



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER**

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: Sheriff-Coroner
Department No.: 032
Agenda Date: March 10, 2026
Placement: Departmental Agenda
Estimated Time: 30 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director(s): Bill Brown, Sheriff-Coroner
Contact Info: Daniel Nelson, Lieutenant
SUBJECT: Receive and File Report Regarding Santa Barbara County Overdose Data (January 2021 through December 2025)

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file a report on drug overdose-related deaths in Santa Barbara County; and
- b) Determine that the activity is not a "Project" subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review per CEQA Guideline Section 15378(b)5), Since the activity is an organizational or administrative activity of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

This item is before your Board to receive a comprehensive presentation on the statistical analysis of overdose-related fatalities in Santa Barbara County spanning January 2021 through December 2025. Beginning in 2021 there was an increase in Opioid related overdose deaths, peaking in 2023. Since 2023, overdose deaths have declined by over 41%.

Discussion:

The attached presentation provides an analysis of overdose-related fatality trends in Santa Barbara County from January 2021 through December 2025. The data underscores a critical public health challenge, with drug-related overdose deaths rising from 139 in 2021 to 144 in 2022, before peaking

at 158 in 2023. This escalation reflects the growing impact of the opioid crisis locally. However, a 39% decline in overdose deaths occurred in 2024, outpacing the national decline of 27%. The majority of overdose deaths are attributable to Fentanyl. Fentanyl overdose deaths rose sharply from 76 in 2021 to 115 in 2022 and 111 in 2023, before dropping to 59 in 2024; a 47% reduction year over year. This downward trend continued in 2025 with a reduction of fentanyl related fatalities numbering 46.

The report also breaks down overdose related deaths into subcategories including trend analysis for unhoused individuals, overdose data by race and age, and locational data related to overdose deaths. In addition, the report analyzes the population of formerly incarcerated individuals that died from drug-related overdose.

Background:

The Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office (SBSO) generates periodic reports detailing overdose-related deaths to support ongoing monitoring of substance-related trends and to guide policy and resource decisions. The report provides verified data including the total number of overdose deaths, toxicology findings as to the drug type present, demographic information and geographic distribution within the County. These reports provide data to inform the Board of current patterns in overdose mortality, highlight emerging substances of concern and identify shifts in the populations most affected. The data also assists the county departments in evaluating contributing factors, assessing the effectiveness of current prevention and intervention strategies, and identifying areas where additional coordination and resources may be warranted.

Attachments:

Attachment A – A summarized slide deck presentation of overdose-related death data

Attachment B – Slide deck of January 2021 through December 2025 overdose-related death data

Contact Information:

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