KENTUCKY INJURY PREVENTION AND RESEARCH CENTER

Kentucky Resident Drug Overdose Deaths, 2021–2025

Annual Report, Updated June 2026

Prepared by

Meghan Steel (meghansteel@uky.edu)

Mira Mirzaian (mira.mirzaian@uky.edu)

Lara Daniels (lara.daniels@uky.edu)

Released by

Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center (KIPRC)

2365 Harrodsburg Road, B340

Lexington, KY 40504

as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health

Suggested Citation

Steel, M., Mirzaian, M., Daniels, L. (2026). *Kentucky Resident Drug Overdose Deaths, 2021–2025: Annual Report, Updated June 2026.* Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center.

Kentucky Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

University of Kentucky
College of Public Health

Contents

1 Introduction **1**

1.1 About this Report 1

1.2 Definitions 2

1.3 Executive Summary 3

Table 1.3.1: Kentucky counties with the highest age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths in 2025 4

2 Total Drug Overdose Deaths **5**

Table 2.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents, 2021–2025 5

Figure 2.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents, 2021–2025 6

3 Drug Overdose Deaths by Sex **7**

Table 3.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025 7

Figure 3.1: Counts of total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025 8

Figure 3.2: Counts of opioid-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025 8

Figure 3.3: Counts of stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025 9

4 Drug Overdose Deaths by Race and Ethnicity **10**

Table 4.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2021–2025 11

Figure 4.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2021–2025 12

Figure 4.2: Age-adjusted rates of opioid-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2021–2025 12

Figure 4.3: Age-adjusted rates of stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2021–2025 13

5 Drug Overdose Deaths by Age Group **14**

5.1 All Ages 14

Table 5.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by age group, 2021–2025 14

Figure 5.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by age group, 2021–2025 . . . 15
5.2 Persons 24 and Younger . . . 16
Table 5.2.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents 24 years old and younger by age group, 2021–2025 . . . 16
Table 5.2.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents 24 years old and younger by age group and drug type, 2021–2025 . . . 17

6 Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug Type 18

6.1 Overview of Drug Types . . . 18
Table 6.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by drug type, 2021–2025 . . . 18
Figure 6.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by opioid type, 2021–2025 . . . 19
Figure 6.1.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by stimulant type, 2021–2025 . . . 19
6.2 Fentanyl . . . 20
Table 6.2.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving fentanyl, 2021–2025 . . . 20
Figure 6.2.1: Map of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by county of residence, 2025 . . . 21
Table 6.2.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025 . . . 22
Table 6.2.3: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by race and ethnicity, 2021–2025 . . . 23
Table 6.2.4: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by age group, 2021–2025 . . . 24
Table 6.2.5: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2021–2025 . . . 25
6.3 Methamphetamine . . . 26
Table 6.3.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving methamphetamine, 2021–2025 . . . 26
Figure 6.3.1: Map of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by county of residence, 2025 . . . 27
Table 6.3.3: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025 . . . 28
Table 6.3.4: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by race and ethnicity, 2021–2025 . . . 29

Table 6.3.5: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by age group, 2021–2025 . . . 30

Table 6.3.6: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2021–2025 . . . 31

6.4 Polysubstance . . . 32

Table 6.4.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving fentanyl with the presence of additional drugs, 2021–2025 . . . 32

7 Drug Overdose Deaths by Month **33**

Figure 7.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by month, 2021–2025 . . . 33

8 Drug Overdose Deaths by Intent **34**

Table 8.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by intent, 2021–2025 . . . 34

9 Drug Overdose Deaths by Pregnancy Status **35**

Table 9.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by pregnancy status, 2021–2025 . . . 35

10 Drug Overdose Deaths by Armed Forces Status **36**

Table 10.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by armed forces status, 2021–2025 . . . 36

11 Drug Overdose Deaths by County of Residence **37**

11.1 County Maps . . . 37

Figure 11.1.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2025 . . . 37

Figure 11.1.2: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2024 . . . 38

Figure 11.1.3: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2023 . . . 38

Figure 11.1.4: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2022 . . . 39

Figure 11.1.5: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2021 . . . 39

11.2 Appalachian Counties . . . 40

Table 11.2.1: Counts and rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2021–2025 . . . 41

Table 11.2.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region and drug type, 2021–2025 42

1 Introduction

1.1 About this Report

This report presents the burden of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents from 2021–2025. It includes only deaths of Kentucky residents. Data on Kentucky residents who died outside of the Commonwealth may be incomplete, resulting in a potential undercount of all drug overdose deaths that occurred among Kentucky residents. Counts greater than zero but less than five and rates based on counts greater than zero but less than 10 were suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Rates based on counts less than 20 are unstable and should be interpreted with caution. Population estimates are based on the US Census Bureau's Annual County Resident Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin. All rates presented in this report have been age-adjusted using the US Standard 2000 population. Population estimates for 2025 were not available at the time this report was generated. Rates for 2025 are based on the population estimates for 2024.

This project is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of cooperative agreement 1 NU17CE010186 totaling $16,222,256 with 0% financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CDC, HHS, or the U.S. government. For more information, please visit CDC.gov.

1.2 Definitions

The source for the Kentucky resident data in this report is the Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data are provisional and subject to change. Drug overdose deaths include events with an underlying cause of death code of X40–X44, X60–X64, X85, or Y10–Y14.

Overdose deaths identified by specific drug types are not mutually exclusive; a drug overdose record that includes codes for two different drug types will be counted under each category. The majority of drug types identified as involved in a drug overdose death are based on the use of ICD-10 codes as a supplemental cause of death. Tables where the drug type is identified using toxicology testing are labeled accordingly. The following ICD-10 codes listed as a supplemental cause of death were used to identify drug overdoses:

Drug Type	ICD-10
All Opioids	T40.0–T40.4, T40.6
All Stimulants	T40.5, T43.6
Heroin	T40.1
Prescription Opioids	T40.0, T40.2–T40.3
Synthetic Opioids	T40.4
Fentanyl	T40.4 and a text mention of fentanyl
Benzodiazepines	T42.4
Cocaine	T40.5
Other Psychostimulants	T43.6
Methamphetamine	T43.6 and a text mention of methamphetamine

1.3 Executive Summary

- In 2025, **1,125** Kentucky residents died from a drug overdose, resulting in an age-adjusted mortality rate of **24.6 deaths per 100,000 residents**. This is **a decrease of 21.8%** from the 1,439 drug overdose deaths in 2024.

- In 2025, **976** non-Hispanic White residents died from a drug overdose, resulting in an age-adjusted mortality rate of **33.9 deaths per 100,000 White residents**. This is **a decrease of 21.0%** from the 1,235 deaths in 2024.

- In 2025, **131** non-Hispanic Black residents died from a drug overdose, resulting in an age-adjusted mortality rate of **43.5 deaths per 100,000 Black residents**. This is **a decrease of 22.5%** from the 169 deaths in 2024.

- In 2025, people aged **45 to 54 years old** experienced the highest proportion of deaths, with **301**. This was **a decrease of 16.9%** from the 362 deaths in 2024.

