The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

Health & Public Safety

Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center

8-31-2023

Maine Monthly Overdose Report for July 2023

Marcella H. Sorg University of Maine - Main, mhsorg@maine.edu

Daniel S. Soucier *University of Maine*, daniel.s.soucier@maine.edu

Yimin Wang

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mcspc_healthsafety

Repository Citation

Sorg, Marcella H.; Soucier, Daniel S.; and Wang, Yimin, "Maine Monthly Overdose Report for July 2023" (2023). *Health & Public Safety*. 69.

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mcspc_healthsafety/69

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Health & Public Safety by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

MAINE MONTHLY OVERDOSE REPORT

For July 2023

Marcella H. Sorg, Daniel S. Soucier, Yimin Wang Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, University of Maine

Overview

This report documents suspected and confirmed fatal and nonfatal drug overdoses in Maine during July 2023 as well as for the period January 2022–July 2023 (Table 1). During July 2023, the proportion of fatal overdoses averaged 6.6% of total overdoses. Monthly proportions of 2023 fatalities have fluctuated from a low of 4.1% in March to a high of 8.1% in April. During the period January–July 2023, fatal overdoses constituted 6.2% of all overdoses, lower than the 6.9% for the year in 2022. The total of confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses January–July, 2023, 366, is 7.8% lower than the total confirmed fatal overdoses for the same period in 2022, 397.

Data derived from multiple statewide sources were compiled and deduplicated to compute fatal and nonfatal overdose totals (Table 1). These include nonfatal overdose incidents reported by hospital emergency departments (ED), nonfatal emergency medical service (EMS) responses without transport to the ED, overdose reversals reported by law enforcement in the absence of EMS, and overdose reversals reported by community members or agencies receiving state-supplied naloxone. There are also an unknown number of private overdose reversals that were not reported and an unknown number of community-reported reversals that may have overlapped with emergency response by EMS or law enforcement. The total number of fatal overdoses in this report includes those that have been confirmed, as well as those that are suspected but not yet confirmed for April, May, June, and July (see Figure 1).

The total number of fatal and reported nonfatal overdoses for July 2023, 821, is displayed in Table 1 near the bottom row. Of those 821, there were 54 (6.6%) confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses, 328 (40.0%) nonfatal emergency department visits, 248 (30.0%) nonfatal EMS responses not transported to the emergency department, 173 (21.1%) reported community overdose reversals, and 18 (2.2%) law enforcement reversals in incidents that did not include EMS.

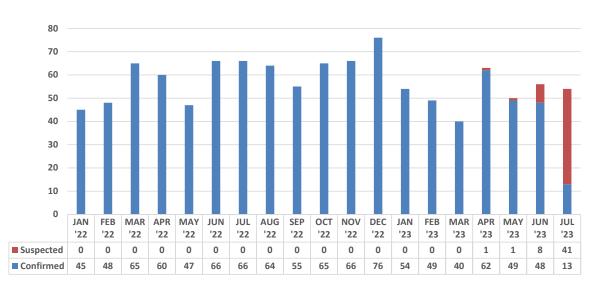


Figure 1. Suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses, all drugs, January 2022–July 2023

 Table 1:
 Composite reported overdose totals, all drugs, January 2022–July 2023

			Nonfatal					
	Emergency Dept.	EMS not transported to emergency	Community reversals with naloxone	Law enforcement reversals with naloxone and without EMS	Total nonfatal overdoses	Total confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses	Total overdoses	
January 2022	295	206	178	39	718	45	763	
February 2022	333	185	153	37	708	48	756	
March 2022	458	201	202	30	891	65	956	
April 2022	290	178	189	26	683	60	743	
May 2022	402	248	186	41	877	47	924	
June 2022	482	250	177	44	953	66	1019	
July 2022	347	287	183	40	857	66	923	
August 2022	385	272	255	37	949	64	1013	
September 2022	458	256	153	33	900	55	955	
October 2022	283	238	177	27	725	65	790	
November 2022	287	206	200	20	713	66	779	
December 2022	362	212	198	14	786	76	862	
2022 total % of 2022 total	4382 (41.8%)	2739 (26.1%)	2251 (21.5%)	388 (3.7%)	9760 (93.1%)	723 (6.9%)	10483 (100%)	
January 2023	296	219	184	44	743	54	797	
February 2023	347	226	192	27	792	49	841	
March 2023	382	256	237	54	929	40	969	
April 2023	270	218	202	27	717	63	780	
May 2023	295	221	165	30	711	50	761	
June 2023	377	228	219	26	850	56	906	
July 2023	328	248	173	18	767	54	821	
2023 YTD total	2295	1616	1372	226	5509	366	5875	
% of 2023 YTD total	(39.1%)	(27.5%)	(23.4%)	(3.8%)	(93.9%)	(6.1%)	(100%)	

