

Gov. Beshear: Kentucky sees 4th consecutive year of decline in overdose deaths

Office of Governor Andy Beshear Press Release

FRANKFORT – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced that overdose deaths in the commonwealth

decreased for the fourth year in a row, with a 22.9% decrease in 2025 compared with the previous year and a 50.8% decrease from 2021.

The Governor said that, according to the 2025 Kentucky Drug Overdose Fatality Report, 1,110 Kentuckians lost their lives last year to a drug overdose.

“We mourn all 1,101 Kentuckians who lost their lives to a drug overdose last year. They were a mom, dad, brother, sister, child or neighbor – and most importantly a child of God who is gone too soon,” said Gov. Beshear. “While we are proud of the progress we have made in fighting addiction, we know we must continue working every day to save more Kentuckians from addiction.”

The report also shows that:

2025 saw the lowest number of overdose deaths recorded since 2014.

Last year marked a 50.8% decrease from 2021, which saw the highest number of overdose deaths ever in Kentucky.

This is the second-largest decrease recorded in the commonwealth since Kentucky began reporting overdose deaths in 2012.

Fentanyl was present in 45.4% of deaths, down from 62.3% in 2024.

Methamphetamine was present in 49.5% of deaths, down from 50.8% in 2024. The two continue to be the most prevalent drugs contributing to overdose deaths in the state.

Among Black Kentuckians, 129 deaths in 2025 were attributed to a drug overdose, marking a 25.4% decrease compared with the year prior. This decrease is the second straight decline among this demographic.

Since its inception, the Office of Drug Control Policy has produced 14 drug overdose fatality reports. Eight of those reports indicated an increase in overdose deaths, with six reporting a decrease. Of the reports showing a decrease, four of them have been under Gov. Beshear’s leadership: In 2024, Kentucky reported a 30.2% decrease compared with 2023. This is the largest decrease recorded in the history of the commonwealth.

In 2023, Kentucky reported a 9.8% decrease compared with 2022.

In 2022, Kentucky reported a 2.5% decrease compared with 2021, marking the first decrease in overdose deaths since 2018.

“Addiction has affected every state in our nation and has caused insurmountable harm to families and future generations – even in our own hometowns,” said Office of Drug Control Policy Executive Director Van Ingram. “But Kentuckians did not just accept this fate; we got up and we fought

back. And because we worked together, because of every Kentuckian who sought recovery, because of everyone loving their neighbor and saying enough is enough, lives have been saved. For anyone facing addiction today, know that you will find hope, strength and recovery in Kentucky – please let us help.”

The Governor recognized that by putting politics aside, Kentucky is saving lives, and his administration is working hard every day with community leaders, non-profit organizations, first responders and advocates. Together, the state’s decline in overdose deaths can be attributed to the following:

More than \$29 million was distributed in grant and pass-through funding from the Office of Drug Control Policy; 182,810 doses of Narcan were distributed; 82 syringe exchange program sites served 25,543 unique participants;

More than 137,000 Kentuckians received addiction services through Medicaid;

More than 19,100 Kentuckians received addiction treatment paid for by the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort;

More than 29,900 Kentuckians received recovery services (housing assistance, employment services, transportation, basic need services, etc.) in their community paid for by the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort;

23 Kentuckians sought treatment through the

Kentucky State Police Angel Initiative;

3,005 incoming calls were made to the KY HELP Call Center with 19,138 outgoing follow-up calls;

More than 52,800 school-aged students participated in substance use prevention curriculum supported by the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort; and

39 counties are now certified as Recovery Ready Communities, representing more than 2.1 million Kentuckians.

FIGHT AGAINST ADDICTION

The Beshear-Coleman administration is committed to making sure no Kentuckian goes without needed addiction recovery and support services.

Gov. Beshear has continued to fight the state’s drug epidemic since his time as attorney general, when he led the nation in the number of individual opioid lawsuits filed by an attorney general. Now, the Governor is working to make sure the hundreds of millions of dollars in settlement funds go to treatment and the communities impacted.

During the first three months of this year, Kentucky State Police (KSP) has seized more than \$5.4 million worth of drugs, which is \$3.1 million higher than the first three months of 2025. Last year, the state police also helped 15 individuals through the Angel Initiative, a program that offers those struggling with addiction a way to connect to recovery resources with no questions asked.

In November of last year, the Governor took action to classify 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) as a Schedule I narcotic, making it illegal to sell, possess or distribute any isolated or concentrated forms of the form of kratom in the state. This followed Gov. Beshear’s similar move to schedule bromazepam, or “designer Xanax,” as a Schedule I narcotic. These actions give Kentucky law enforcement the ability to make arrests for sales or possession.