- Number of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl in 2025: **482**
  - Percentage of total drug overdose deaths in 2025: **42.8**%
  - Percentage change from 2024: **decrease of 41.9%**

- Number of drug overdose deaths involving heroin in 2025: **18**
  - Percentage of total drug overdose deaths in 2025: **1.6**%
  - Percentage change from 2024: **increase of 20.0%**

- Number of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine in 2025: **466**
  - Percentage of total drug overdose deaths in 2025: **41.4**%
  - Percentage change from 2024: **decrease of 19.1%**

- Number of drug overdose deaths involving cocaine in 2025: **154**
  - Percentage of total drug overdose deaths in 2025: **13.7**%
  - Percentage change from 2024: **decrease of 19.4%**

Table 1.3.1: Kentucky counties with the highest age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths in 2025

	Kentucky County	Number of Deaths	Rate of Deaths per 100,000 Residents
1	Rockcastle	12	78.8†
2	Estill	11	66.9†
3	Boyd	35	65.5
4	Garrard	12	59.4†
5	Floyd	21	55.6
6	Clay	11	55.5†
7	Whitley	17	49.4†
8	Clark	17	49.0†
9	Rowan	10	45.9†
10	Taylor	12	44.0†

Counties with rates based on counts less than 10 have been excluded from this list. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

† Rates based on counts less than 20 are unstable and should be interpreted with caution.

2 Total Drug Overdose Deaths

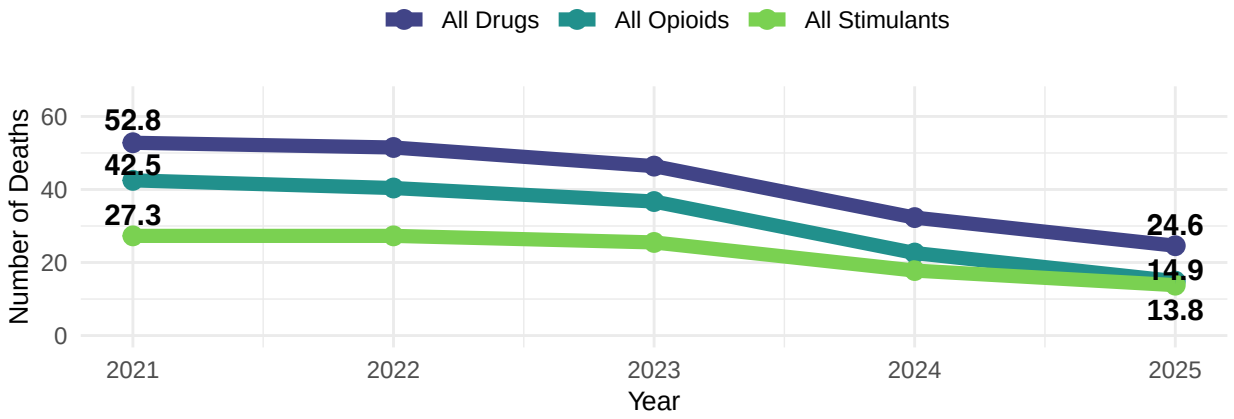
In 2025, a total of 1,125 Kentucky residents died from a drug overdose. This is a decrease of 21.8% from the 1,439 drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents in 2024. A total of 657 deaths, or 58.4% of the total drug overdose deaths in 2025, involved at least one type of opioid, while 623 deaths, or 55.4%, involved at least one type of stimulant. The total number of opioid overdose deaths among Kentucky residents decreased by 33.4%, from 987 in 2024 to 657 in 2025. The total number of stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents decreased by 20.6%, from 785 in 2024 to 623 in 2025.

Table 2.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents, 2021–2025

	Any Drug		Any Opioid		Any Stimulant	
Year	**Count**	**Rate**	**Count**	**Rate**	**Count**	**Rate**
2021	2,257	52.8	1,799	42.5	1,151	27.3
2022	2,200	51.5	1,706	40.4	1,151	27.3
2023	2,020	46.4	1,577	36.7	1,099	25.5
2024	1,439	32.3	987	22.6	785	17.8
2025	1,125	24.6	657	14.9	623	13.8

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 2.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents, 2021–2025



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

3 Drug Overdose Deaths by Sex

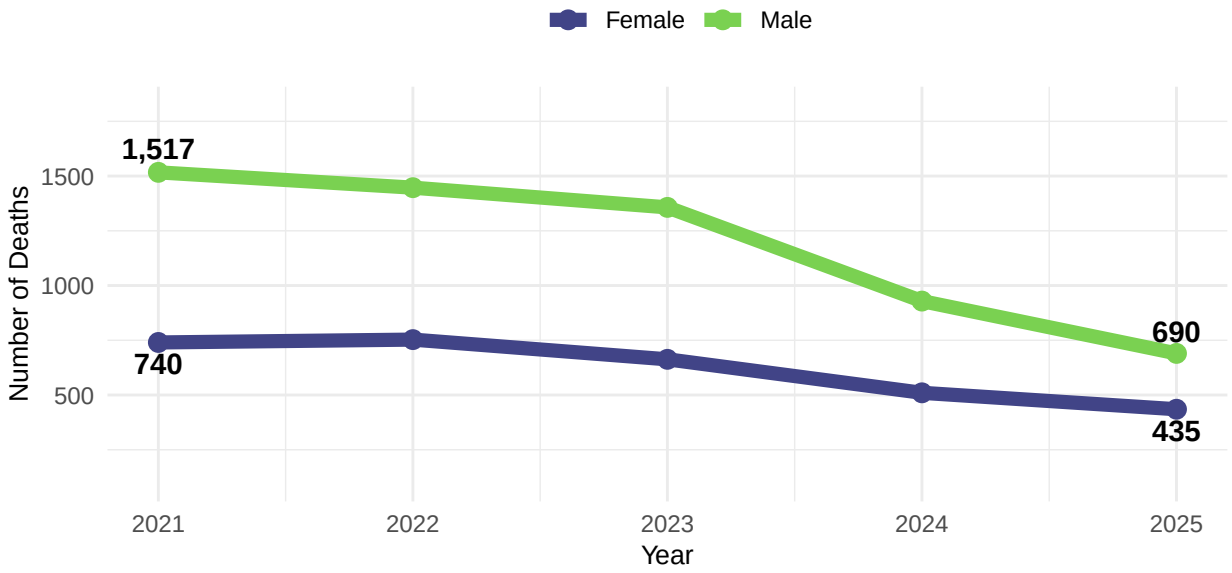
For the five-year period from 2021 to 2025, 65.7% of Kentucky resident drug overdose decedents were males. Males also made up 66.5% of all opioid overdose deaths among Kentucky residents and 68.5% of all stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents. The total number of drug overdose deaths among male Kentucky residents decreased by 25.7% (from 929 to 690) from 2024 to 2025. For this same time period, opioid overdose deaths among male Kentucky residents decreased by 35.2% (from 637 to 413), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among male Kentucky residents decreased by 32.3% (from 549 to 415). Among female Kentucky residents, the total number of drug overdose deaths in 2025 decreased by 14.7% (from 510 to 435) from 2024. For that same time period, opioid overdose deaths among female Kentucky residents decreased by 30.3% (from 350 to 244), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among female Kentucky residents decreased by 11.9% (from 236 to 208).