Law Enforcement Response to Fatal and Nonfatal Overdose Incidents

Due to the method we used to deduplicate nonfatal overdose incidents to derive a composite number of overdoses for the month, the total amount of activity of law enforcement officials is underrepresented in the above table. The process used to deduplicate overdoses begins by removing fatal overdoses from the emergency department and EMS overdose incidents. Then the number of patients transported to emergency departments by Maine EMS are removed from the EMS overdose incidents. Finally, EMS involvement and fatal overdose incidents are removed from law enforcement responses.

Table 2 shows the public safety response to fatal and nonfatal overdose events in January–July 2023 as well as 2022. During January–July 2023, law enforcement officers responded to a reported 1,038 overdose incidents (343 fatal; 695 nonfatal), and Maine EMS responded to a reported 5,545 incidents (296 fatal; 5,249 nonfatal). During 2022 as a whole, law enforcement officers responded to a reported 2,143 incidents (672 fatal; 1,471 nonfatal), and Maine EMS responded to a reported 9,958 incidents (582 fatal; 9,376 nonfatal).

Table 2: Fatal and nonfatal overdose emergency response counts from law enforcement and EMS, including overlapping cases

	Fatal overdose response Jan-Dec 2022	Nonfatal overdose response Jan-Dec 2022	Total overdose response Jan-Dec 2022	Fatal overdose response Jan-Jul 2023	Nonfatal overdose response Jan-Jul 2023	Total overdose response Jan-Jul 2023
Maine EMS	582	9376	9958	296	5249	5545
Lawenforcement	672	1471	2143	343	695	1038

^{*}Please note numbers will fluctuate from month to month as public safety agencies catch up their reporting. Due to methodological convention, alcohol-only cases are excluded from this table. However, we recognize that alcohol is a large part of substance misuse epidemic. Cases with both drugs and alcohol are included.

County Distribution of Suspected Nonfatal Overdoses with EMS Response

Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of nonfatal overdoses at the county level. Due to how overdose reversals are reported by community partners and emergency departments, only EMS cases have county frequencies. Often, law enforcement officers are also present at these nonfatal overdose events. The July 2023 monthly totals in the far right column can be compared to the percentage of the census population on the far left or the percentage of nonfatal overdoses for the year in 2022, or for the year-to-date in 2023. Caution must be exercised viewing single counties with small numbers for a single month. These may fluctuate randomly, without reflecting any significant statistical trend. January–July 2023 percentage totals for most counties fall within 0 to 1 percentage points of the 2020 census distribution. Penobscot County and Androscoggin County are 3 percentage points higher than the 2020 census proportion. York County is 4 percentage points lower than the 2020 census proportion.

Table 3: County of EMS incident among suspected and confirmed nonfatal overdoses

	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2022 Est. N = 9377		20	Jan-Jul 2023 Est. N = 5249		023 = 870
Androscoggin	8%	1055	(11%)	556	(11%)	96	(11%)
Aroostook	5%	490	(5%)	241	(5%)	52	(6%)
Cumberland	22%	2194	(23%)	1207	(23%)	196	(23%)
Franklin	2%	140	(1%)	78	(1%)	13	(1%)
Hancock	4%	287	(3%)	169	(3%)	30	(3%)
Kennebec	9%	922	(10%)	527	(10%)	81	(9%)
Knox	3%	245	(3%)	182	(3%)	31	(4%)
Lincoln	3%	162	(2%)	95	(2%)	14	(2%)
Oxford	4%	410	(4%)	205	(4%)	39	(4%)
Penobscot	11%	1293	(14%)	750	(14%)	124	(14%)
Piscataquis	1%	90	(1%)	67	(1%)	14	(2%)
Sagadahoc	3%	130	(1%)	81	(2%)	16	(2%)
Somerset	4%	392	(4%)	254	(5%)	25	(3%)
Waldo	3%	199	(2%)	116	(2%)	19	(2%)
Washington	2%	221	(2%)	99	(2%)	17	(2%)
York	16%	1147	(12%)	622	(12%)	103	(12%)

^{*}EMS nonfatal overdose counts include incidents where a patient may have died after admission to the ED. Please note numbers will fluctuate from month-to-month as public safety agencies catch up their reporting. Due to methodological convention, alcohol-only cases are excluded from this table. However, we recognize that alcohol is a large part of substance misuse epidemic. Cases with both drugs and alcohol are included.

