

The Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council: Foundation, Structure, Function & Accomplishments

PARCA Annual Forum

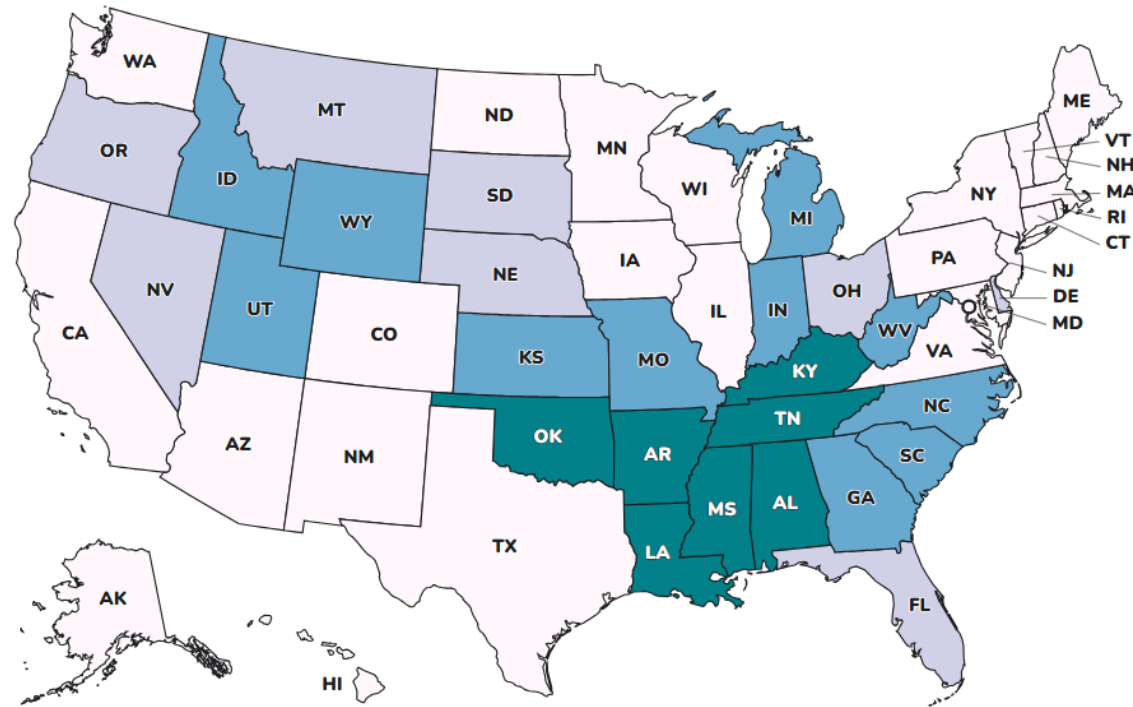
March 6, 2026



Kimberly G. Boswell, Commissioner
Alabama Department of Mental Health

Major Challenges

In the early days of the opioid epidemic, Alabama became known for high rates of opioid prescriptions, leading the nation with a rate of 143.8 prescriptions per 100 people in 2012.