Table 3.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025

		Any Drug		Any Opioid		Any Stimulant	
Sex	**Year**	**Count**	**Rate**	**Count**	**Rate**	**Count**	**Rate**
Female	2021	740	34.7	591	28.0	348	16.8
	2022	753	35.6	569	27.3	387	19.1
	2023	663	30.6	500	23.4	334	15.7
	2024	510	22.7	350	15.9	236	11.0
	2025	435	18.8	244	10.9	208	9.7
Male	2021	1,517	70.7	1,208	56.8	803	37.8
	2022	1,447	67.4	1,137	53.4	764	35.6
	2023	1,357	62.1	1,077	50.0	765	35.2
	2024	929	41.9	637	29.2	549	24.6
	2025	690	30.5	413	18.9	415	18.1

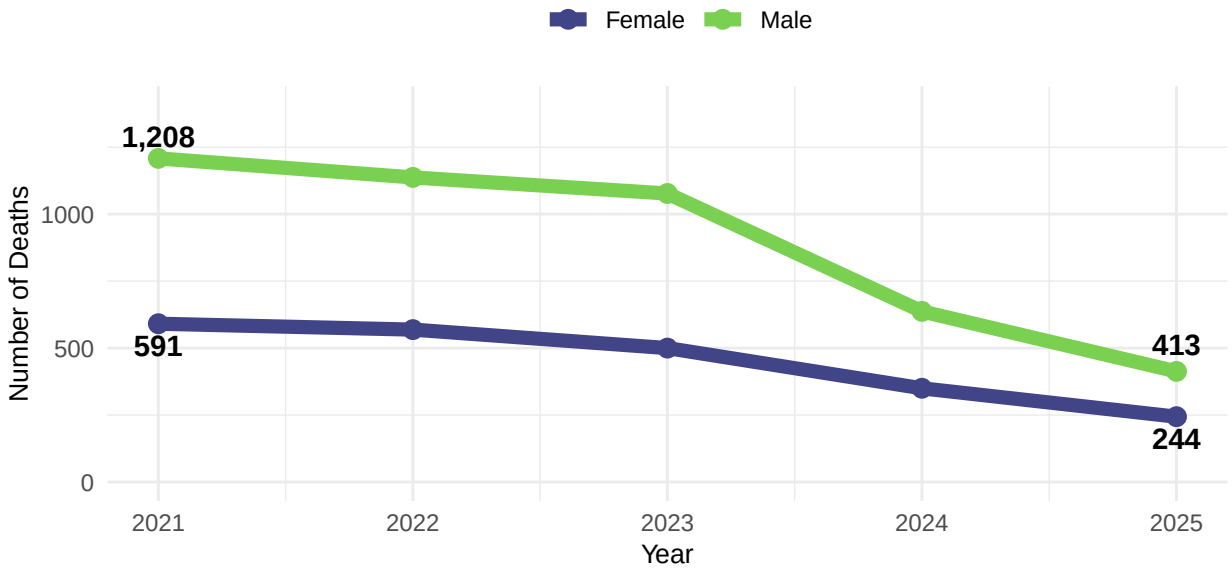
Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 3.1: Counts of total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025



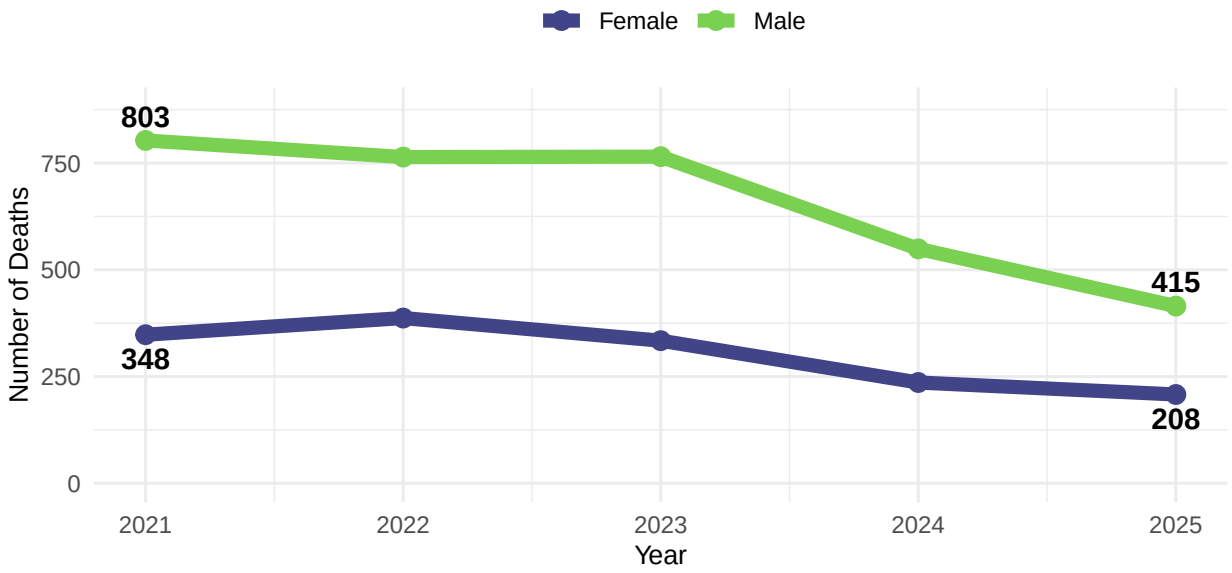
Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 3.2: Counts of opioid-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 3.3: Counts of stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

4 Drug Overdose Deaths by Race and Ethnicity

The drug overdose mortality rate for non-Hispanic Black Kentucky residents surpassed the rate for non-Hispanic White Kentucky residents for the first time in 2021 and remained higher in 2025 (33.3 deaths per 100,000 non-Hispanic Black residents vs. 25.9 deaths per 100,000 non-Hispanic White residents). In 2025, non-Hispanic White decedents accounted for 86.8% of Kentucky resident drug overdose deaths, while non-Hispanic Black decedents accounted for 11.7%. Non-Hispanic White decedents made up 84.5% of all opioid drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents (15.4 deaths per 100,000 White residents) and 84.6% of all stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents (14.3 per 100,000 White residents). The percentages of opioid and stimulant-involved overdose decedents who were non-Hispanic Black were 12.7% (22.2 per 100,000 non-Hispanic Black residents) and 9.4% (20.8 deaths per 100,000 non-Hispanic Black residents), respectively. Hispanic decedents accounted for 1.7% of deaths, with a rate of 6.3 per 100,000 Hispanic residents. The percentages of opioid and stimulant-involved overdose decedents who were Hispanic were 1.9% (4.5 per 100,000 Hispanic residents) and 1.1% (4.6 per 100,000 Hispanic residents), respectively.

The total number of drug overdose deaths among non-Hispanic White Kentucky residents decreased by 21% from 2024 to 2025 (from 1,235 to 976). For that same time period, opioid overdose deaths among non-Hispanic White Kentucky residents decreased by 33.1% (from 834 in 2024 to 558 in 2025), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among non-Hispanic White Kentucky residents decreased by 21.3% (from 671 to 528). The total number of drug overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black Kentucky residents decreased by 22.5% (from 169 in 2024 to 131 in 2025). For that same time period, opioid overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black Kentucky residents decreased by 31.7% (from 126 in 2024 to 86 in 2025), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black Kentucky residents decreased by 17.2% (from 99 in 2024 to 82 in 2025). Among Hispanic Kentucky residents, the total number of drug overdose deaths decreased by 5.6% (from 18 in 2024 to 17 in 2025). For that same time period, opioid overdose deaths among Hispanic Kentucky residents decreased by 20% (from 15 in 2024 to 12 in 2025), while stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Hispanic Kentucky residents increased by 50% (from 8 in 2024 to 12 in 2025).

