



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

*Proclamation*

WHEREAS, drug overdoses have been the number one cause of accidental deaths in New Jersey, surpassing motor vehicles crashes, falls, homicides, and suicides; and

WHEREAS, addiction is a health condition and the discrimination associated with addiction must be addressed so that no one is stigmatized because of their health condition and avoids getting support as a result; and

WHEREAS, recent declines in overdose deaths inspire hope, far too many people - more than 4 every day - still lose their lives to drug overdose in New Jersey, and the majority of these involve the highly potent opioid fentanyl or one of its analogs, and are increasingly complicated by the presence of xylazine, medetomidine and other adulterants; and

WHEREAS, people who use drugs, family members, health care practitioners, and others can save lives by learning about the signs of an overdose and how to administer naloxone and how to use of rescue breathing to deliver much-needed oxygen to the individual until medical help arrives; and

WHEREAS, obtaining naloxone, free and anonymously, through New Jersey's Naloxone 365 program in participating pharmacies (located at [StopOverdoses.nj.gov](https://www.nj.gov/health/hivstdtb/hrc/)) and through community organizations and harm reduction agencies (<https://www.nj.gov/health/hivstdtb/hrc/>), where naloxone and other harm reduction services and supports are provided statewide,

WHEREAS, the overdose crisis in New Jersey and across the country is not only driven by drug supply, but also by psychological trauma, structural inequities, stigma, and feelings of despair and isolation; and

WHEREAS, there have been declines in the number of overdose deaths across NJ populations, Black New Jerseyans are still dying at twice the rate of White non-Hispanic residents, as well as overdose deaths are increasingly occurring in those 55 years and older; and

WHEREAS, continued efforts are needed to increase the availability of substance use treatment and medications for opioid use disorder, which can be accessed by calling 1-844-REACHNJ or NJ's Rapid Referral program that quickly links individuals with providers of medications for opioid use disorder; and

WHEREAS, families affected by overdose need compassion, along with assistance and emotional support from professional and peer resources, including NJ Connect for Recovery (855-652-3737); and

WHEREAS, August 31<sup>st</sup> is recognized in communities around the world as a day to remember individuals lost to drug overdose and to support their families and loved ones, and to galvanize action towards ending preventable overdose deaths;

NOW, THEREFORE, I Mikie Sherrill, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

AUGUST 31, 2026  
AS  
OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

in New Jersey.



*Dale G. Callahan*

Lt. GOVERNOR

GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-ninth day of July in the year two thousand twenty-six, the two hundred fifty-first year of the Independence of the United States.

*Mikie Sherrill*

GOVERNOR