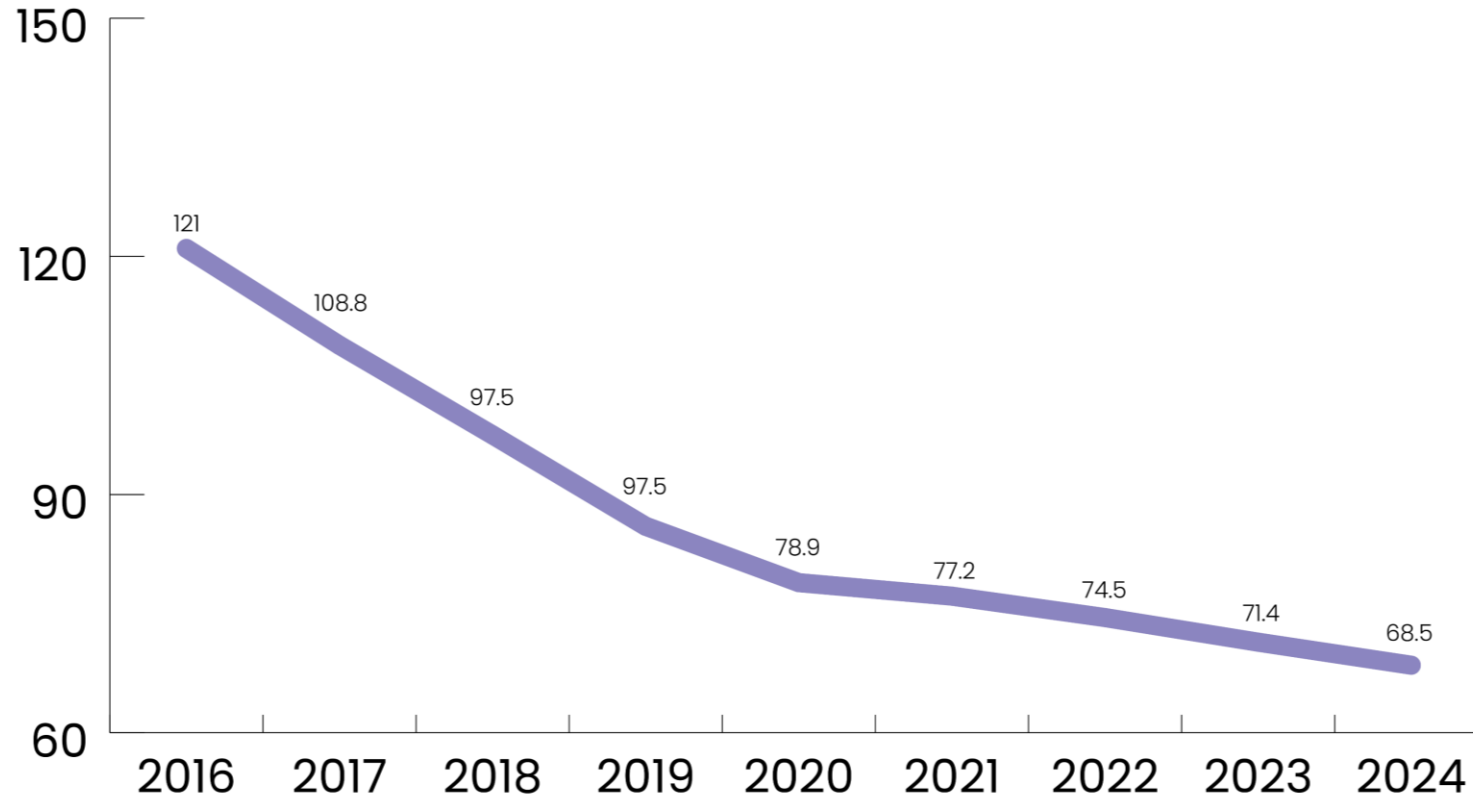


Opioid Dispensing Rate (per 100 persons)

- <33.9
- 33.9 - 40.4
- 40.4 - 49.9
- >49.9

In 2024, prescription rates to **68.5** prescriptions per 100.

Decrease in Opioid Prescriptions per 100 persons



From 2016-2024, we have seen a **43.39%** decrease in opioid prescriptions.