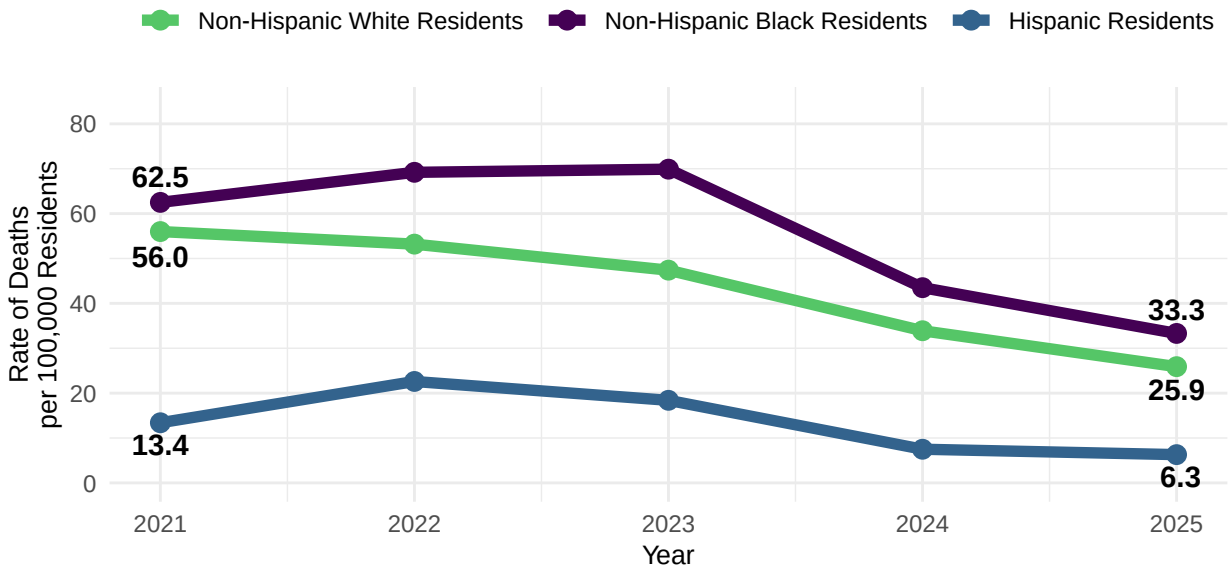
Table 4.1: Counts and age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2021–2025

		Any Drug		Any Opioid		Any Stimulant	
Ethnicity/ Race	**Year**	**Count**	**Rate**	**Count**	**Rate**	**Count**	**Rate**
Hispanic	2021	29	13.4	26	12.1	13	6.1
	2022	49	22.6	42	19.4	21	9.9
	2023	43	18.4	35	14.6	21	9.1
	2024	18	7.5	15	6.4	8	*
	2025	17	6.3	12	4.5	12	4.6
Non-Hispanic Black	2021	233	62.5	200	53.4	138	36.1
	2022	258	69.2	219	59.1	145	38.9
	2023	267	69.9	226	58.9	167	43.6
	2024	171	43.5	127	32.5	99	25.0
	2025	131	33.3	86	22.2	82	20.8
Non-Hispanic White	2021	1,984	56.0	1,563	44.6	997	28.8
	2022	1,878	53.2	1,431	41.0	977	28.2
	2023	1,694	47.4	1,302	37.1	900	25.6
	2024	1,236	33.9	835	23.4	672	18.7
	2025	976	25.9	558	15.4	528	14.3

* Rates based on counts less than 10 have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy

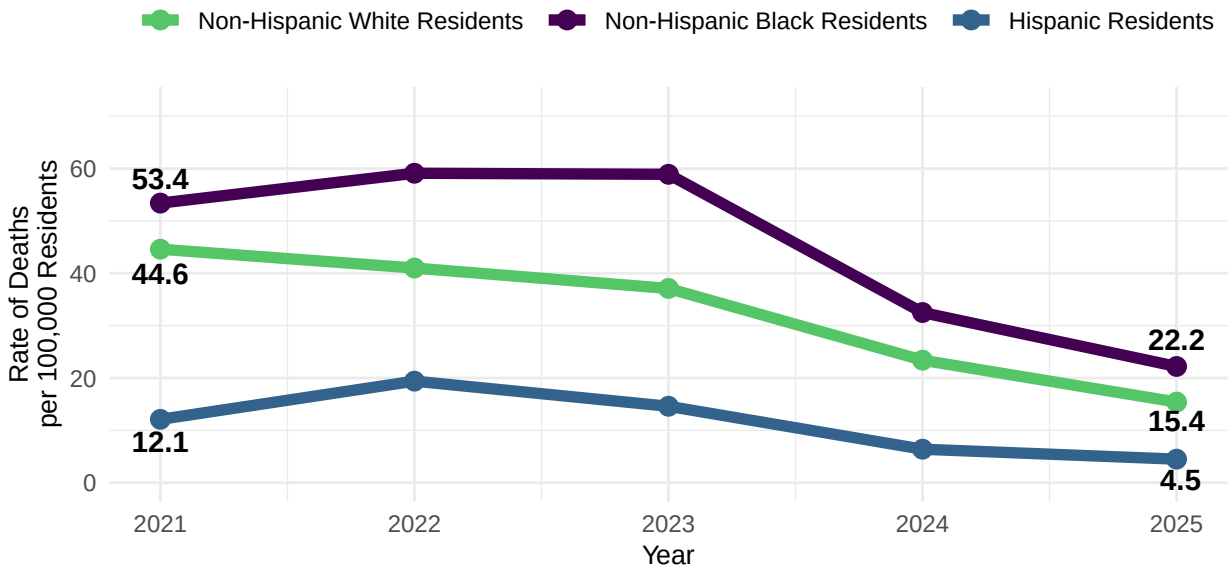
Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 4.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2021–2025



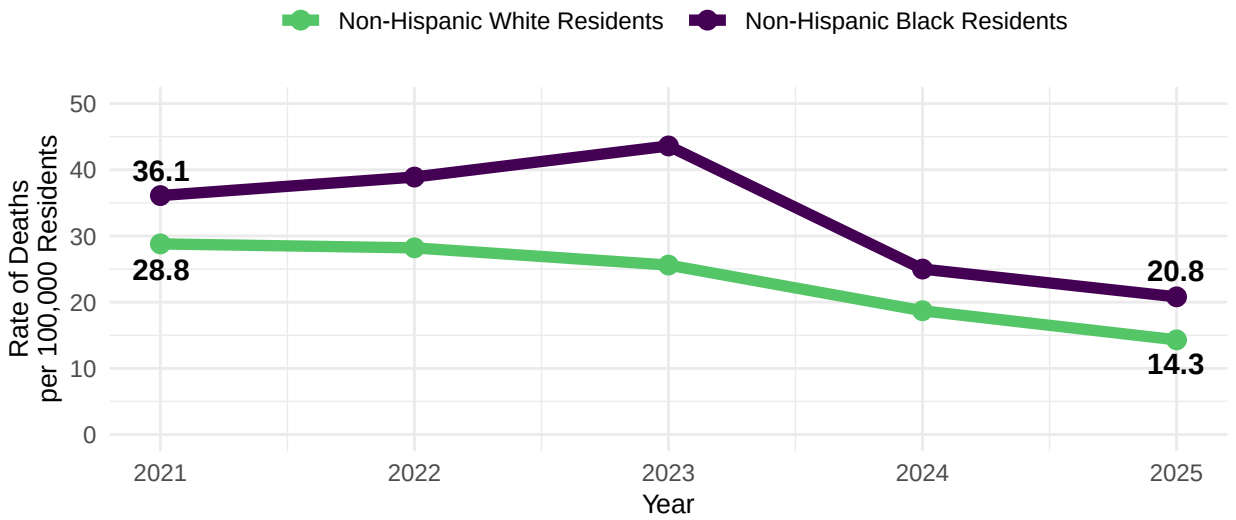
Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 4.2: Age-adjusted rates of opioid-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2021–2025



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 4.3: Age-adjusted rates of stimulant-involved overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by ethnicity and race, 2021–2025



Hispanic patients and patients of other races were excluded from this graph as their rates were not reportable for some of the fives years due to low counts of deaths (n=104 for the period of 2021−2025). Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