County Distribution of Suspected and Confirmed Fatal Overdoses

Table 4 shows the frequency distribution of fatal overdoses at the county level. The July 2023 monthly totals in the far right column can be compared either to the percentage of the census population in the far-left column or the percentage of all Maine fatal overdoses for the 2022 year as a whole, or to the year-to-date total for 2023. Caution must be exercised when viewing single counties with small numbers for a single month. These may fluctuate randomly, without reflecting any significant statistical trend. The 2023 percentages for most counties fall within 0 to 2 percentage points of the 2020 census distribution. Androscoggin County is 5 percentage points higher and Penobscot County is 4 percentage points higher than the 2020 Census proportions. York County is 4 percentage points lower than the 2020 Census proportions.

Table 4:	County of death	among suspected	and confirmed f	atal overdoses

	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec 2022 Est. N = 723		Jan-Jul Est. N		Jul 2023 Est N = 54	
Androscoggin	8%	69	(10%)	46	(13%)	5	(9%)
Aroostook	5%	47	(7%)	20	(5%)	4	(7%)
Cumberland	22%	134	(19%)	78	(21%)	10	(19%)
Franklin	2%	13	(2%)	5	(1%)	1	(2%)
Hancock	4%	24	(3%)	8	(2%)	1	(2%)
Kennebec	9%	54	(7%)	37	(10%)	4	(7%)
Knox	3%	20	(3%)	8	(2%)	2	(4%)
Lincoln	3%	14	(2%)	6	(2%)	1	(2%)
Oxford	4%	36	(5%)	10	(3%)	2	(4%)
Penobscot	11%	109	(15%)	54	(15%)	7	(13%)
Piscataquis	1%	9	(1%)	12	(3%)	2	(4%)
Sagadahoc	3%	11	(2%)	4	(1%)	3	(6%)
Somerset	4%	35	(5%)	16	(4%)	4	(7%)
Waldo	3%	21	(3%)	4	(1%)	0	(0%)
Washington	2%	24	(3%)	15	(4%)	1	(2%)
York	16%	103	(14%)	43	(12%)	7	(13%)

Age and Sex Distribution of Fatal Overdose Victims

Table 5 displays the age and sex composition¹ of the July 2023 fatal overdose population, the 2023 and 2022 fatal overdose population, and the 2020 estimated census population. When comparing the July 2023 data with 2023 year-to-date and 2022 data as well as the census population proportion, caution must be exercised as the small number of cases in each month is vulnerable to random fluctuation that may not reflect a significant statistical trend. The cumulative proportion of males is the same in 2023 and 2022 (73%). The 2023 totals were 269 males and 97 females. The cumulative age distribution for 2023 compared to 2022 shows 3 deaths under 18 in 2022 and 1 in 2023, a decrease of 5 percentage points in the proportion of those aged 18–39, an increase of 4 percentage point in those aged 40–59, and a 1 percentage point increase in the proportion of those 60 and above.

¹ Note that death certificate data contain sex as a recorded category and do not contain gender categories.

	% 2020 estimated Census population	Jan-Dec Est. N =		Jan-Jul Est. N		Jul 20 Est. N	
Males	49%	527	(73%)	269	(73%)	36	(67%)
Under 18	19%	3	(<1%)	1	(<1%)	0	(0%)
18-39	26%	295	(41%)	131	(36%)	12	(22%)
40-59	27%	333	(46%)	182	(50%)	37	(69%)
60+	29%	92	(13%)	52	(14%)	5	(9%)

Table 5: Decedent reported age group and sex among suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses*

Table 6 displays the reported race and ethnicity of confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses in 2022 and 2023 compared to the 2020 census population. Note that race and ethnicity are not finalized until the full death certificate is entered into Vital Records, and a small number of decedents' records lack information about these variables. Out of 363 decedents for whom race was reported January through July 2023, 90% of the victims were identified as White, 3% as Black/African American, and 2% as American Indian/Alaska Native. Out of 356 decedents for whom Hispanic ethnicity status was reported, 1% were identified as Hispanic.

