



Governor Bill Walker
STATE OF ALASKA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 283

I, Bill Walker, Governor of the State of Alaska, under the authority of Article III, Sections 1 and 24, Constitution of the State of Alaska, find and direct the following:

FINDINGS

Across the State of Alaska individuals, families, and communities are struggling to cope with the devastating effects of opioid misuse, heroin abuse, and addiction disorders. The heroin and opioid epidemic has reached epic proportions in our state.

There is an urgent need to raise awareness and develop solutions regarding prevention, treatment, and recovery of opioid misuse and heroin addiction in our state.

I find that:

- The nonmedical use of prescription opioids and the use of illegal drugs is a major public health issue;
- Opioid abuse, through the use of prescription medication or illegal drugs including heroin, has rapidly expanded across the state;
- Nonmedical use of prescription opioids provides a pathway toward opioid addiction that can lead to use of ever more dangerous substances, including heroin;
- Heroin is less expensive than purchasing opioid pills illegally, and in some parts of the state, heroin is much more accessible;
- Heroin addiction has a profound effect on the brain and, in 2016, the United States Surgeon General declared addiction as a chronic brain disease;
- In 2012, the state's prescription opioid overdose death rate was more than double the national rate, and the heroin-associated overdose death rate was 50 percent higher than the national rate;
- From 2009 to 2015, the number of heroin-associated deaths in Alaska more than quadrupled;
- Highly dangerous synthetic opioids have made their way into Alaska, posing an immediate threat to the lives and health of Alaskans and their families; and
- High rates of heroin use and prescription opioid abuse remain the driving factor behind accidental drug overdose deaths in Alaska.

In the face of these sobering statistics, we must remember that those who become addicted require our compassion and help to recover. By pulling together and facing this problem, we can help more Alaskans break free from the disease of addiction.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Administrative Order is to outline my plan to address efforts to combat the heroin and opioid epidemic and overdose-related deaths in Alaska.

Further, this Administrative Order is to alert all departments to the seriousness of the heroin and opioid epidemic and to direct all State agencies, in particular, the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Public Safety to initiate steps to combat the opioid epidemic currently facing the State of Alaska.

ORDER

Under the authority of Article III, Sections 1 and 24, Constitution of the State of Alaska, I, Bill Walker, Governor of the State of Alaska, order that:

Subject to any requirements for appropriation, all departments shall evaluate and apply for grants, including federal grants, that are available to assist the State in combating heroin and opioid abuse, including applying for grants or other funds to:

1. Provide prevention and treatment for Alaskans who are at risk or who are currently suffering from opioid or heroin addiction;
2. Assist with the elimination of illegally imported drugs, reduce and treat the illegal use of prescription opioids and other illegal drugs in Alaska;
3. Assist in the legal monitoring, management, and use of controlled substances that are prescription drugs in Alaska; and
4. Assist in developing additional resources to provide for medically assisted treatment in Alaska.

The Department of Health and Social Services, through the State Medical Officer, Dr. Jay C. Butler, M.D., shall establish, coordinate, and manage an incident command structure to develop strategy and implement responses to address the heroin and opioid abuse epidemic.

The Department of Corrections shall develop a program to provide medically-assisted treatment for any inmate at the point of release from custody who agrees to participate in an effort to address inmates' ongoing opioid and heroin addictions. The program shall include evaluating, with medical guidance and patient consent, available evidence-based options to assist a person seeking to recover from drug addiction, including extended-release injectable suspension medication approved for the treatment of alcohol or drug dependence.

The Department of Corrections shall coordinate with the Department of Health and Social Services to provide the necessary services for detoxification and follow up to ensure the effectiveness of the medically-assisted treatment.

The Department of Public Safety will develop options to identify the pathways through which illegal drugs are brought into the state, and pursue available methods to restrict the entry of illegal drugs through improved screening and enforcement measures. This effort shall include working with the

federal government to identify ways to coordinate efforts and use resources more effectively and efficiently to address movement of illegal drugs in the state.

OTHER PROVISIONS

1. This Order is for administrative purposes only. It neither creates any third-party rights nor modifies the statutory and regulatory authority of any State agency.
2. Consistent with law and available appropriations, each affected State agency shall use existing personnel and monetary resources to comply with this Order.

This Order takes effect immediately.

DATED at Juneau, Alaska on this 16th day of February, 2017.



Bill Walker
Governor