



**MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS
& OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Subject: *Protocol for Responding to Incidents
Involving Drug Overdose*

Number: 277-A

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Rescinds: 277 – Heroin Use & Overdose

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Approved By:

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this protocol is to establish a consistent department-wide response to the drug overdose problem. A coordinated effort between all shareholders is required to properly investigate these calls.

II. PROCEDURE & REQUIRED ACTION

A. Non-Fatal Overdose

1. Patrol Officer Response

- a. Render medical aid for the victim. Officers will, as necessary, request EMS for any person experiencing an overdose of a prescription or illicit drug use, or the ill effects of the same.
- b. If opioid overdose is suspected, and the Officer administers Naloxone, they must be trained to do so and follow department protocol (See Regulations & Operating Procedures #275, Naloxone).
- c. Locate and identify all persons on the scene.
- d. Obtain initial factual information from all individuals involved/on scene. Be mindful that family members and associates can provide valuable information about the victim's history of addiction/drug abuse, as well as possible suppliers and locations where the victim may have purchased the illegal substance.

- e. If information is obtained regarding the supply source or place of purchase, it will be documented in a UCR, and the report number will be sent to the Street Crimes Unit email.
- f. Be mindful that others on the scene may attempt to clean up the scene to protect the interests of the victim or themselves.
- g. Treat the location as a potential crime scene. Establish a crime scene log when necessary or applicable.
- h. Notify your direct supervisor
- i. Attempt to gain consent to view and record the cell phone for any text messaging, photographs, or phone numbers that may be related to the source of supply for the overdose substance.

** Note- Officers shall use their BWC to memorialize the attempt to gain consent, as well as record the viewing of the contents of the cell phone into the BWC.*

- j. Useful information related to the supply source of the overdose substance, obtained through a lawful search of the cell phone, will be documented in a UCR, and the report number will be sent to the Street Crimes Unit email. This information may include:

- i. Phone numbers.
- ii. Contact names.
- iii. Text messages.
- iv. Photographs/videos.
- v. Social media information.

- k. Process the scene.
 - i. Photograph the scene and all evidence with their department-issued phone. Upload photographs to Evidence.com using the appropriate file number.
 - ii. Officers will wear personal protective equipment when handling items that could be contaminated or hazardous to the officer or those in the immediate area.
 - iii. Officers will seize all narcotics and paraphernalia (spoons, needles, packaging material, etc.). Officers will mitigate

exposure by processing and/or destroying these items following MBPD Procedures 501 and 503.

- iv. When pills, tablets, capsules, etc., are found, photograph and seize the drugs as well as the bottles or containers used to house the drug(s).
- I. Secure and submit all evidence following MBPD Procedures 501 and 503. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Any suspected controlled dangerous substances or chemical agents believed to have been ingested by the victim.
 - ii. Drug paraphernalia (e.g., hypodermic syringe, gelatin capsules, spoon, aluminum foil, glass pipe, etc.).
 - iii. Photographs and/or video footage lawfully obtained from either private or public sources.

** Note-When packaging loose material for placement into Property and Evidence, Officers will use the fuming hood at the Police Department.*

- m. Complete/submit a Uniform Crime Report, titled "Drug Overdose," before the end of your tour of duty. The report must contain the following information:
 - i. Victim, witness and/or suspect name, address, date of birth, telephone numbers, and additional pertinent identifying information.
 - ii. Detailed crime scene description to include all items of evidence recovered.

**Note -Photograph and document any symbols, monikers or identifying markings/characteristics on paraphernalia (Ex.: stars, words/names, colored capsules, etc.) as this may assist investigators with identifying where and from whom the substance was purchased.*

- iii. Identity of all persons on scene and information they provided.
- iv. In cases of prescription overdose (or state if the information is not available):

- a) Medication type, dosage, date prescription was issued, and physician's name.
 - b) Name of the pharmacy identified on the prescription container.
 - c) Pharmacy prescription number.
 - d) Name and address of patient on the label.
 - e) Number of tablets/capsules the victim is believed to have ingested and remaining pill count.
 - f) Reason for the medication, if noted.
- v. In cases involving other chemical agents, attempt to identify the substance and its source, and include such information in the Uniform Crime Report. The following may be useful in the identification of chemical agents:
- a) Myrtle Beach Fire Department.
 - b) Local Pharmacies.
 - c) Poison Control Center.
 - d) Tru-Narc.
- n. Name of hospital where the victim was transported, when applicable. Officers will follow up with the hospital and document the victim's condition in the UCR.

2. Patrol Supervisor Response

- a. Must respond to the scene of the call.
- b. Ensure the scene has been processed and evidence submitted to property and evidence (P&E) following MBPD 501 and 503.
- c. Ensure complete and accurate reports have been submitted by the end of tour.
- d. Make sure that the call is documented in SharePoint/pass-on.

B. Fatal Overdose

1. Patrol Officer Response

- a. Notify a supervisor to respond to the scene.
- b. Don Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) if necessary.
- c. Secure crime scene, begin crime scene log, and identify witnesses.
- d. Work with an Investigator/Narcotics Officer for further investigatory actions/reporting.

2. *Patrol Supervisor Response*

- a. Must respond to the scene of the call.
- b. Notify on-duty shift detective or on-call Investigator.
- c. Notify On-duty/on-call Crime Scene Officer.
- d. Notify Chief of Police and or their designee as soon as practical.
- e. Ensure complete and accurate reports have been submitted prior to the end of shift.
- f. Make sure that the call is documented in SharePoint/pass-on

3. *Detective Unit Response*

- a. Respond and investigate all suspected overdose deaths. For OD deaths that are determined not to be a homicide or suspicious in nature and in turn become a drug investigation to identify and charge the source, the investigation will transition to narcotics investigators with detectives assisting as needed or requested.
- b. Notify On-duty/on-call Crime Scene Officer and Street Crimes Officer.
- c. Direct all investigatory actions of suspected overdose deaths.
- d. Assign cases for follow-up investigation.
- e. Ensure the scene has been processed and evidence submitted to property and evidence (P&E) following MBPD 501 and 503.

4. *Street Crimes Unit Response*

- a. Respond to and investigate all suspected overdose deaths.
- b. Assist with Tru-Narc and follow-up search warrants for cellphones if applicable
- c. Prepare and package suspect narcotics for laboratory testing, when applicable.

5. *Crime Scene Response*

- a. Respond and document all suspected overdose deaths as requested by the Investigative Unit.
- b. All evidence will be documented, collected, and dropped into property and evidence by the crime scene unit to eliminate any chain of custody issues that could arise.
- c. Conduct data extractions of cellular/mobile devices, iPads, computers, or other digital devices when requested.
- d. If a search warrant is obtained during a death investigation, a crime scene officer should execute it.

6. *Crime Analysis Response*

- a. SCU/Narcotics Officers will forward reports, monthly, to the MBPD Crime Analyst for analysis and sharing w/ all participating members.
- b. Review/collect all overdose reporting.
 - i. Analyze all information in order to establish trends and similarities between all overdoses within the City.
 - ii. Assist Narcotics and Investigations Units with leads and possible suspects that are garnered through the analysis of the data collected from various units.
 - iii. Provide spreadsheets and/or link analysis on all overdose deaths.