Major Challenges

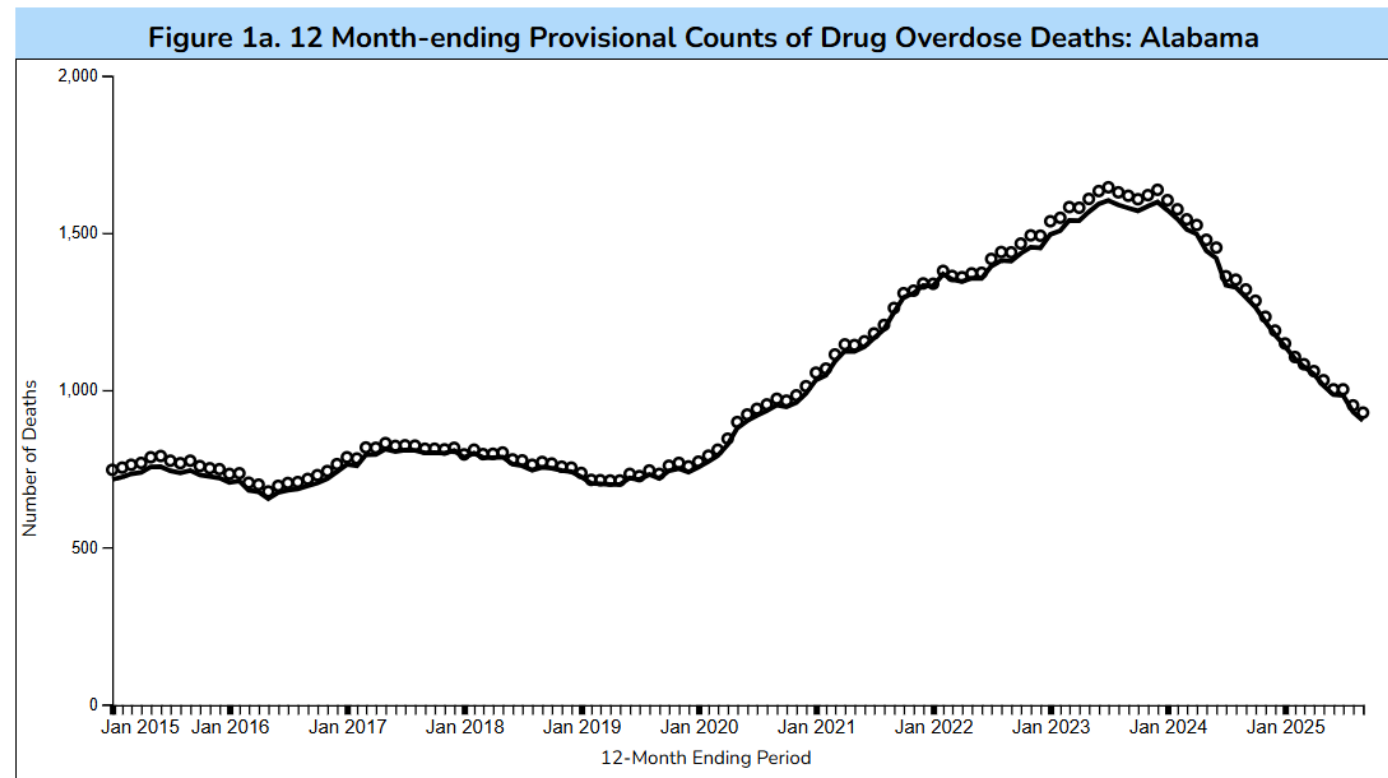
For 2016, there were 740 reported overdose deaths (all substances).

As of September 2025, there were 903 reported overdose deaths.

This is a 30% decrease from 2024.

12 Month-ending Provisional Number and Percent Change of Drug Overdose Deaths

Based on data available for analysis on: February 1, 2026



Foundation

Foundation: The Council

Governor Kay Ivey's Executive Order No. 708 established the 2017 Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council.

The Council was established to develop a comprehensive coordinated strategy to combat Alabama's opioid crisis and reduce the number of deaths and other adverse consequences in our state.



EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 708

ESTABLISHING THE ALABAMA OPIOID OVERDOSE AND ADDICTION COUNCIL

WHEREAS the United States is experiencing a drug-overdose epidemic with deaths rising among men and women of all races and ages, and of these drug-related deaths, more than three out of five involve an opioid;

WHEREAS local medical examiners' reports verify that the use of heroin and prescription opioids has greatly worsened Alabama's increasing overdose-death rate, and that other powerful opioids, including fentanyl and carfentanil, are now present in Alabama, contributing to the State's overdose deaths;

WHEREAS the use of prescription opioids is linked to use of heroin, and nearly 30,000 Alabamians over the age of 17 are estimated to be addicted to prescription painkillers or heroin;

WHEREAS opioid misuse and addiction affect other critical concerns for our State, including crime, child welfare, education, infectious diseases, infant mortality, neonatal abstinence syndrome, and overcrowding of jails and prisons;

WHEREAS prevention, treatment, recovery-support, and other behavioral health services for substance-use disorders are extremely limited in Alabama; and

WHEREAS notable efforts have been made across the State to address select aspects of the drug-overdose crisis, but the complexities of this epidemic require systemic change and the development of a unified, comprehensive strategy to guide, support and evaluate this change;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, Governor of the State of Alabama, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of

Foundation

More than 40 agencies, organizations, and businesses, which include 185 individuals, make up the subcommittees.

