



Office of Children and Family Services

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

SUZANNE MILES GUSTAVE, ESQ.
Acting Commissioner

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Dear Licensed, Registered or Enrolled Legally Exempt Group Child Care Provider,

This letter is to encourage you to learn how to save lives.

New York State and the nation are currently experiencing a high number of fatal overdoses due to fentanyl and other opioids. You can help prevent overdose deaths and save lives in your community by learning how to use medication designed to reverse overdoses. These medications are known as opioid antagonists. Naloxone nasal spray (also known by the brand name Narcan) can reverse an overdose from a drug such as heroin, fentanyl, and other opioids. Naloxone nasal spray is easy to administer and safe to use on any person, even infants.

How can you get Naloxone?

Naloxone is an over-the-counter medicine that is available *for free* through the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (NYS OASAS), through the New York State Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (OOPP) administered by the NYS Department of Health (DOH), or in New York City only, through the New York City Department of Health.

If you wish to keep an opioid antagonist nasal spray on site at your child care program, you must:

- ensure at least one designated staff has successfully completed virtual or in-person training that covers steps for responding to an opioid overdose and other crucial information.
- maintain onsite verification that designated employees have completed the training and make verification available to OCFS or its representatives.
- maintain onsite an approved Appendix K waiver.
- maintain policies and procedures that follow the child care regulations regarding stocking, storage, maintenance, labeling, and disposal of medication; and
- immediately notify parents (if applicable) and OCFS upon administering medication.

Where can you get the training?

NYS OASAS training on recognizing fentanyl exposure and the use of Naloxone nasal spray to help prevent and reverse an opioid overdose. To obtain this training please visit <https://oasas.ny.gov/search/events>. Educational resources on how to recognize the signs of an overdose and administer naloxone can be found at <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/12028.pdf>.

How Does this Change the Approved Health Care Plan?

Licensed, registered or enrolled legally exempt group child care programs who wish to maintain an opioid antagonist nasal spray onsite must apply for a waiver of OCFS regulations through amending their health care plan. The child care program must:

- Complete the new Appendix K to the Health Care Plan which is attached to this letter and will be added to all future versions of the Health Care Plan. Appendix K is exclusively for programs that choose to obtain, stock, and potentially administer opioid antagonists like naloxone.

- Submit Appendix K to the regulator for approval prior to stocking opioid antagonists. Once the amended plan is approved, providers must keep the approved Appendix K onsite as part of the Health Care Plan, share it with any health care consultant associated with the program and share this update with parents.

What is Fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is more potent than heroin and morphine. Doctors use some types of opioids to treat severe pain. Illegal fentanyl has been on the rise in many states across America. Nearly half of all overdose deaths in New York State now involve fentanyl or other opioids. Fentanyl is often disguised or mixed into other illegal drugs without the user's knowledge. Fentanyl is undetectable by sight, smell, or taste. Drugs containing fentanyl, even in very small amounts, substantially increase the risk of overdose and death. Just three milligrams of fentanyl can be fatal.

What does fentanyl look like?

- A liquid, or a white or brown powder
- Pressed into a pill, often mislabeled as an actual medication, such as 'OxyContin' or 'Xanax.'
- Mixed in with other illicit drugs, including heroin, methamphetamine, and cocaine.

What are the Signs of an Overdose?

- Falling asleep, loss of consciousness
- Shallow or no breathing
- Limp body (though may be rigid if fentanyl was used)
- Choking or gurgling sounds
- Small, constricted, 'pinpoint' pupils (may be difficult to see in an emergency)
- Pale blue or cold skin, lips, or nails (factors including skin tone could make this difficult to see)

If you suspect an opioid overdose, you should:

- **Call 911**
- Administer an opioid antagonist, such as naloxone. Giving naloxone to a person, including a child, who is overdosing can save their life.

If you are trained, you can also do rescue breathing and/or chest compressions until the person wakes up or emergency help arrives.

Find more information on overdose prevention at [Community Overdose Prevention Education | Office of Addiction Services and Supports \(ny.gov\)](https://www.ocfs.ny.gov/Community-Overdose-Prevention-Education)

Sincerely,



Nora Yates
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services