**Virginia Department of Education**

# Best Practices on Naloxone Possession and Administration in Response to a Suspected Opioid Overdose in the School Setting

## Background

On November 21, 2016, the State Health Commissioner, declared a drug addiction public health emergency and issued a statewide standing order for Naloxone which authorized pharmacists to dispense Naloxone in accordance with *Code of Virginia* [§ 54.1-3408](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title54.1/chapter34/section54.1-3408/).

In 2019, the Virginia General Assembly passed [House Bill 2318](http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?191+sum+HB2318) (McGuire, III) which amended the *Code of Virginia* § 54.1-3408 and expanded the list of individuals who may possess, administer, and dispense naloxone to include:

* School nurses;
* Local health department employees that are assigned to a public school pursuant to an agreement between the local health department and the school board; and
* Other school board employees or individuals contracted by a school board to provide school health services.

§ 54.1-3408 (X). Professional use by practitioners

*“...employees of regional jails, school nurses, local health department employees that are assigned to a public school pursuant to an agreement between the local health department and the school board, other school board employees or individuals contracted by a school board to provide school health services, and firefighters who have completed a training program may also possess and administer naloxone or other opioid antagonist used for overdose reversal and may dispense naloxone or other opioid antagonist used for overdose reversal pursuant to an oral, written, or standing order issued by a prescriber or a standing order issued by the Commissioner of Health or his designee in accordance with protocols developed by the Board of Pharmacy in consultation with the Board of Medicine and the Department of Health.”*

Liability for persons rendering emergency care are addressed in the *Code of Virginia,* [§ 8.01-225](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title8.01/chapter3/section8.01-225/) (19).

*“Any person… in good faith prescribes, dispenses, or administers naloxone or other opioid antagonist used for overdose reversal in an emergency to an individual who is believed to be experiencing or about to experience a life-threatening opiate overdose shall not be liable for any civil damages for ordinary negligence in acts or omissions resulting from the rendering of such treatment if acting in accordance with the provisions of subsection X or Y of § 54.1-3408 or in his role as a member of an emergency medical services agency*.”

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) convened a stakeholder group comprised of school nurses, school division administrators, and representatives from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) from around the Commonwealth and incorporated best practices from the state and national level to develop the guidance provided in this document.

The information contained in *Best Practices on Naloxone Possession and Administration in Response to a Suspected Opioid Overdose in the School Setting* serves as guidance only. The decision to adopt a naloxone policy in schools is made by the local educational agency (LEA). If an LEA approves naloxone administration by school employees, this document may be used by school divisions to assist in developing local school policies in response to suspected opioid overdose.

## Naloxone Policy Considerations

LEAs should consider the following items when drafting a local policy on Naloxone for use in the school setting.

### ***Code of Virginia* Requirements for Naloxone Use in the School Setting**

* 1. The *Code of Virginia* [§ 54.1-3408 (X)](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title54.1/chapter34/section54.1-3408/) provides the framework for schools to develop policy around naloxone possession and administration in the school setting. This legislation pertains to school nurses, health department personnel assigned to schools, and school board employees that provide health services. They may possess and administer naloxone as long as they have completed a training program pursuant to an oral, written, or standing order.
  2. It is important to note that the *Code of Virginia* [§ 54.1-3408 (X)](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title54.1/chapter34/section54.1-3408/) does not mandate that schools possess and administer naloxone. School divisions are encouraged to decide whether they want to adopt a naloxone-in-schools policy based on multiple factors including access or location of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) relative to school setting; local data on opioid use/misuse; School Resource Officers (SROs) possession of naloxone; community and school board feedback; and local resources for sustainability.

#### **School Responsibility**

The emergency response and procedures for opioid overdose in the school setting are part of the school division’s [School Crisis, Emergency Management and Medical Response Plan](https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/sites/dcjs.virginia.gov/files/publications/law-enforcement/school-crisis-emergency-management-and-medical-emergency-response-plan.pdf). Information regarding the procedure for the administration of naloxone in the school setting can be accessed on the [VDOE School Health](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/index.shtml) webpage.

### **Required Training of School Personnel**

* 1. The *Code of Virginia* [§ 54.1-3408 (X)](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title54.1/chapter34/section54.1-3408/) requires the training of selected school personnel in order to possess and administer naloxone in schools. This training provides general information to participants regarding:
  2. What is an Opioid?
  3. How does an overdose occur?
  4. Signs and Symptoms of Opioid Overdose.
  5. How to Recognize an Opioid Overdose?
  6. How to respond to an Opioid Overdose using Naloxone.
  7. The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) provides training to school personnel on how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose emergency with the administration of naloxone. [REVIVE!](http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/behavioral-health/substance-abuse-services/revive) is the name of the DBHDS’ Opioid Overdose and Naloxone Education (OONE) program for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

#### **Policy Considerations**

Schools adopting a naloxone policy should address the following items in their policy:

* Identification of selected school board employees to be trained, by role and school; assignment (e.g., all schools; only middle and high school; school board office);
* Number of doses for each school indicated;
* Frequency of training: the VDOE recommends training on an annual basis; and
* Identification of staff responsible for documentation of training and trained school personnel and the procurement/replacement of naloxone.

Additional considerations specify when trained staff may administer naloxone in response to a suspected opioid overdose. This includes before/after school activities and during school-sponsored events and field trips.

### **Process for Obtaining Naloxone for School Use**

* 1. The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) will require verification of school personnel who have completed the required training program before a standing order is issued to a school division. Standing orders for naloxone use are good for two years.
  2. The DBHDS will issue a training e-certificate to participants who have completed the required training program. This will include the participants name, date, and length of training. To obtain this verification contact the DBHDS REVIVE! Training Coordinator at [REVIVE Certificate Request](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/REVIVECertificateRequest).

#### **Obtaining Naloxone**

Schools will complete order forms and provide a standing order for naloxone from VDH for purchase of naloxone or participation in a free Naloxone in Schools program.

#### **Sources for purchasing or obtaining naloxone for schools include:**

* [Free Narcan for high schools form](https://www.narcan.com/static/NARCAN-for-High-Schools-2018.pdf);
* [Narcan Direct](https://www.narcandirect.com/); and
* Check with the local health department regarding availability.

### **Storage of Naloxone**

* 1. Naloxone should be stored in a location that is accessible to trained staff.