The collaboration that has grown out of the subcommittees, through shared goals, resources, education and true partnerships, is an amazing aspect of the Council and helps to **SAVE LIVES**.



Structure and Function

Structure

To lead the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council, Governor Ivey named three co-chairs, the Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH), the State Health Officer, and the State Attorney General.

Six standing committees were originally assembled to explore the problem and make recommendations. Two more were added in 2021 and 2022.

1. Data
2. Prescriber-Dispenser
3. Rescue
4. Treatment-Recovery
5. Community Engagement
6. Law Enforcement
7. Workforce
8. Maternal Child Health

Funding: State Opioid Response Grant (SOR)

The State Opioid Response Grant (SOR) and the Strategic Targeted Response (STR) grant before it, addresses the opioid overdose crisis by providing resources to increase access to approved medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) and to reduce unmet treatment needs and opioid-related overdose deaths with supports.

Opioid State Targeted Response/Strategic Opioid Response Grant - Alabama		
Year	Grant Name	Funding
2017	OSTR	\$7,967,873
2018	OSTR	\$7,967,873
2019	SOR 1	\$13,744,136
2020	SOR 1	\$13,744,136
2021	SOR 2	\$16,086,041
2022	SOR 2	\$16,086,041
2023	SOR 3	\$16,267,833
2024	SOR 3	\$16,267,833
2025	SOR 4	\$16,181,718
2026	SOR 4	\$16,809,597
2027	SOR 4	\$16,181,718

Funding: State Opioid Response Grant (SOR)

The SOR did three important things for Alabama:

1. SOR provided funding or ability to expand medication assisted treatment by 116%. Before SOR, there was no ability to expand beyond existing clinics to more traditional providers who could offer the service.
2. SOR funds supported education and training on opioid use disorder and the effect on the lives of individuals with substance use disorder and their families and the community
3. SOR allowed the opportunity to fund Naloxone statewide for the first time ever.

The Strategic Opioid Response grant program (SOR) supports the work of the Council and funds the State Opioid Coordinator position to coordinate and increase collaboration with partners.

Funding: Overdose Data to Action Grant (OD2A)

Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) supports states to implement prevention activities and to collect accurate, comprehensive, and timely data on nonfatal and fatal overdoses and in using those data to enhance programmatic and surveillance efforts.

The Alabama Department of Public Health is the direct recipient, with ADMH as a subrecipient.

CDC - Overdose Data to Action (States) subrecipient funding with ADPH		
Year	Grant Name	Funding
2019	OD2A.S	\$862,000
2020	OD2A.S	\$1,192,000
2021	OD2A.S	\$1,895,540
2022	OD2A.S	\$1,461,270
2023	OD2A.S	\$1,246,270
2024	OD2A.S	\$1,293,270
2025	OD2A.S	\$1,293,270
2026	OD2A.S	TBD
2027	OD2A.S	TBD