In September 2025, Gov. Beshear awarded more than \$1.4 million in federal grant funding to nine state and local agencies to fight drug trafficking through the Edward J. Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant.

Last summer, the commonwealth released the 2024 Crime in Kentucky Report, which showed serious crime rates decreased by nearly 8%, including an 11.55% decrease in drug/narcotic offenses, a 12.7% decrease in homicide offenses and a 13.78% decrease in sex offenses.

TREATMENT RESOURCES

If you or a loved one are struggling with addiction, the KY HELP Call Center can connect you to treatment by calling 833-8KY-HELP (833-859-4357).

Information about treatment programs all across the commonwealth is available at FindHelpNowKy.org. Information on how to obtain the life-saving drug naloxone, which is used to reverse an opioid overdose, can be found

at that website as well as at FindNaloxoneNowKy.org and FindMentalHealthNowKy.org.

Visit the KSP website to find one of 16 posts where those suffering from addiction can be paired with a local officer who will assist with locating an appropriate treatment program. The Angel Initiative is completely voluntary, and individuals will not be arrested or charged with any violations if they agree to participate in treatment.

ABOUT THE REPORT

The Kentucky Overdose Fatality Report is compiled each year by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center using data from the Office of Vital Statistics, the Office of the State Medical Examiner and Kentucky’s coroners. The numbers are subject to change.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report includes both the deaths of Kentucky residents and nonresidents in its reporting. Kentucky’s overdose report includes only the deaths of Kentucky residents, which has been the standard since the Kentucky General Assembly first required this annual report. The Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy includes resident deaths only to better target harm reduction and prevention activities for Kentuckians.

Kentucky gets \$416,200 to demolish flood-prone properties

By Tom Latek
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has announced \$19.9 million in funding to Kentucky, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi and South Carolina, for long-term projects that will make local communities more resilient to floods.

This funding is part of the more than \$250 million that FEMA announced for over 100 flood mitigation projects nationwide. Under DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin’s leadership, FEMA is working diligently to address the backlog of funding requests. Even 67 days into the current lapse in appropriations, the longest ever in U.S. history, DHS and FEMA are delivering resources to states across the country.

One of the approved project awards is \$416,200 to Kentucky for the acquisition and demolition of five



National Flood Insurance Program Severe Repetitive Loss properties in Floyd County’s Wayland community.

Other funding awards in FEMA’s Region 4 include:

--\$2.3 million to Florida to elevate six properties located in Santa Rosa County. Elevating the most flood-prone structures in these communities eliminates the risk of loss of life and reduces the need for search and rescue and evacuation efforts, essential home repairs, and emergency

sheltering for those families.

--\$1.5 million to Alabama for the acquisition and demolition of four properties located in Hoover. Two of the homes were covered by the National Flood Insurance Program, and their demolition will eliminate future claims on these properties.

--\$460,887 to Mississippi to fund phase one of flood mitigation efforts in Madison County. The project will reduce and slow stormwater runoff problems within the

county and city limits.

--\$162,000 to South Carolina for the elevation of one National Flood Insurance Program Repetitive Loss property in Hilton Head Island.

These awards are distributed through FEMA’s Flood Mitigation Assistance program and Swift Current, which is designed in hopes of empowering states to take proactive action against the devastating impact of floods, which are the most common and costly type of natural disaster.

Terrorist inmate convicted of stabbing cellmate 30 times

By Tom Latek
Kentucky Today

LONDON – A man serving his sentence at a federal prison in Kentucky for attempting to aid a foreign terrorist group, will face more time, after being found guilty of assaulting his cellmate.

According to the U.S. Attorney’s office for the Eastern District of Kentucky, Mufid Elfgeeh, 42, was convicted by a federal jury in London for attempted murder. Elfgeeh was convicted following a two-day trial at U.S. District Court in London.

Prosecutors say while serving a 22.5 year sentence for attempting to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, United States Penitentiary McCreary staff observed Elfgeeh attacking his cellmate. Elfgeeh had requested a private cell and was upset that the Bureau of

Prisons (BOP) had not complied with his request.

Elfgeeh used an improvised weapon to stab his cellmate at least 30 times as he ignored numerous verbal commands to stop the attack, continuing the stabbing through three sprays of OC spray, OC vapor grenades, being struck by a foam baton, pepper balls, and hornet nest munitions. Elfgeeh’s assault continued until staff outfitted with protective gear breached the cell, restrained him, and removed the weapon.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI. The U.S. Attorney’s Office was represented in the case by Assistant U.S. Attorney Pearce Nesbitt.

Elfgeeh will appear for sentencing on September 1, 2026. He faces a maximum of 20 additional years in prison, on top of his current sentence.