5 Drug Overdose Deaths by Age Group

5.1 All Ages

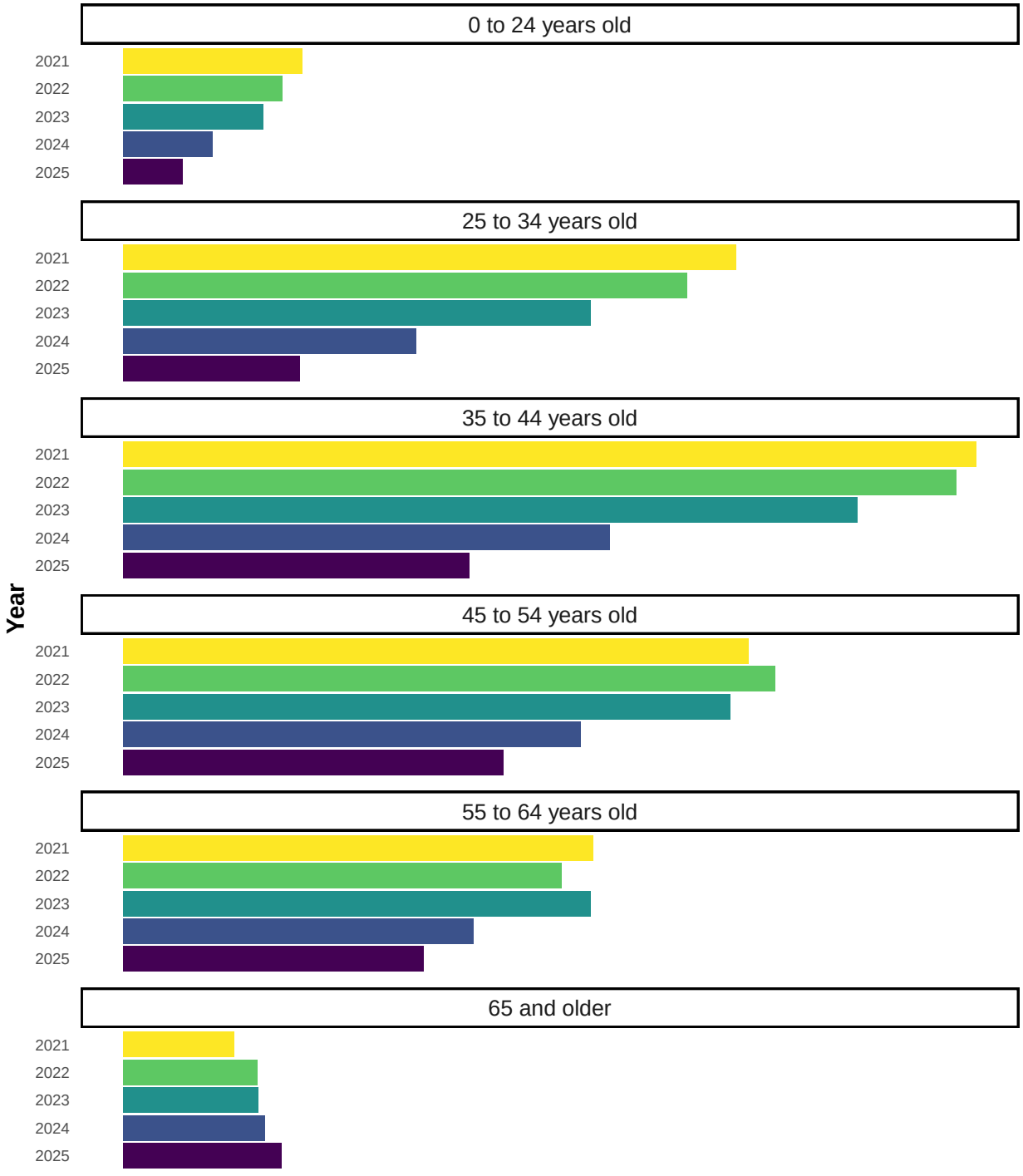
In 2025, the greatest number of drug overdose deaths involved residents who were 45 to 54 years old, with 301 deaths representing 27% of the total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents. This is a decrease of 17% from the 362 drug overdose deaths involving patients 45 to 54 years old in 2024. Decedents who were 35 to 44 years old made up the second-largest age group represented among drug overdose deaths, with 274 deaths and representing 24% of the total drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents in 2025.

Table 5.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by age group, 2021–2025

Age Group	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
0 to 24 years old	142	126	111	71	47
25 to 34 years old	485	446	370	232	140
35 to 44 years old	675	659	581	385	274
45 to 54 years old	495	516	480	362	301
55 to 64 years old	372	347	370	277	238
65 and older	88	106	107	112	125

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 5.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by age group, 2021–2025



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

5.2 Persons 24 and Younger

Of the drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents in 2025, 47 deaths (4.2%) involved residents aged 24 or younger. This is a decrease of 33.8% from the 71 decedents aged 24 or younger in 2024. Consistent with previous years, of all decedents aged 24 or younger who died from a drug overdose in 2025, persons who were 19 to 24 years old made up the majority of drug overdose deaths, with 35 deaths (74.5% of deaths in 2025 involving a person aged 24 or younger). The age group with the second highest number of drug overdose deaths were persons 10 to 18 years old, with 9 deaths (19.1% of the deaths in 2025 involving a person aged 24 or younger). Over the five-year period from 2021 to 2025, the majority of drug overdose deaths among persons aged 24 or younger involved fentanyl, with 409, followed by methamphetamine, with 117. Cannabis was involved in 53 deaths.

Table 5.2.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents 24 years old and younger by age group, 2021–2025

Age Group	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
0 to 9 years old	<5	7	9	6	<5
10 to 18 years old	*	16	15	11	*
19 to 24 years old	119	103	87	54	35

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. For some years, the age group with the next lowest number has been censored to protect a suppressed value, represented by an asterisk (*). Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 5.2.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents 24 years old and younger by age group and drug type, 2021–2025

Drug Type	0 to 9 years old	10 to 18 years old	19 to 24 years old
Heroin	<5	0	5
Prescription Opioids	<5	5	33
Fentanyl	22	52	335
Unspecified Opioids	0	<5	17
Cocaine	<5	<5	43
Methamphetamine	<5	11	105
Benzodiazepines	0	5	47
Cannabis	<5	9	43

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

6 Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug Type

6.1 Overview of Drug Types

Please note: Drug type categories presented in this report are not mutually exclusive. If a death certificate includes codes for multiple drug types, that overdose will be counted for each of the drug types. For this reason, adding the counts for each drug type will not provide the total count of overdoses.