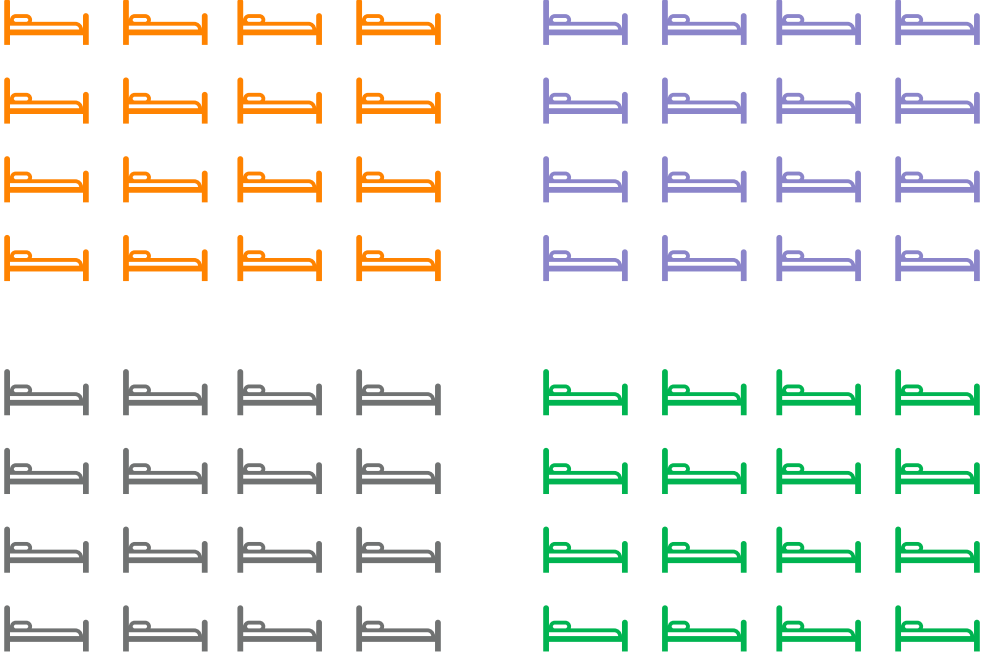
Funding: Overdose Data to Action Grant

The OD2A grant has:

1. The OD2A supports education and trainings offered by the Council, including funding credentialed education for ADMH providers.
2. OD2A funds have significantly impacted expansion of recovery supports.
3. The OD2A funded the creation, continued improvement and expansion of the Connect Alabama app.
4. The OD2A supports connections to care from jails to the community, to ensure a continuation of services.

Substance Use Treatment Beds

In FY2023, the state received the first major investment in substance use treatment beds since the 1970s. Thanks to this investment, Alabama has **four new 16-bed units in Dekalb, Lee, Madison, and Walker counties.**



401
individuals
served to date

Oversight Commission on Alabama Opioid Settlement Funds

In 2021, the Council began to discuss alignment of future opioid settlement funds with evidence-based practices for prevention, treatment and recovery.

1

Beginning in 2018, Alabama pursued litigation with pharmaceutical companies, manufacturers, and distributors to hold them accountable for allegedly causing and exacerbating the state's severe opioid addiction and overdose crisis.

2

The state has settled with close to 20 drug manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacies, with the first settlements received in December 2022.

3

In May of 2023, the Alabama Legislature passed House Joint Resolution 204, creating the Oversight Commission on Alabama Opioid Settlement Funds (OSF).

4

In OSF rounds 1-3, prevention, treatment and recovery grant funding was appropriated for the purpose of prevention, reduction, treatment, or mitigation of the effects of opioid substance use.

5

In OSF rounds 2 and 3 appropriations, the Commission identified additional programs for funding.

Opioid Settlement Fund Grants (OSF)– Rounds 1 -3

At the recommendation of the Oversight Commission on Alabama Opioid Settlement Funds, the Legislature appropriated opioid settlement dollars for ADMH to administer **prevention, treatment, and recovery grants**, to prevent, reduce, treat, or mitigate the effects of opioid substance use.

ROUND 1

CATEGORY	TOTAL SUBMISSIONS
PREVENTION	18
TREATMENT	25
RECOVERY	9
TOTAL	52

ROUND 2

CATEGORY	TOTAL SUBMISSIONS
PREVENTION	13
TREATMENT	25
RECOVERY	31
TOTAL	69

ROUND 3

CATEGORY	TOTAL SUBMISSIONS
PREVENTION	23
TREATMENT	24
RECOVERY	41
TOTAL	88

A goal of the OSF grant process was to encourage applications from nontraditional providers and to increase the number of organizations certified or approved by ADMH.