Table 6: Decedent race and ethnicity among suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses*

	% 2020 Estimated Census Population: Race & Hispanic/ Latinx Ethnicity	Jan-Dec 2022 Race N = 720 Ethnicity N = 706	Jan-Jul 2023 Race Est. N = 363 Ethnicity Est. N = 356	Jul 2023 Race Est. N = 54 Ethnicity Est. N = 53
White alone, non-Hispanic	91%	670 (93%)	327 (90%)	51 (94%)
Black/African American alone, non-Hispanic	2%	17 (2%)	12 (3%)	0 (0%)
American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	1%	14 (2%)	7 (2%)	1 (2%)
Other race and 2+ races combined, non-Hispanic	7%	11 (2%)	7 (2%)	1 (2%)
Hispanic/Latinx alone or in combination	2%	7 (1%)	3 (1%)	0 (0%)

^{*}Race and ethnicity data for some cases are unavailable until drug deaths are confirmed.

Military Status and Housing Stability of Fatal Overdose Victims

Out of the 364 cases for which military background was reported January–July 2023, 22 (6%) were identified as having a military background. Out of the 54 cases in July 2023 where military background was reported, 5 (9%) was identified as having a military background.

Of the 366 total suspected and confirmed overdose cases year-to-date in 2023, undomiciled or transient housing status was reported for 41 (11%) of victims. Among those 41, the largest proportions of undomiciled persons were found in Cumberland County (14, 34%), Penobscot County (10, 24%) and Androscoggin County (6, 15%). In July 2023, 6 decedents (11%) were identified as undomiciled.

^{*}Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

[†]Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Basic Incident Patterns of Fatal Overdoses

Table 7 reports some of the basic incident patterns for fatal overdoses. July 2023 can be compared to either 2023 year-to-date or 2022 as a whole. Caution must be exercised interpreting a single month of data as numbers may fluctuate randomly and not reflect a statistically significant trend. In addition, data totals may change slightly as suspected cases are confirmed or eliminated. Both EMS and police responded together to most fatal overdoses (75%) in 2023. Law enforcement was more likely to respond to a scene alone (19%) than EMS (6%). The overwhelming majority (90%) of confirmed fatal drug overdoses were ruled as, or suspected of being, accidental manner of death. Of the 366 confirmed or suspected fatal overdoses in 2023, 138 (38%) had a history of prior overdose. Although most cases had bystanders or witnesses present at the scene by the time first responders arrived, the details about who was present at the time of the overdose were frequently unclear. However, responding family and friends or bystanders administered naloxone for 57 (16%) of the 2023 fatal overdoses, higher than 2022 (11%), 2021 (9%), and 2020 (4%). Often, bystanders or witnesses administered naloxone in addition to EMS and/or law enforcement. During 2023, 25% of suspected and confirmed fatal overdose cases had naloxone administered at the scene by EMS, bystanders, and/or law enforcement. This rate is lower than in 2021 (30%) and the same as 2022 (25%).

Of the 296 suspected or confirmed drug death cases with EMS involvement during 2023, 167 (56%) victims were already deceased when EMS arrived. In the remaining 129 (44%) cases, resuscitation was attempted either at the scene or presumably in the ambulance during transport to the emergency room. Of those 129 who were still alive when EMS arrived, 35 (27%) were transported, and 93 (72%) did not survive to be transported and 1 had an unknown status. Thus, out of 296 ultimately fatal cases with EMS response, only 35 (14%) remained alive long enough to be transported but died during transport or at the emergency room. This outcome is likely due to a combination of the high number of cases with fentanyl as a cause of death and individuals using alone. Fentanyl acts more quickly than other opioids, and there is less time for bystanders to find an overdose victim alive, administer naloxone, and call 911.

Table 7: Incident characteristics among suspected and confirmed fatal overdoses

	Jan-De Est. N		Jan-Ju Est. N		Jul 2 Est N	
EMS response alone	38	(5%)	21	(6%)	3	(6%)
Law enforcement alone	131	(18%)	68	(19%)	6	(11%)
EMS and law enforcement	541	(75%)	275	(75%)	45	(83%)
Private transport to Emergency Dept.	13	(2%)	1	(<1%)	0	(0%)
Naloxone administration reported at the scene	182	(25%)	93	(25%)	17	(31%)
Bystander only administered	44	(6%)	24	(7%)	4	(7%)
Law enforcement only administered	31	(4%)	8	(2%)	2	(4%)
EMS only administered	49	(7%)	27	(7%)	3	(6%)
EMS and law enforcement administered	11	(2%)	5	(1%)	2	(4%)
EMS and bystander administered	26	(4%)	23	(6%)	6	(11%)
Law enforcement and bystander administered	5	(1%)	8	(2%)	2	(4%)
EMS, bystander, and law enforcement administered	6	(1%)	2	(<1%)	1	(2%)
Naloxone administered by unspecified person	0	(0%)	1	(<1%)	0	(0%)
History of prior overdose	269	(37%)	138	(38%)	25	(46%)

