The State of Maryland

Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER
01.01.2023.21

(Rescinds Executive Orders 01.01.2022.07, 01.01.2022.05, 01.01.2018.30, 01.01.2017.01, and 01.01.2015.13)

Maryland's Office of Overdose Response

WHEREAS, The State of Maryland faces a substance-related overdose crisis;

WHEREAS, Overdose rates increased at an unprecedented rate in Maryland and across the United States in the last decade, resulting in wide-scale loss of life;

WHEREAS, Substance-related overdose deaths are preventable, and access to substance use disorder services can reduce overdose-related harms and save lives;

WHEREAS, Overdose-related harms affect communities in every Maryland jurisdiction and all demographic groups, threatening the well-being of the State;

WHEREAS, Maryland has experienced increasing racial disparities in overdose-related outcomes;

WHEREAS, Leadership from an executive-level office can direct the optimal mobilization of State and local resources and coordinate the efforts of all State agencies working to reduce overdose-related morbidity and mortality, and address health disparities;

WHEREAS, Maryland State agencies possess specialized capabilities, data, and expertise that when shared, can promote more effective response efforts to the overdose crisis;

WHEREAS, Local government agencies can reduce overdose-related harms through the provision of services and can promote coordinated statewide action through the sharing of capabilities, data and expertise;

WHEREAS, Collaboration between the State and local jurisdictions is necessary to promote the adoption of evidence-informed best practices that can reduce overdose morbidity and mortality;

WHEREAS, The Opioid Operational Command Center has grown from a primarily emergency management response team to a multi-disciplinary office focused on broad approaches to the State's varied substance-related issues, and is the lead office coordinating the State's response to combat substance-related overdose morbidity and mortality; and

WHEREAS, There is a need to rename the Opioid Operational Command Center to reflect its broad purpose and mission.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WES MOORE, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY RESCIND EXECUTIVE ORDER 01.01.2022.07, 01.01.2022.05, 01.01.2018.30, 01.01.2017.01, AND 01.01.2015.13 AND PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVELY IMMEDIATELY:

A. Maryland's Office of Overdose Response

(1) There is a Maryland's Office of Overdose Response (the "Office") within the Maryland Department of Health.

(2) The Office shall be managed by a Special Secretary of Overdose Response, who serves at the pleasure of the Governor. The Special Secretary shall:

(a) Direct the daily operation and administration of the Office;

(b) Act as a coordinating liaison to the Maryland Overdose Response Advisory Council;

(c) Provide advice and recommendations to the Governor on matters related to overdose; and

(d) Coordinate with federal and local governments to strengthen overdose prevention and response programs and initiatives.

(3) Staffing. The Special Secretary shall select, organize, and direct the staff of Maryland's Office of Overdose Response.

(4) Duties. The Office shall be responsible for the following activities:

(a) Facilitate statewide coordination of overdose prevention and response efforts across Maryland's 24 local jurisdictions and State agencies;

(b) Coordinate the interagency process to develop the Governor's policy agenda affecting overdose prevention and response programs and initiatives;

(c) Support local jurisdictions through grant funds to their Overdose Prevention Teams, as established by Section C, below;

(d) Conduct and coordinate public outreach on behalf of the Governor to encourage greater involvement and participation by community organizations and constituent groups;

(e) Assist in the identification of funding opportunities for State and local agencies and community organizations to implement initiatives that further the State's goal of reducing overdose morbidity and mortality;

(t) Coordinate and consult on matters relating to overdose prevention and response initiatives across State government; emphasize communication and cooperation with federal and local governments on all overdose-related concerns; and provide recommendations to enhance intergovernmental prevention and response efforts;

(g) Coordinate and facilitate data sharing among State and local sources while maintaining the privacy and security of sensitive personal information; and

(h) Provide staff to the Maryland Overdose Response Advisory Council.

(5) Maryland's Office of Overdose Response is the successor agency of the Opioid Operational Command Center.

B. Overdose Prevention Teams

(1) Prior to receiving funds from the Office, each county and the City of Baltimore shall establish an Overdose Prevention Team that meets at least quarterly and reports activities and data to Maryland's Office of Overdose Response annually.

(2) An Overdose Prevention Team shall include, but is not limited to, individuals with experience in:

(a) Health;

(b) Social services;

(c) Education;

(d) Public safety agencies, including law enforcement, fire service, and emergency services;

(e) Harm reduction programs;

(f) Recovery support programs;

(g) Substance use treatment; and

(h) Community and faith-based organizations.

C. Maryland Overdose Response Advisory Council

(1) There is a Maryland Overdose Response Advisory Council (the "Council").

(2) Membership.

(a) The Council shall include individuals from the following State agencies:

(i) Maryland's Office of Overdose Response;

(ii) Department of Health;

(iii) Department of Human Services;

(iv) Department of Housing and Community Development;

(v) Department of Labor;

(vi) Department of Commerce;

(vii) Department of Education;

(viii) Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services;

(ix) Department of Juvenile Services;

(x) Department of Emergency Management;

(xi) Department of Veterans Affairs;

(xii) Department of Aging;

(xiii) Department of Disabilities;

(xiv) Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services;

(xv) Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems;

(xvi) Office of the Public Defender;

(xvii) Maryland Judiciary; and

(xviii) Maryland State Police.

(b) Staff members from the Offices of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor will also be regular participants.

(c) Other State agencies may be asked to participate at the invitation of the Chair.

(3) Duties. The Council shall:

(a) Facilitate data sharing among respective agencies;

(b) Identify emerging challenges related to the provision of substance use disorder services and develop recommendations to address those challenges;

(c) Promote equity in the provision of substance use disorder services;

(d) Share data related to equity among all relevant agencies;

(e) Coordinate the implementation of recommendations of Maryland's Commission for Health Equity related to overdose mortality and the Racial Disparities in Overdose Taskforce; and

(t) Submit a report to the Governor annually by November 1.

(4) Procedures.

(a) The Lieutenant Governor shall chair the Council. The Chair shall:

(i) Oversee the work of the Council;

(ii) Determine the Council's agenda; and

(iii) Identify additional support as needed.

(b) The Council shall meet on a quarterly basis, at minimum.

(c) A majority of the Council members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business.

(d) The Council may adopt other procedures as necessary to ensure the orderly transaction of business.

(e) Members from the Offices of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor will be regular participants.

(t) Other state agencies as needed.

(5) Maryland's Office of Overdose Response shall provide staff to the Council.

D. All State departments, agencies, commissions, and boards are directed to cooperate with Maryland's Office of Overdose Response in implementing the provisions of this Executive Order, including but not limited to, sharing relevant data.

E. Reports. Maryland's Office of Overdose Response shall submit a report to the Governor and the public in the form of an interagency coordination plan by December 1, 2024, and thereafter annually by December 1.

F. This Executive Order shall be implemented in a manner that is consistent with all applicable statutes and regulations. Nothing in this Executive Order shall operate to contravene any State or federal law or to affect the State's receipt of federal funding.

G. If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person, entity, or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, all other provisions or applications of the Executive Order shall remain in effect to the extent possible without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are severable.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis, this 14th Day of December 2023.

Wes Moore
Governor

ATTEST:

Susan C. Lee
Secretary of State