

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA



ITEM: 2.13
(ID # 27222)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, July 01, 2025

FROM : SUPERVISOR KAREN SPIEGEL AND SUPERVISOR CHUCK WASHINGTON

SUBJECT: SUPERVISOR KAREN SPIEGEL AND SUPERVISOR CHUCK WASHINGTON:
Receive and file updates from the Board of Supervisors Ad-Hoc Multidisciplinary Committee on Fentanyl Response

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file the updates from the Board of Supervisors Ad-Hoc Multidisciplinary Committee for Fentanyl Response, and
2. Advocate for continued federal funding for the Riverside Overdose Data to Action program

ACTION:Consent

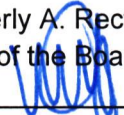

Supervisor Karen Spiegel, Supervisor 2nd District 8/26/2025


Supervisor Chuck Washington, Chair 8/27/2025

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Washington, seconded by Supervisor Spiegel and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is received and filed as recommended.

Ayes: Medina, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Gutierrez
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: July 1, 2025
xc: BOS-D2, BOS-D3

Kimberly A. Rector
Clerk of the Board
By: 
Deputy

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BACKGROUND:

Summary

In late 2021, Riverside County created a multi-disciplinary committee to assess the current state of fentanyl-involved deaths in Riverside County. The goal of this committee is to bring different disciplines together to share information, data, and resources with the mission to prevent poisoning and deaths due to illicit fentanyl use.

The impact of this drug is felt in different parts of our society. Therefore, our response must be varied across departments focused on different aspects of the response. Subcommittees were created to focus on education/awareness, law enforcement, addiction treatment, emergency medical response, funding streams and data collection.

Education/Awareness:

The communications team created an Emmy award-winning campaign, known as *Faces of Fentanyl*, to raise awareness around the dangers of the deadly drug. These PSA-style advertisements were placed on local media outlets, spanning traditional advertising methods like billboards and radio to digital advertisements such as streaming devices and social media.

The advertising campaigns resulted in more than 136 million impressions cumulatively. The PSAs were placed throughout Riverside County, with increased saturation among 16–50-year-olds in target areas with higher rates of fentanyl-related deaths.

The communications team is currently working with the Riverside County Office of Education to develop a fentanyl curriculum, as required by a new state law (AB 2429). This curriculum was piloted in two school districts (Lake Elsinore Unified School District and Coachella Valley Unified School District) during the Spring semester of the 2024/2025 school year. Student and teacher feedback from the pilot will be reviewed, and training will be provided on the finalized curriculum to all interested districts during the summer of 2025, in preparation for the 2025-2026 school year. This pilot launched approximately 18 months ahead of the deadline imposed by the new state law and is the result of the ad hoc committee's collection of multi-disciplinary expertise and local data.

Law Enforcement:

To date, the DA's Office (DAO) has filed 38 cases related to fentanyl deaths, leading to a groundbreaking guilty trial verdict for 2nd degree murder, the first of its kind in the state. The defendant received a sentence of 15 years to life.

Currently, the DA's Office has 17 active fentanyl homicide cases with 20 defendants and 17 victims pending trial. In addition, the DAO has referred another 12 cases to the U.S. Attorney's Office for federal prosecution.

The Riverside County Sheriff's Office (RSO), along with local police departments, are actively involved in drug interdiction efforts, targeting the transportation and distribution of fentanyl within the county. Their efforts led to the confiscation of more than 400 pounds of fentanyl from

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Riverside County's streets and neighborhoods in 2024, as well as another 300 pounds seized by multi-agency teams including RSO. RSO efforts include working with regional task forces and collaborating with federal agencies like the Drug Enforcement Agency to investigate and prosecute drug traffickers.

All these efforts reduce the availability of fentanyl, hold dealers accountable, and prevent overdoses within Riverside County.

Substance Use and Misuse:

Riverside University Health System (RUHS)-Behavioral Health provides prevention, early intervention, and treatment services for those currently using or at-risk of using fentanyl. Behavioral Health actively distributes naloxone coupled with education in treatment clinics, at community events, as well as ensures that field outreach and crisis teams are equipped. In addition, RUHS also provides a naloxone distribution center through a pharmacy located at RUHS Medical Center. Those struggling from an opioid use disorder can access Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT) within county operated outpatient clinics, community health centers, and contracted providers in all levels of care. The emergency room at RUHS-Medical Center also offers a bridge program to assist members in overdose crisis to be inducted on MAT and have onsite substance use disorder (SUD) navigators to connect bridged members for ongoing MAT treatment.

Behavioral Health also hosts three regional *One Life One Heart* Poisoning and Overdose Awareness 5K events where community members gather to receive resources and education. The Behavioral Health Friday Night Live (FNL) Program provides education and brings awareness to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs to youth from 4th to 12th grades throughout Riverside County. The FNL Youth Ambassadors created four videos focusing on initiating conversations between adults and youth surrounding community support, resources, how to administer naloxone, and demonstrating the value of genuine conversations between children and adult allies. Tutorials, family information, and other fentanyl and SUD materials have been added to the It'sUPtoUS Riverside website for our community, this can be found at <https://up2riverside.org/substance-use-and-prevention/>.