209 proposals were submitted in Rounds 1-3.
64 were from organizations not previously certified.

Function

The Council recognized substance use disorders (SUD) as complex, multifactorial health conditions that can be prevented and treated.

The function of the subcommittees is to plan and implement dynamic solutions to meet the needs of Alabamians with substance use disorders.

Plans focus on four overarching goals:

1. Prevention
2. Intervention
3. Treatment
4. Community Response

Major Accomplishments

Data Subcommittee

The committee develops the capacity to provide rapid access to current data from various statewide agencies to address the opioid crisis and overdoses.

Accomplishments

- Creation of a Data governance board to coordinate agencies, organizations and partners was the first step in collaborative data sharing.
- **The successful effort of bringing agencies together through data sharing agreements was a turning point for the work of the Council and toward the goal of knowledge and awareness related to the opioid epidemic.**
- Data sharing agreements were crucial to the creation and implementation of the Centralized Data Repository (CDR).
- The CDR was made available to the public in 2022, More than 16,000 visits have been made to the site since then.

Prescribers-Dispensers Subcommittee

The committee is tasked with ensuring prescribers and dispensers are educated in safe opioid prescribing and best practices.

Accomplishment

ALAHOPE (Alabama Health Professionals' Opioid and Pain Management Education), was launched in May 2023.

ALAHOPE obtained approval for free continuing education credits for physicians, as well as other clinicians, and offers accessible courses.



3,370 course completions

as of Oct. 1, 2025

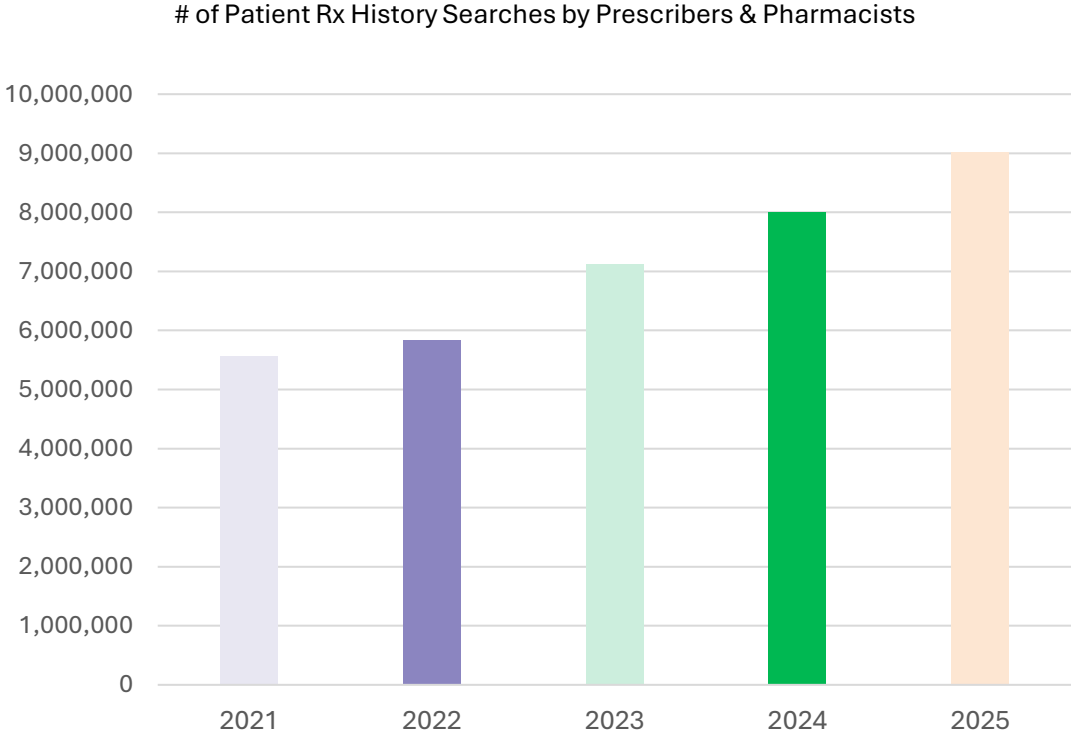
Prescribers-Dispensers Subcommittee

The committee continues to support and promote the use of the Alabama’s Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) which enables healthcare providers to review an individual’s controlled-substance prescription history prior to writing an opioid prescription, increasing awareness of any potential issues.