Table 8 displays the frequencies of the most prominent drug categories causing death among confirmed drug deaths. As expected, within the 315 confirmed drug death cases so far in 2023, nonpharmaceutical fentanyl was the most frequent cause of death, mentioned on the death certificate of 252 (80%) victims.

Fentanyl is nearly always found in combination with multiple other drugs. Heroin involvement, declining rapidly in recent years, was reported as a cause of death in 9 (3%) of 2023 deaths. Xylazine and nonpharmaceutical tramadol were identified as co-intoxicants with fentanyl for the first time in 2021. Among 315 confirmed deaths in 2023, there were 28 cases (9%) with xylazine listed in addition to fentanyl as a cause of death, and 1 case (<1%) with tramadol listed along with fentanyl.

Stimulants continue to increase as a cause of death, usually in combination with other drugs, particularly fentanyl. Cocaine-involved fatalities constituted 108 (34%) of confirmed cases in 2023, an increase from 29% in 2022. Fentanyl is mentioned as a cause in combination with cocaine in 92 cases, 85% of 2023 cocaine cases. Methamphetamine was cited as a cause of death in 101 (32%) of the confirmed fatal overdoses in 2023, the same percentage as in 2022; 83 (82%) of the methamphetamine deaths also involved fentanyl as a cointoxicant cause of death. Cocaine and methamphetamine are named together on 26 (8%) death certificates in 2023, in most of those cases (22, 85%) as co-intoxicants of fentanyl.

Table 8: Key drug categories and combinations causing death among confirmed overdoses

Cause of death (alone or in combination with other drugs) Sample size for confirmed cases only	Jan-De Est. N		Jan-Ju Est. N		Jul 2 Est. N	
Fentanyl or fentanyl analogs	560	(77%)	252	(80%)	9	(69%)
Heroin	19	(3%)	9	(3%)	0	(0%)
Cocaine	213	(29%)	108	(34%)	6	(46%)
Methamphetamine	234	(32%)	101	(32%)	5	(38%)
Pharmaceutical opioids**	156	(22%)	56	(18%)	4	(31%)
Fentanyl and heroin	18	(2%)	9	(3%)	0	(0%)
Fentanyl and cocaine	171	(24%)	92	(29%)	4	(31%)
Fentanyl and methamphetamine	189	(26%)	83	(26%)	5	(38%)
Fentanyl and xylazine	46	(6%)	28	(9%)	2	(15%)
Fentanyl and tramadol	10	(1%)	1	(<1%)	1	(8%)

^{**}Nonpharmaceutical tramadol is now being combined with fentanyl in pills and powders for illicit drug use. When found in combination with fentanyl, and in the absence of a known prescription, tramadol is categorized as a nonpharmaceutical opioid.

Highlight of the Month

Governor's Updated Opioid Response Strategic Action Plan

Governor Mills' strategic action plan for opioid response is one of the most comprehensive in the nation. Since day one, she has made this a priority in her administration.

—Michael Botticelli, Former Director, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy

Governor Janet T. Mills presented her updated Opioid Response Strategic Action Plan on July 20 at her 5th Annual Opioid Response Summit. Held at the Cross Insurance Arena in Portland, the Summit attracted 1400 attendees, all of whom received a copy of the updated Plan. A pdf version of the Plan can be found at https://www.maine.gov/future/opioids. The updated Plan focuses on six areas: Prevention, Treatment, Harm-Reduction, Recovery, Public Safety, and Leadership. Within the six areas, there are nine priorities, thirty-four strategies, and dozens of activities under each of the strategies. The original Plan was adopted in September 2019 and updated mid-way through the global pandemic in 2021. Among the new provisions in the updated Plan are strategies and activities supporting Maine's veterans, immigrant populations, and faith-based treatment programs. Each section of the updated Plan begins with a "Progress Update" indicating what has been accomplished since 2019. The document opens with letters from Governor Mills and Gordon Smith, the state's Director of Opioid Response. The Governor closes her letter with the following:

There is no simple solution to ending the opioid epidemic, but this new strategic plan outlines the latest steps we are taking to save lives, to prevent substance use disorder, and to ensure that our people can achieve their full potential. I welcome your partnership and I thank you for all your efforts to support these goals.