Emergency Medical Response:

The Emergency Management Department (EMD), in partnership with Public Health, monitors fentanyl-related overdoses in the emergency medical services system. This initiative includes analytics for tracking overdose trends and an alerting protocol to facilitate real-time response coordination. In 2024, over 660 fentanyl overdose encounters were recorded.

As a standard of care, all EMS providers are required to carry and administer naloxone for suspected overdoses. To further combat fatalities, EMD established the Leave Behind Naloxone Program, which has distributed more than 400 naloxone kits to community members since 2022.

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EMD and RUHS-Behavioral Health also launched the Community Assessment and Transport Team (CATT), which pairs emergency medical technicians with behavioral health clinicians to respond to crisis calls. CATT has treated more than 300 patients, provided 665 services, and completed 448 substance use related follow-up calls.

Funding Streams:

National lawsuits with pharmaceutical companies responsible for the current opioid epidemic have resulted in millions to the County of Riverside to support local efforts in prevention, response and treatment.

During the first installment of revenue payments, the county funded \$500,000 for the *Faces of Fentanyl* advertising campaign, \$790,000 for the Behavioral Health Friday Night Live program, and approximately \$1.8 million for medications for addiction treatment. An agenda item will come to this Board at a future date with a proposed spending plan for the second installment of opioid settlement revenue.

Data Collection:

Public Health and EMD disseminates monthly overdose reports and dashboards through the Riverside Overdose Data to Action (RODA) program, which provide an in-depth overview of suspected and confirmed overdoses, naloxone administration and type of drugs mentioned in overdose calls. RODA reports are used by multiple county departments and service providers to direct services, programs and education to areas of the county in greatest need. The local data produced by RODA on monthly intervals sets the County of Riverside's response to fentanyl apart from other counties that must rely on state data released during longer intervals.

Public Health, EMD, and the Sheriff's Office developed an overdose outbreak protocol, which detects overdose outbreaks within 72 hours by analyzing three key data sources, which are EMS data, ESSENCE surveillance and preliminary death records.

In addition, this team collaborates to create tailored data products, such as a naloxone desert map which highlights areas of high overdose rates and low administration of naloxone. This flexibility ensures timely actions for addressing emerging challenges and demonstrates how Riverside County moves data to action.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

As a result of the efforts by these subcommittees, led by county departments, we're seeing all overdoses deaths, as well as specific opioid and fentanyl deaths, decline at greater rates than those of California or the U.S.

For example, comparing 2024 data to 2023 data, there was a 25% reduction in overall overdose deaths in California. For the U.S., there was a 27% reduction. However, in Riverside County that reduction dropped by 28%. Comparing only opioid deaths in 2024 to 2023, there was a 33% decrease in California and 34% decrease in the U.S. However, for Riverside County, opioid deaths fell by 39% during the same timeframe.

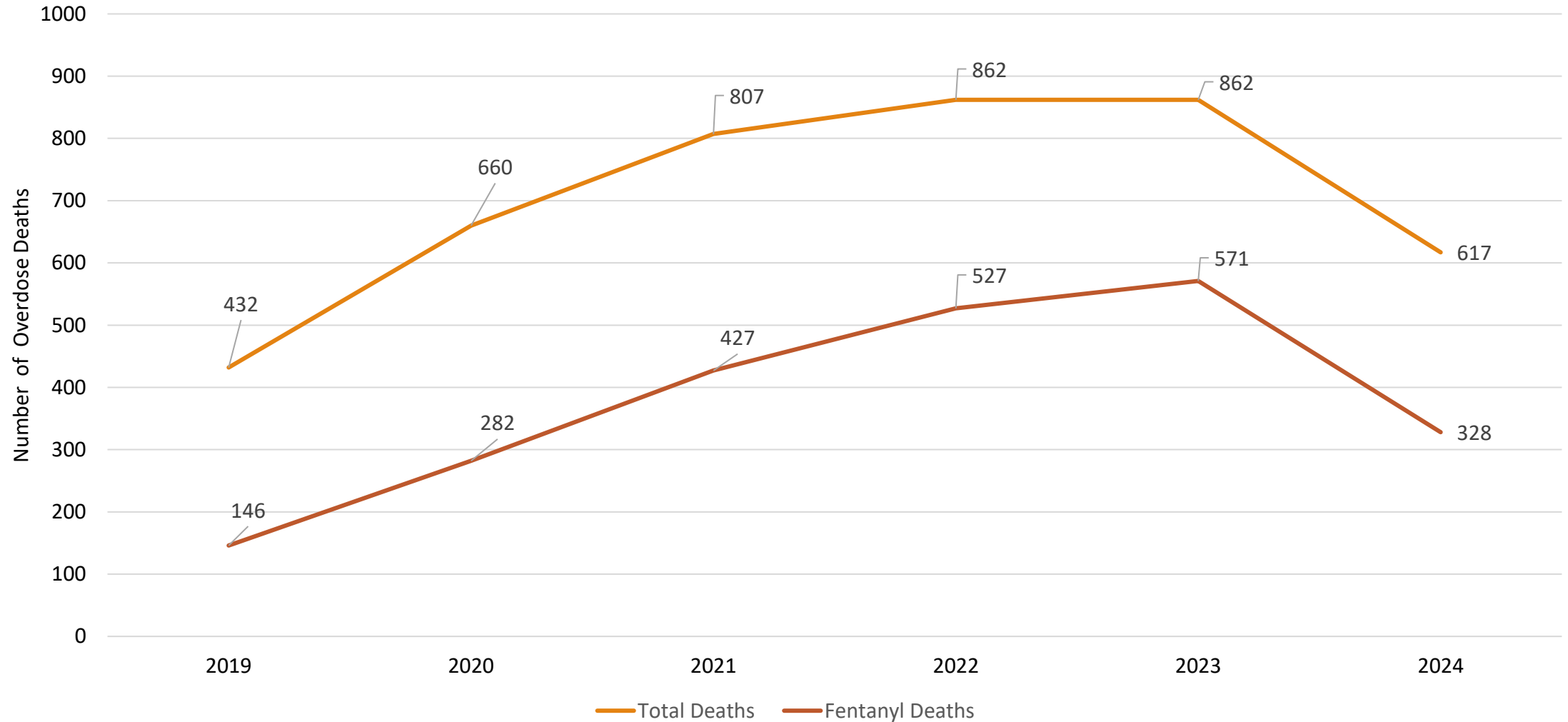
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When we review Riverside County fentanyl-related death data, we see even more significant reductions, far outpacing the decreases from all overdoses and opioid-specific overdoses. Looking at only fentanyl-related deaths in 2024, the decline fell by 43% compared to 2023. Among our younger population of 24-year-olds and younger, the decrease in fentanyl deaths fell by 66%.