Accomplishment

Expanded use of the Alabama’s Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) has resulted in a **61% increase from 2021 to 2025!**

PDMP Database Utilization 2021-2025*
*2025 Projected



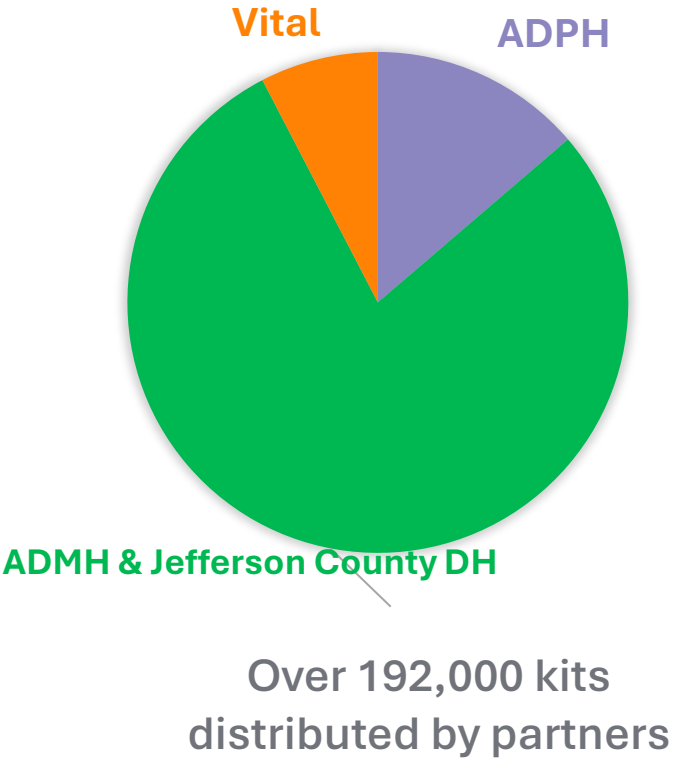
Rescue Subcommittee

The committee prioritizes overdose reversal awareness, outreach, training, and distribution efforts, as well as other ways to reduce overdose deaths, including opportunities that may require policy changes when needed.

Accomplishment

Naloxone (aka Narcan) is a major contributor in saving countless lives. Alabama has distributed Naloxone kits to thousands of individuals and over 700 organizations, in all 67 counties, since 2019.

The FY25 and FY26 Opioid Settlement Fund appropriations allow for the **purchase of 84,000 kits.**



Treatment and Recovery Support Subcommittee

The committee's work is to expand the quality, availability, and accessibility of evidence-based treatment and recovery efforts for persons with opioid use disorders, family members, friends, and those in long-term recovery.

Accomplishment

The Connect Alabama app, launched July 2022, makes it easy to find treatment and vital resources. The ability to schedule an assessment is accessible through the app.

The Services locator tool allows for easy access to treatment providers and includes mental health, prevention, substance use or medication disposal locations.

The app includes specific information for veterans, pregnant women and young adults.



23,880+

Downloads since launch



10,500+

Resources found
on the app

Community Engagement and Outreach Subcommittee

The committee seeks to increase outreach to educate and train individuals, communities, and organizations by providing culturally competent messaging to address the needs of diverse populations and mitigate behavioral risks that may be associated with opioid use/misuse, and to ensure all Alabamians have access to prevention services.

Accomplishments

The subcommittee was integral in development and promotion of the *Smart Dose* and *Courage for All* statewide media campaigns, podcasts and townhalls.

The committee has assisted the efforts of groups such as the Drug Education Council, the Council on Substance Abuse, Collegiate Recovery Communities, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Addiction Prevention Council (APC).



100+ OneBoxes*
Distributed in 2025

*OneBox is an emergency opioid overdose reversal kit distributed by APC.

