



# in the Works

A community newsletter of updates, support, and personal stories

## Overdoses Rising in Denver Metro Area, including Boulder County

Similar to Denver, there has been a concerning rise of overdoses in Boulder County. Fentanyl has recently been reported in heroin, Xanax pills, and cocaine in our area. The Denver news release below from July 22 includes additional information and reminders for staying safe.

### DDPHE and Denver Police Issue Warning: Fentanyl in Denver: Be Careful! The dangerously potent opioid continues to be found in the Denver drug supply

DENVER – The Denver Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE) and the Denver Police Department (DPD) are warning the public about an extremely potent and dangerous drug found in Denver. Fatal overdoses are increasing in Denver, especially those linked to fentanyl. A recent comparison of January to May 2019 overdose fatalities within the same time period in 2020 showed a 282 percent increase in fentanyl-related overdose fatalities.

Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid that is up to 50 times more potent than heroin, and 100 times more potent than morphine. Overdoses caused by fentanyl can happen faster and are harder to stop than those caused by other opioids. The drug can come in many forms, including pills, capsules, rock, and pure powders. It cannot be seen, tasted or smelled when mixed with other drugs.

DDPHE, DPD, and several partners have been monitoring the Denver area for the presence of fentanyl with the goal of reducing the risk of overdose death in the community. It has already been found in other cities across the country. In November of 2019, DDPHE issued a similar alert when fentanyl was found in Denver disguised as black tar heroin in a brick-like form. Fentanyl can also be found in counterfeit pills, made to look like prescription medications. DDPHE

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## Announcements

### Longmont and Lafayette syringe access sites are open.

Syringe access services are available in Longmont Monday through Friday, 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and in Lafayette on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. To access services, call the office and let them know what you need and a staff member will collect the materials and deliver them to you outside the building. Call 720-864-6515 for Longmont and 720-564-2708 for Lafayette.

### The North Boulder syringe access location has been closed.

Our Works office at 3482 N. Broadway in Boulder has been closed for the foreseeable future. The Boulder County AIDS Project (BCAP), located at 2118 14<sup>th</sup> Street, and Mental Health Partners located at 3180 Airport Road are still providing syringe access services in Boulder. To learn more about these sites, please visit [www.BoulderCountyWorks.org](http://www.BoulderCountyWorks.org).

**Get your harm reduction materials by mail!** To order supplies by mail, visit [BoulderCountyWorks.org](http://BoulderCountyWorks.org), and complete the "Request works materials by mail" form. We will mail your order to your address, which can be a shelter if you're able to receive mail there. You must be a current Works Program participant (new folks still have to check in for their initial visit at one of our four locations in Boulder County), and the mailing address must be within Boulder County.

## Advisories

**Hepatitis A is still popping up in Boulder County.** There have been a few new cases of hepatitis A in Longmont. Hepatitis A is spread through fecal-oral transmission (i.e. poop to mouth). This can happen really easily, especially when people don't have access to soap and water for hand

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## Harm Reductionist Spotlight

Patty Brezovar has worked in the Works Program and the HIV and Hep C Prevention program at Boulder County Public Health for the past 20 years. She has been providing syringe access services at the Boulder, Longmont, and Lafayette sites, along with providing HIV and hep C testing to the general public and the inmate population at the Boulder County Jail. Patty states, "My job has provided me with such deep meaning these last 20 years.

I am humbled and honored that participants have shared themselves and their stories with me. They have enriched my life and shown me about resilience and courage and humor and love. Thank you for teaching me so much!" It is very bittersweet that Patty will be retiring this September.



Kelsey Weigman came to Colorado from Philadelphia, PA, in 2017 and got involved with harm reduction work right away! Kelsey began her work in HIV prevention services as an intern at Boulder County AIDS Project (BCAP), then worked at Liver Health Connection in Denver before returning to BCAP as the Prevention Coordinator in 2019. Kelsey has always been passionate about health equity

and direct service, and was so happy to find a community of folks advocating for harm reduction and sexual health. As BCAP's Prevention Coordinator, Kelsey is thrilled to be able offer support, education, and supplies to her community.



