals to fluctuate from month to month because of random variation. Monthly reports are posted on [mainedrugdata.org](http://mainedrugdata.org).*

*A “drug death” is confirmed when one or more drugs are mentioned on the death certificate as a cause or significant contributing factor for the death. Most drug-induced fatalities are accidents related primarily to drug lethality, the unique vulnerability of the drug user, such as underlying medical conditions, and the circumstances surrounding drug use during that moment.*

*A “suspected” drug fatality is identified by physiological signs of overdose as well as physical signs at the scene and witness information. To be confirmed as a drug death, the medical examiner must have issued a final death certificate which includes the names of the specific drugs. A forensic toxicology exam must also have been done, which includes a minimum of two toxicology tests, one to screen for drugs present, and another that will quantify the levels of drugs in the decedent’s system. All cases receive a thorough external examination and comprehensive toxicology tests. In some cases, a complete autopsy is also done. Additional data, such as medical records and police incident reports are also collected. Normally cases are completed within one month; however, due to recent problems being experienced by our national toxicology testing service, completion of cases is occurring at about 6–8 weeks after death, and occasionally longer.*

*By highlighting drug deaths at the monthly level, this report brings attention to the often-dramatic shifts in totals that can occur from month to month. These fluctuations are common with small numbers and will tend toward an average over time. Whereas the overall number of overdose deaths are a critical indicator of individual and societal stress, this metric itself can be quite resistant to public policy interventions due to its complexity. Overdose fatalities occur because of multiple unique and interacting factors, as mentioned above. For that reason, these reports will seek to monitor components that can be directly affected by specific public health education and harm reduction interventions. The statistics in this report reflect both suspected and confirmed “occurrent” deaths, that is, deaths that occur in the State of Maine, even though they may not be Maine residents. These totals also do not include Maine residents who die in other states. For these reasons, totals will differ slightly from the statistics reported by the National Center for Health Statistics, which reports only confirmed “resident” deaths. In addition, due to recently reported updates of toxicology results and newly confirmed or eliminated drug death cases, the 2024 statistics have changed slightly from those reported in the previous monthly report.*

1 The Office of Attorney General supports ongoing research on fatal overdoses by the University of Maine. Additionally, the Overdose Data to Action cooperative agreement from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention also provides funding to the State of Maine’s Office of Behavioral Health and Maine Center for Disease Control, which also supports University programs involving fatal and nonfatal overdoses surveillance and enables the collection of nonfatal metrics included in this report. The conclusions in this report do not necessarily represent those of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.