Law Enforcement Subcommittee

The committee is tasked with identifying and developing ways to educate and equip the law enforcement community in both harm-reduction and harm-prevention approaches for those struggling with substance misuse and co-occurring conditions.

Accomplishments

- Fentanyl tests strips were legalized in 2022, with more than 104,000 strips distributed.
- All incarcerated Alabamians entering the Alabama Department of Corrections are screened for a history of substance use and recommended for appropriate drug treatment interventions.
- Eleven (11) ADOC facilities offer substance use programs and MOUD, 17 offer pre-treatment and aftercare, and three (3) are providing recovery support to women.
- Naloxone is available at Bureau of Pardons and Paroles Day Reporting Centers

Maternal and Child Health Subcommittee

The committee is tasked with the development and identification of resources to educate and equip providers and families needing support services; collaborating with stakeholders regarding barriers to care and policy issues; and ensuring resources for referrals are offered at vital access points in the continuum of care.

Accomplishments

- Promoted SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) training for obstetric/maternity providers and community partners through VitAL Alabama's EveryStep Program
- Partnered with the Law Enforcement Workgroup for outreach to county courts, district attorneys, and law enforcement about local treatment and diversion options for pregnant or nursing women with SUD
- Collaborated with law enforcement partners to outline a continuum of care for incarcerated pregnant women ahead of the 2026 opening of the Thomasville CARES facility

Workforce Subcommittee

The committee seeks to assist unemployed or underemployed individuals affected by the opioid misuse and connect them with recovery services and rapid reskilling opportunities. Every dollar invested in mental health training can yield up to a four-fold return in improved productivity and reduced healthcare costs.

Accomplishments

- Developed a virtual Workplace Wellness Toolkit, a recovery-friendly/supportive Training Program as well as five training videos for employers.
- More than 347 downloads have been made since its launch in January 2025.



Highlighted Outcomes – OSF Grants Round 1 & 2

Prevention · Treatment · Recovery

- Over 2,240 fentanyl testing strips distributed
- 7,500 adults and 6,000 youth provided prevention education and strategies
- Nearly 30 lbs. of medication collected through Drug Take Back programs

- Nearly 1,323 adults and 111 youth directly received treatment
- 434 group sessions provided
- 113 individuals secured housing

- 179,138 individual recovery services provided
- 426 individuals secured employment
- 583 educational events or trainings held

Opioid Awareness Campaign - Take Notice

The campaign is a movement to educate, equip & empower Alabamians to end the opioid crisis in our state. Partnership is with ADMH and funded by the Alabama Legislature.

Through a strategic, multichannel approach that combined policymaker outreach, statewide visibility, targeted digital engagement, and compelling survivor storytelling, the **Opioids Take** campaign successfully elevates awareness of Alabama's opioid epidemic and connected millions of residents with life-saving information.

Its reach – spanning millions of impressions – demonstrates the power of coordinated messaging in driving awareness, engagement, and hope across the state.



**Don't let one pill
take everything.**

When offered a pill by anyone other than your doctor, always say no. Counterfeit pills often contain **fentanyl**, the #1 cause of overdose deaths in Alabama.

opioidstake

The poster features a close-up of a hand holding a single white pill between the thumb and index finger. The background is dark with a subtle grid pattern. The text is in white and orange, with 'take' in orange in the headline. The 'opioidstake' logo is on an orange bar at the bottom.



Summary of Impact

Across multiple years of reports (2018–2025), the Council’s accomplishments progressed from strategic planning and data system foundation to measurable outcomes such as:

- Real decreases in overdose deaths
- Expansion of treatment and recovery capacity
- Increased access to lifesaving naloxone
- Professional training for health and law enforcement providers
- Reduction in opioid prescribing and potency of prescriptions
- Policy and legal changes to reduce harm

These results demonstrate the Council’s role in coordinating cross-sectoral efforts in Alabama — from public health to law enforcement to community organizations — to reduce opioid harm, build care infrastructure, and strengthen prevention, treatment, and recovery systems – and

SAVE LIVES.

Kimberly G. Boswell Commissioner

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