The Riverside Overdose Data to Action program is federally funded by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention and has improved the collection and analysis of County overdose data for prevention activities. Continuation of this funding is at risk and, if cut, could reverse recent trends in the reduction of overdose deaths.

ATTACHMENT. Riverside Overdose Data to Action Fentanyl Deaths 12 Month Comparison 2024 Data

Moving 12 Month - All Overdose Deaths and Fentanyl Deaths (January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2024*)



*Exclude Suicide and Homicide

12 Month Moving Count (January 1- December 31)

Exclude Suicide/Homicide

	Riverside County % Change	CA % Change	National % Change
Overdose Deaths	28%	25%	27%
Fentanyl Related Overdose Deaths	43%	-	-
Opioid Related Overdose deaths	39%	33%	34%

12 Month Moving Count (January 1- December 31)

Exclude Suicide/Homicide

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Percent Difference: 2023 vs 2024 2024
0-9				*		*		
10-14		*	*	*			*	
15-24	23	44	98	76	56	50	17	-66%
25-44	134	162	261	321	365	344	259	-25%
45-64	193	187	252	321	354	382	267	-30%
65-74	38	35	45	73	75	72	61	-15%
75+	*	*	*	14	11	11	12	9%
Unknown					*	*		
Total	392	432	661	807	862	862	617	-28%

12 Month Moving Count (January 1- December 31)

Exclude Suicide/Homicide

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Percent Difference: 2023 vs 2024
Coachella Valley	98	131	173	199	227	230	151	-34%
East	15	9	18	12	16	13	11	-15%
Mid	70	80	110	168	161	172	122	-29%
Northwest	144	151	254	275	314	290	213	-27%
Southwest	63	58	106	139	127	130	93	-28%
Unknown	*	*		14	17	27	27	0%
Total	392	432	661	807	862	862	617	-28%

12 Month Moving Count (January 1- December 31)

Exclude Suicide/Homicide

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Percent Difference: 2023 vs 2024
American Indian or Alaska Native	*	*	8	6	8	6	9	50%
Asian	*	*	13	*	6	10	8	-20%
Black or African American	30	31	63	82	68	78	56	-28%
LatinX	114	145	210	265	333	336	251	-25%
Multiple Race	*	8	28	27	26	22	13	-41%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*			*	*	7	*	-71%
Other/Unknown	*	*	*	11	12	22	22	0%
White	236	238	336	409	407	381	256	-33%
Total	392	432	661	807	862	862	617	-28%

12 Month Moving Count (January 1- December 31)

People Experiencing Homelessness*
Exclude Suicide/Homicide

	Total Counts	Percent Different
2019	64	
2020	103	61%
2021	154	50%
2022	213	38%
2023	243	14%
2024	156	-36%

2017-2018 data for people experiencing homelessness is incomplete. Counts include both occurrent and resident overdose deaths among people experiencing Homelessness.

Resource

Data Source: California Integrated Vital Records System (CAL-IVRS), California
Comprehensive Death File (CCDF), 2017-2024

Data as of May 12, 2025

2019-2023 Include out of state deaths (Riverside County Residents who OD outside of CA)