(Overdoses rising, continued)

advises anyone who misuses substances, or knows someone who does, to share this warning and make sure they have naloxone available. Some ways you can protect yourself are:

- Carry naloxone (Narcan), and make sure those around you carry naloxone. You can find out where to purchase it at [StoptheClockColorado.org](https://stoptheclockcolorado.org).
- Don't use alone: If you do, let someone know so they can check on you.
- Avoid mixing drugs: Don't mix opioids with alcohol and/or benzodiazepines.
- Test a small amount of the substance before using it.
- If injecting, inject slower.
- Assume street-purchased medications may be counterfeit and may contain fentanyl. Don't assume it's the same strength as prescription medications.
- If you think someone may have overdosed, administer naloxone and call 911.
- Connect with others, and stay connected.
- Substance use treatment is effective and is available.

For more information, [https://bit.ly/Fentanyl\\_Alert\\_Denver](https://bit.ly/Fentanyl_Alert_Denver)

**STAY SAFE**



Use with someone else



Avoid mixing drugs



Carry Narcan®



Take turns using



Start with a tester shot



Be aware of changes in tolerance

**NEED HELP?**

Colorado Crisis Services  
1.844.493.8255 or text "talk" to 38255

National Suicide Prevention  
Lifeline 1.800.273.8255

## Partner Spotlight

The Boulder County AIDS Project (BCAP) has been providing syringe access services in partnership with Boulder County Public Health since 2013. They are in the office and available to provide Works services and harm reduction counseling Monday through Friday, 2 p.m.-5 p.m. at 2118 14th Street in downtown Boulder. BCAP can also provide products and simple food items for basic needs for people who use drugs and are experiencing homelessness. These services can be accessed during their Works hours listed above.

BCAP usually offers free, rapid HIV and hepatitis C testing in the office, but this has been put on hold due to COVID-19. While hepatitis C testing will need to be done by a medical practice (e.g. primary care doctor), for the time being, BCAP can now offer free, rapid, at-home HIV testing for any Works participants who are interested. To get in touch with BCAP for HIV testing needs, please call 303-444-6121, or visit <https://www.bcap.org/free-hiv-testing>.

(Advisories, continued)

washing. Please do your best to keep your hands clean and make sure to **get vaccinated for free with us any Friday from 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. in Longmont at Boulder County Public Health located at 515 Coffman Street**, if you need it. We can also check to see if you are vaccinated if you're not sure.

**COVID-19 is here to stay.** The virus can be especially dangerous for those at higher risk, including people:

- 60 years old and older.
- With underlying health conditions, including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes.
- Who have weakened immune systems (which can happen with drug use).
- Who are pregnant.

### Take Steps to Protect Those at Higher Risk

- Anyone feeling ill should stay away from those at higher risk.
- Those at higher risk should stay home and away from large groups as much as possible, including large gatherings where there may be close contact with others.

### Continue to Take Everyday Wellness Actions

- Do not share any injection equipment, pipes, or snorting instruments with others.
- Clean your hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your nose and mouth with the inside of your elbow when coughing and sneezing.
- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.
- Stay home or away from others if you are sick.
- Get an annual flu vaccine if you have not had one (these should be available for Works participants for free this fall).

### Practice Good Hygiene

- Start practicing not touching your face now. This can greatly reduce the frequency of potential spread of disease.
- Start building healthy habits like pushing elevator buttons with a knuckle instead of a fingertip.

### Share Your Feedback

Your feedback is invaluable. We are working on a way for you to submit anonymous recommendations, constructive feedback, comments, compliments, etc. online. In the meantime, please submit your anonymous feedback at our 3482 Broadway site in Boulder (we have a box for comments in the office), or feel free to share what is working well or needs improvement with any Works staff member.

## Contact

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