

State of North Carolina

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

2025

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, from 2000 to 2023, 41,500 North Carolinians were among the more than 1 million Americans who died from drug overdose; according to updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates, the combined medical, social, and personal cost of drug overdose deaths in North Carolina alone totaled over \$50 billion in 2023; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this crisis, with the overdose death rate increasing 83 percent since 2019 and 4,442 North Carolinians losing their lives to overdose in 2023, the highest recorded number in a single year;

WHEREAS, the rates of overdose are increasing fastest among Black/African American and Hispanic North Carolinians, with 210 percent and 200 percent increases in their overdose death rates from 2019 to 2023, respectively, while American Indian/Indigenous communities had the highest overdose rate at 111.3 deaths per 100,000 residents in 2023; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid plays a critical role in decreasing overdose deaths due to more individuals getting access to substance use disorder treatment; North Carolina's bipartisan Medicaid expansion in December 2023 is estimated to have helped thousands of individuals gain access to opioid use disorder treatment; recent data shows that there has been a 17% increase in behavioral health providers accepting Medicaid since expansion, a 29 percent decrease in the number of overdose visits to emergency departments in the first year of Medicaid expansion, and the number of overdose deaths cut in half from 2023 to 2024, one of the steepest declines in the nation; and

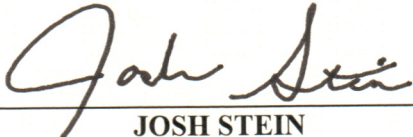
WHEREAS, more than 31,000 people received treatment for opioid use disorder from one of the 92 licensed opioid treatment programs in North Carolina, and more than 1 million doses of naloxone, the life-saving overdose reversal medication, have been distributed by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services since 2020; and

WHEREAS, disasters like Hurricane Helene can exacerbate symptoms among those with substance use disorder and increase the likelihood of relapse for those in recovery; and

WHEREAS, Overdose Awareness Day is a day to remember those in our great state and across the country whose lives have been lost to overdose, to honor family and community grief, to acknowledge and address stigma related to substance use and substance use disorders across the continuum, and to renew our commitment to ending the overdose crisis;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSH STEIN, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim August 31, 2025, as "**OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY**" in North Carolina and commend its observance to all citizens.





JOSH STEIN

Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-third day of July in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-fifth and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-ninth.