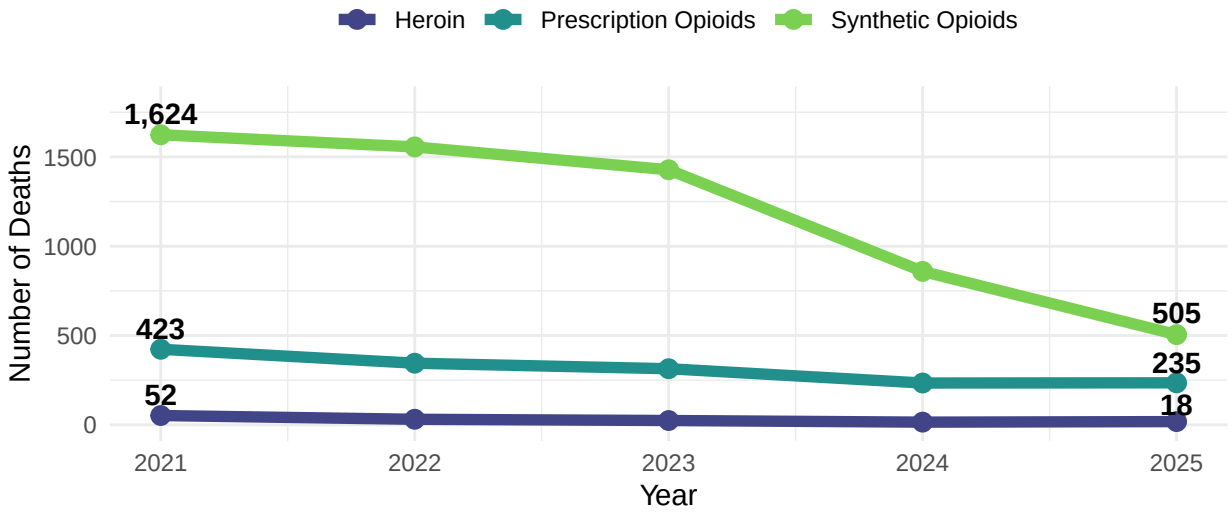
Of the 1,125 drug overdose deaths in 2025, heroin was listed as being involved in 18 deaths (1.6%), an increase of 20% from the 15 in 2024. An opioid other than heroin was listed as being involved in 654 (58.1%) of the drug overdose deaths in 2025, a decrease of 33.6% from the 985 in 2024. Drug overdose deaths involving benzodiazapines decreased by 30.5%, from 213 in 2024 to 148 in 2025, representing 13.2% of the drug overdose deaths in 2025. There were 154 drug overdose deaths involving cocaine in 2025, a decrease of 19.4% from the 191 in 2024. Finally, drug overdose deaths involving other psychostimulants decreased by 21.4%, from 646 in 2024 to 508 in 2025, representing 45.2% of the drug overdose deaths in 2025.

Table 6.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by drug type, 2021–2025

Drug Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Heroin	52	31	24	15	18
Prescription Opioids	423	345	314	234	235
Synthetic Opioids	1,624	1,556	1,428	859	505
Unspecified Opioids	50	37	48	43	17
Cocaine	220	227	281	191	154
Other Psychostimulants	991	986	880	646	508
Benzodiazepines	307	252	229	213	148
Cannabis	105	114	83	65	70

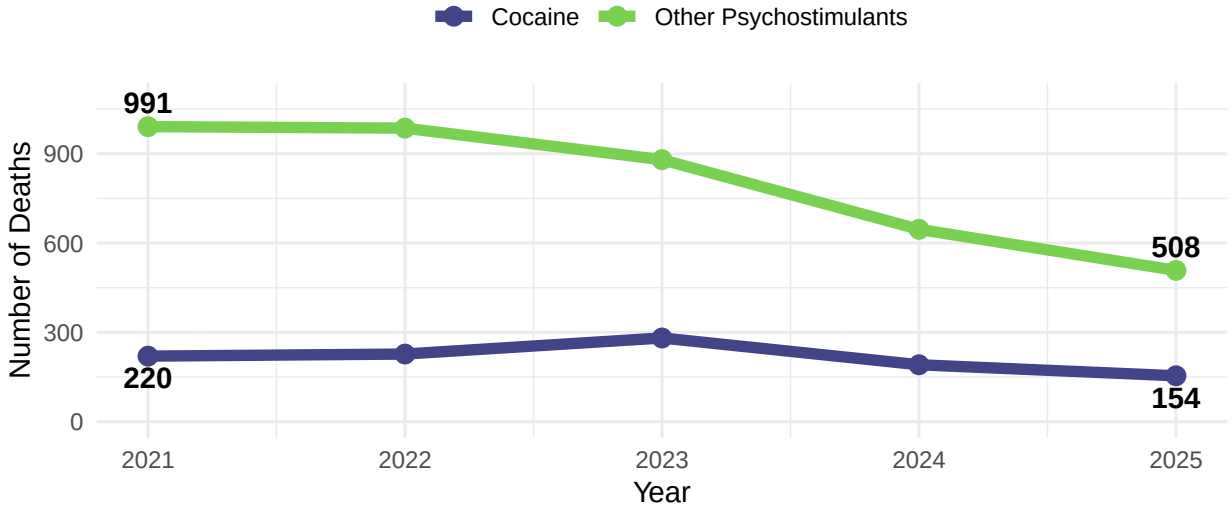
Drug type categories are not mutually exclusive. If a drug overdose death includes codes for multiple drug types, it will be included in each category. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 6.1.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by opioid type, 2021–2025



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 6.1.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by stimulant type, 2021–2025



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

6.2 Fentanyl

Fentanyl was involved in 482 (42.8%) of the 1,125 drug overdose deaths in 2025. This is a decrease of 41.9% from the 829 deaths in 2024. In 2025, the average age for a person who died from a fentanyl overdose was 43.2 years, which is lower than the average age for drug overdose deaths involving all drugs of 47.7 years.

The Kentucky counties with the highest counts of fentanyl-involved drug overdose deaths in 2025 were 1) Jefferson, with 154; 2) Fayette, with 42; 3) Kenton, with 19; 4) Madison, with 17; and 5) Boyd, with 11.

Meanwhile, the Kentucky counties with the highest age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl in 2025 were 1) Floyd, with 32.9 deaths per 100,000 residents; 2) Boyd, with 21.2 deaths per 100,000 residents; 3) Pike, with 21.1 deaths per 100,000 residents; 4) Jefferson, with 20.3 deaths per 100,000 residents; and 5) Madison with 16.4 deaths per 100,000 residents.

Finally, the five Kentucky counties with the greatest reportable percentage increases or smallest percentage decreases in the number of fentanyl-involved drug overdose deaths from 2024 to 2025 were 1) Floyd, with a 37.5% increase from 8 in 2024 to 11 in 2025; 2) Powell, with a 0% increase from 5 in 2024 to 5 in 2025; 3) Boyle, with a 16.7% decrease from 6 in 2024 to 5 in 2025; 4) Scott, with a 16.7% decrease from 6 in 2024 to 5 in 2025; and 5) Whitley, with a 20% decrease from 10 deaths in 2024 to 8 deaths in 2025.

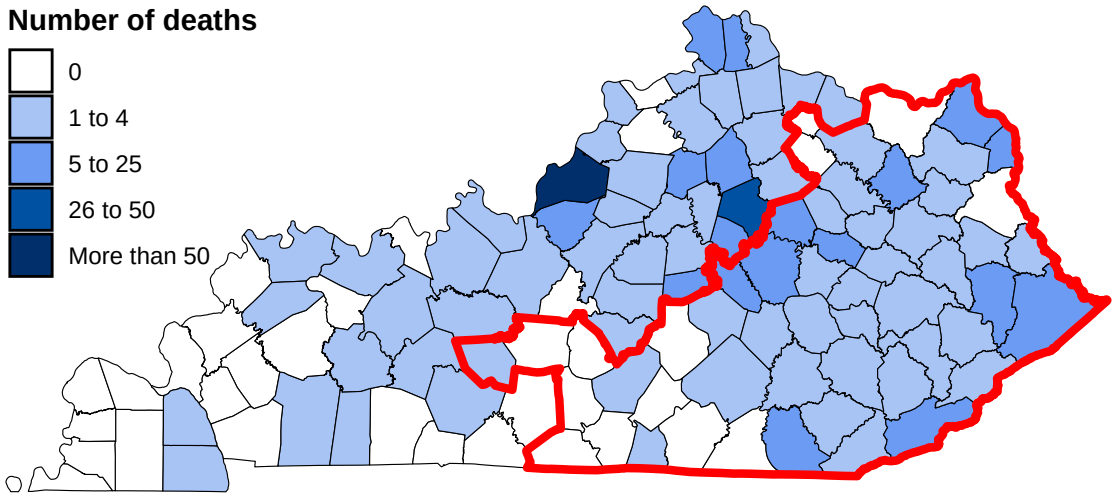
Table 6.2.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving fentanyl, 2021–2025

Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl
2021	2,257	1,569	69.5%
2022	2,200	1,524	69.3%
2023	2,020	1,408	69.7%
2024	1,439	829	57.6%
2025	1,125	482	42.8%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 6.2.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl by Kentucky county of residence, 2025

Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

To access a complete table of the counts of drug overdose deaths that involved fentanyl for each Kentucky county, please visit: https://kiprc.uky.edu/resources

Table 6.2.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025

Sex	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl
Female	2021	740	494	66.8%
	2022	753	482	64.0%
	2023	663	419	63.2%
	2024	510	277	54.3%
	2025	435	170	39.1%
Male	2021	1,517	1,075	70.9%
	2022	1,447	1,042	72.0%
	2023	1,357	989	72.9%
	2024	929	552	59.4%
	2025	690	312	45.2%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 6.2.3: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by race and ethnicity, 2021–2025

Race/ Ethnicity	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl
Non-Hispanic White	2021	1,984	1,346	67.8%
	2022	1,878	1,258	67.0%
	2023	1,694	1,146	67.7%
	2024	1,236	682	55.2%
	2025	976	395	40.5%
Non-Hispanic Black	2021	233	190	81.5%
	2022	258	211	81.8%
	2023	267	216	80.9%
	2024	171	123	71.9%
	2025	131	74	56.5%
Hispanic	2021	29	26	89.7%
	2022	49	41	83.7%
	2023	43	33	76.7%
	2024	18	15	83.3%
	2025	17	12	70.6%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 6.2.4: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by age group, 2021–2025

Age Group	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl
0 to 24	2021	142	117	82.4%
	2022	126	108	85.7%
	2023	111	94	84.7%
	2024	71	57	80.3%
	2025	47	33	70.2%
25 to 34	2021	485	395	81.4%
	2022	446	355	79.6%
	2023	370	294	79.5%
	2024	232	179	77.2%
	2025	140	79	56.4%
35 to 44	2021	675	507	75.1%
	2022	659	496	75.3%
	2023	581	445	76.6%
	2024	385	263	68.3%
	2025	274	156	56.9%
45 to 54	2021	495	323	65.3%
	2022	516	317	61.4%
	2023	480	326	67.9%
	2024	362	177	48.9%
	2025	301	121	40.2%
55 to 64	2021	372	202	54.3%
	2022	347	207	59.7%
	2023	370	215	58.1%
	2024	277	121	43.7%
	2025	238	70	29.4%
65+	2021	88	25	28.4%
	2022	106	41	38.7%
	2023	107	34	31.8%
	2024	112	32	28.6%
	2025	125	23	18.4%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 6.2.5: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2021–2025

Region	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Fentanyl	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Fentanyl
Appalachian[1]	2021	748	458	61.2%
	2022	718	431	60.0%
	2023	706	455	64.4%
	2024	491	255	51.9%
	2025	416	157	37.7%
Non-Appalachian	2021	1,509	1,111	73.6%
	2022	1,482	1,093	73.8%
	2023	1,314	953	72.5%
	2024	948	574	60.5%
	2025	709	325	45.8%

[1] The Appalachian region includes the Kentucky counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe.

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

6.3 Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine was involved in 466 (41.4%) of the 1,125 drug overdose deaths in 2025. This is a decrease of 19.1% from the 576 deaths in 2024. In 2025, the average age for a person who died from a drug overdose involving methamphetamine was 46.5 years, which is lower than the average age for drug overdose deaths involving all drugs of 47.7 years.

The Kentucky counties with the highest counts of methamphetamine-involved drug overdose deaths in 2025 were 1) Jefferson, with 87; 2) Fayette, with 22; 3) Madison, with 16; 4) Pike, with 14; and 5) Whitley, with 11.

Meanwhile, the Kentucky counties with the highest age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine in 2025 were 1) Whitley, with 33.7 per 100,000 residents; 2) Floyd, with 28.8 per 100,000 residents; 3) Pike, with 28.4 per 100,000 residents; 4) Madison, with 15.8 per 100,000 residents; and 5) Jefferson with 11.4 per 100,000 residents.

Finally, the five Kentucky counties with the greatest reportable percentage increases in the number of methamphetamine-involved drug overdose deaths from 2024 to 2025 were 1) Whitley, with a 120% increase from 5 in 2024 to 11 in 2025; 2) Floyd, with a 66.7% increase from 6 in 2024 to 10 in 2025; 3) Daviess, with a 25% increase from 8 in 2024 to 10 in 2025, 4) Leslie, with a 20% increase from 5 in 2024 to 6 in 2025; and 5) Perry, with a 20% increase from 5 in 2024 to 6 in 2025.

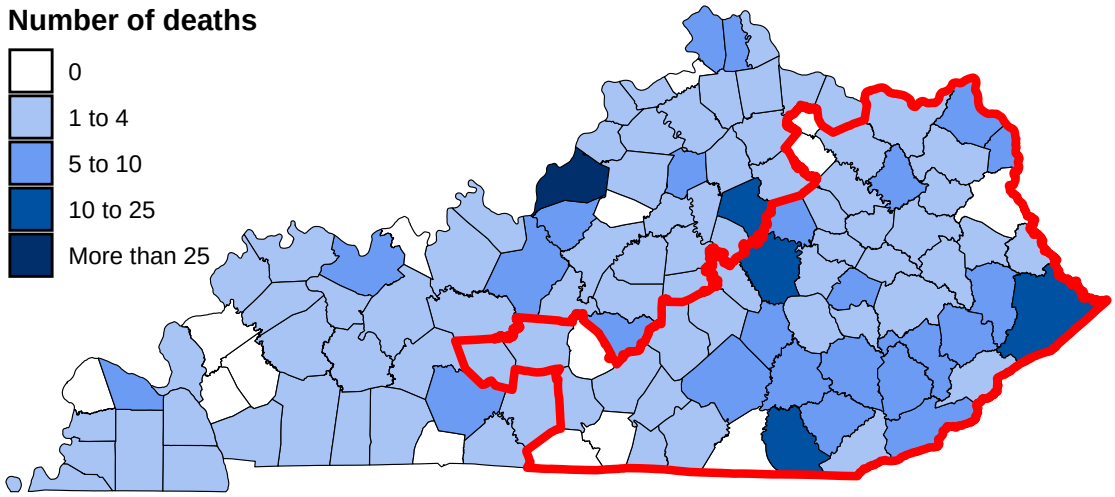
Table 6.3.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving methamphetamine, 2021–2025

Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine
2021	2,257	859	38.1%
2022	2,200	866	39.4%
2023	2,020	781	38.7%
2024	1,439	576	40.0%
2025	1,125	466	41.4%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 6.3.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine by Kentucky county of residence, 2025

Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

To access a complete table of the counts of drug overdose deaths that involved methamphetamine for each Kentucky county, please visit: https://kiprc.uky.edu/resources

Table 6.3.3: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by sex, 2021–2025

Sex	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine
Female	2021	740	260	35.1%
	2022	753	285	37.8%
	2023	663	237	35.7%
	2024	510	167	32.7%
	2025	435	157	36.1%
Male	2021	1,517	599	39.5%
	2022	1,447	581	40.2%
	2023	1,357	544	40.1%
	2024	929	409	44.0%
	2025	690	309	44.8%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 6.3.4: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by race and ethnicity, 2021–2025

Race/ Ethnicity	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine
Non-Hispanic White	2021	1,984	789	39.8%
	2022	1,878	789	42.0%
	2023	1,694	698	41.2%
	2024	1,236	529	42.8%
	2025	976	421	43.1%
Non-Hispanic Black	2021	233	65	27.9%
	2022	258	62	24.0%
	2023	267	65	24.3%
	2024	171	38	22.2%
	2025	131	37	28.2%
Hispanic	2021	29	<5	N/A
	2022	49	9	18.4%
	2023	43	11	25.6%
	2024	18	<5	N/A
	2025	17	7	41.2%