To address the ongoing crisis, the process of revising and updating the Plan began in 2022. Many partners, both external and internal, were engaged to comment on the existing plan and to make recommendations for the update. This updated plan is the result of this inclusive process, which resulted in nearly 1,000 comments being submitted for consideration.

This Plan will not be stagnant. We will continue to update it as needed to serve the needs of Maine people. Our work is not done, but we are in a much better position now than during earlier times, partly because of the settlement funds coming into the state. But, most of all, we are in a better position because of the thousands of Mainers who are helping everyday to reduce the shame and stigma associated with substance use disorders and supporting persons who are on a pathway to recovery. This updated Strategic Action Plan provides us all with a roadmap to saving lives and preventing substance use disorders. Thank you for caring and for your support.

Background Information about this Report

This report, funded jointly by the Maine Office of Attorney General and the Office of Behavioral Health, I provides an overview of statistics regarding suspected and confirmed fatal and nonfatal drug overdoses each month. Data for the fatal overdoses were collected at the Office of Chief Medical Examiner and data regarding nonfatal overdoses were contributed by the Maine CDC, Maine Emergency Medical Services, Maine ODMAP initiative, Maine Naloxone Distribution Initiative, and Office of Attorney General Naloxone Distribution. Year-to-date numbers are updated as medical examiner cases are finalized, and their overdose status is confirmed or ruled out, and as occasional lagged EMS, ED, and ODMAP data totals are finalized. The totals are expected to shift as case completion occurs. In addition, due to the small sample size in each month, we expect totals to fluctuate from month to month because of random variation. The monthly reports are posted on mainedrugdata.org.

A "drug death" is confirmed when one or more drugs are mentioned on the death certificate as a cause or significant contributing factor for the death. Most drug-induced fatalities are accidents related primarily to drug lethality, the unique vulnerability of the drug user, such as underlying medical conditions, and the circumstances surrounding drug use during that moment.

A "suspected" drug fatality is identified by physiological signs of overdose as well as physical signs at the scene and witness information. To be confirmed as a drug death, the medical examiner must have issued a final death certificate which includes the names of the specific drugs. A forensic toxicology exam must also have been done, which includes a minimum of two toxicology tests, one to screen for drugs present, and another that will quantify the levels of drugs in the decedent's system. All cases receive a thorough external examination and comprehensive toxicology tests. In some cases, a complete autopsy is also done. Additional data, such as medical records and police incident reports are also collected. Normally cases are completed within one month; however, due to recent problems being experienced by our national toxicology testing service, completion of cases is occurring at about 6–8 weeks after death, and occasionally longer.

By highlighting drug deaths at the monthly level, this report brings attention to the often-dramatic shifts in totals that can occur from month to month. These fluctuations are common with small numbers and will tend toward an average over time. Whereas the overall number of overdose deaths are a critical indicator of individual and societal stress, this metric itself can be quite resistant to public policy interventions due to its complexity. Overdose fatalities occur because of multiple unique and interacting factors, as mentioned above. For that reason, these reports will seek to monitor components that can be directly affected by specific public health education and harm reduction interventions. The statistics in this report reflect both suspected and confirmed "occurrent" deaths, that is, deaths that occur in the State of Maine, even though they may not be Maine residents. These totals also do not include Maine residents who die in other states. For these reasons, totals will differ slightly from the statistics reported by the National Center for Health Statistics, which reports only confirmed "resident" deaths. In addition, due to recently reported updates of toxicology results and newly confirmed or eliminated drug death cases, both the 2021 and 2022 statistics have changed slightly from those reported in the previous monthly report.

The Office of Attorney General supports ongoing regarding research on fatal overdoses by the University of Maine. Additionally, the Overdose Data to Action cooperative agreement from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention also provides funding to the State of Maine's Office of Behavioral Health and Maine Center for Disease Control, which also supports University programs involving fatal and nonfatal overdoses surveillance and enables the collection of nonfatal metrics included in this report. The conclusions in this report do not necessarily represent those of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.