

**RCW 43.70.775 Drug overdose prevention and awareness campaign—
Annual report.** (1) The department shall develop, implement, and maintain a statewide drug overdose prevention and awareness campaign to address the drug overdose epidemic.

(2) (a) The campaign must educate the public about the dangers of methamphetamines and opioids, including fentanyl, and the harms caused by drug use. The campaign must include outreach to both youth and adults aimed at preventing substance use and overdose deaths.

(b) The department, in consultation with the health care authority, may also include messaging focused on substance use disorder and overdose death prevention, resources for addiction treatment and services, and information on immunity for people who seek medical assistance in a drug overdose situation pursuant to RCW 69.50.315.

(3) The 2024 and 2025 campaigns must focus on increasing the awareness of the dangers of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, including the high possibility that other drugs are contaminated with synthetic opioids and that even trace amounts of synthetic opioids can be lethal.

(4) Beginning June 30, 2025, and each year thereafter, the department must submit a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the content and distribution of the statewide drug overdose prevention and awareness campaign. The report must include a summary of the messages distributed during the campaign, the mediums through which the campaign was operated, and data on how many individuals received information through the campaign. The department must identify measurable benchmarks to determine the effectiveness of the campaign and recommend whether the campaign should continue and if any changes should be made to the campaign. The report must be submitted in compliance with RCW 43.01.036. [2024 c 201 s 2.]

Finding—Intent—2024 c 201: "(1) The legislature finds that overdoses and overdose deaths, particularly from synthetic opioids, have increased in recent years. According to the federal centers for disease control and prevention, among persons aged 14 through 18, overdose deaths increased 94 percent from 2019 to 2020 and 20 percent from 2020 to 2021. In 2021, over 75 percent of all drug overdose deaths involved opioids, with synthetic opioids, including fentanyl, accounting for nearly 88 percent of those deaths. Between 2022 and 2023, Washington saw the largest increase in overdose deaths of any state at 40 percent.

(2) The legislature recognizes that fatal overdose risk among adolescents is increasing due to widespread availability of illicitly manufactured fentanyl, proliferation of counterfeit pills resembling prescription drugs but containing illicit drugs, and ease of purchasing pills through social media. The United States drug enforcement administration states that there is significant risk that illegal drugs have been intentionally contaminated with fentanyl. As a result, many young people may ingest a lethal dose without knowing that they are consuming fentanyl.

(3) The legislature acknowledges that the level of public health crisis created by use of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids requires an immediate, substantial, and coordinated effort by national, state, and local public health, social service, and educational agencies working together.

(4) The legislature also acknowledges that the popularity of drugs grows and wanes forming distinct drug epidemics, similar to disease epidemics. As the popularity and availability of synthetic opioids wanes, it is likely that some other substance will pose the next acute public health crisis.

(5) Therefore, in order to combat the current public health crisis of abuse of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, and to be prepared to address the next drug epidemic before it reaches crisis level, the legislature intends to direct the state department of health to deploy a statewide substance use prevention and awareness campaign that evolves to address the substance or substances with the greatest impact on the health of Washington youth and their families, diverse regions and communities, and the broader public. The legislature also intends for the public education system to actively incorporate campaign messages and materials in classrooms, as well as in family and community communications." [2024 c 201 s 1.]

Effective date—2024 c 201: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 19, 2024]." [2024 c 201 s 5.]

Short title—2024 c 201: "This act may be known and cited as the Lucas Petty act." [2024 c 201 s 7.]