Counts greater than zero but less than five and rates based on counts greater than zero but less than 10 have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 6.3.5: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by age group, 2021–2025

Age Group	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine
0 to 24	2021	142	38	26.8%
	2022	126	25	19.8%
	2023	111	27	24.3%
	2024	71	14	19.7%
	2025	47	13	27.7%
25 to 34	2021	485	189	39.0%
	2022	446	168	37.7%
	2023	370	132	35.7%
	2024	232	91	39.2%
	2025	140	63	45.0%
35 to 44	2021	675	295	43.7%
	2022	659	296	44.9%
	2023	581	260	44.8%
	2024	385	164	42.6%
	2025	274	125	45.6%
45 to 54	2021	495	203	41.0%
	2022	516	219	42.4%
	2023	480	191	39.8%
	2024	362	172	47.5%
	2025	301	141	46.8%
55 to 64	2021	372	120	32.3%
	2022	347	132	38.0%
	2023	370	148	40.0%
	2024	277	104	37.5%
	2025	238	95	39.9%
65+	2021	88	14	15.9%
	2022	106	26	24.5%
	2023	107	23	21.5%
	2024	112	31	27.7%
	2025	125	29	23.2%

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 6.3.6: Counts of drug overdose deaths involving methamphetamine among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2021–2025

Region	Year	Total Drug Overdose Deaths	Drug Overdose Deaths Involving Methamphetamine	Percentage of Total Drug Overdose Deaths that Involved Methamphetamine
Appalachian[1]	2021	748	332	44.4%
	2022	718	318	44.3%
	2023	706	318	45.0%
	2024	491	248	50.5%
	2025	416	206	49.5%
Non-Appalachian	2021	1,509	527	34.9%
	2022	1,482	548	37.0%
	2023	1,314	463	35.2%
	2024	948	328	34.6%
	2025	709	260	36.7%

[1] The Appalachian region includes the Kentucky counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe.

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

6.4 Polysubstance

In 2025, 91.3% of drug overdoses that involved fentanyl also involved at least one additional type of drug. The most common drugs listed alongside fentanyl among those who died in 2025 were 1) methamphetamine, with 203 deaths; 2) prescription opioids, with 88 deaths; and 3) cocaine, with 79 deaths. Similarly, 78.8% of drug overdose deaths that involved methamphetamine, 86.4% of drug overdose deaths that involved cocaine, and 91.9% of drug overdose deaths that involved a prescription opioid also involved at least one additional type of drug. Due to the unique pharmacology of the drugs, 100% of drug overdose deaths that involved a benzodiazepine and 98.6% of drug overdose deaths that involved cannabis also involved at least one other type of drug.

Table 6.4.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents involving fentanyl with the presence of additional drugs, 2021–2025

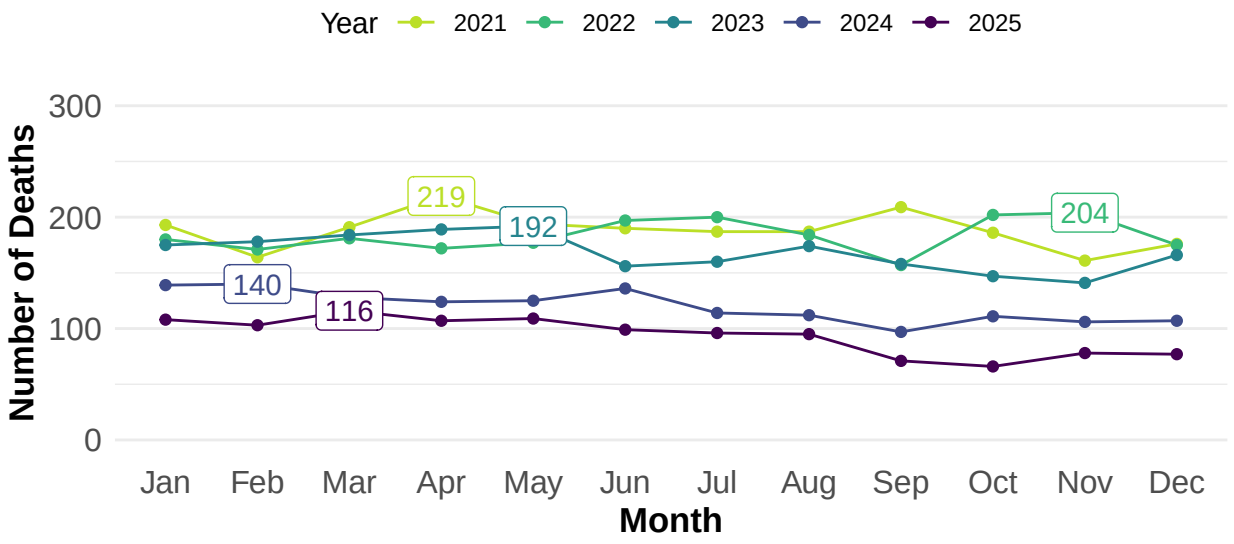
Drug Type(s)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Fentanyl	1,569	1,524	1,408	829	482
Methamphetamine	605	596	570	333	203
Cocaine	180	191	231	134	79
Prescription Opioids	252	206	181	110	88
Heroin	46	26	15	13	15
Benzodiazepines	211	164	157	133	68
Cannabis	89	91	70	43	37
Other Drugs	1,315	1,249	1,182	721	411
Fentanyl Only	132	131	120	53	42

Drug types are not mutually exclusive. A fentanyl overdose that involves multiple additional drugs will be counted in each relevant category. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

7 Drug Overdose Deaths by Month

In 2025, March saw the highest number of drug overdose deaths, at 116. This was a decrease of 17.1% from the highest monthly number of drug overdose deaths in 2024, which occurred in February with 140 deaths.

Figure 7.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by month, 2021–2025



Labeled values display the maximum monthly number for each year.
Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data are provisional and subject to change. Data extracted June 2026.

8 Drug Overdose Deaths by Intent

Consistent with previous years, the majority of drug overdose deaths in 2025 were unintentional, with 1,043 deaths or 92.7% of all drug overdose deaths that year. Suicide was the documented intent for 58 (5.2%) of the drug overdose deaths in 2025, a 7.4% increase from the 54 in 2024.

Table 8.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by intent, 2021–2025

Intent	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Unintentional	2,175	2,114	1,923	1,361	1,043
Suicide	47	60	58	54	58
Homicide	0	<5	0	0	<5
Undetermined Intent	35	*	39	24	*

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. For some years, the intention with the second lowest count has been censored to protect a suppressed value, indicated with an asterisk (*). Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

9 Drug Overdose Deaths by Pregnancy Status

Kentucky death certificates use a checkbox system for reporting pregnancy status among female decedents. While this system is effective at identifying pregnancy-related and maternal deaths, it has been shown to be less complete when the cause of death is accidental, including deaths involving a drug overdose.[1] For this reason, the counts presented in the table below are likely an undercount of the total number of drug overdose deaths that occurred during a pregnancy or within one year after a pregnancy.

Table 9.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by pregnancy status, 2021–2025

Pregnancy Status	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Pregnant at Time of Death	10	6	<5	<5	<5
Pregnant within One Year of Death	<5	11	<5	<5	0
Unknown Pregnancy Status	224	234	219	146	78

Counts greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed in accordance with state data management policy. Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

[1] Horon IL, Cheng D. Effectiveness of pregnancy check boxes on death certificates in identifying pregnancy-associated mortality. *Public Health Reports*. 2011;126(20):195-200. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3056032/

10 Drug Overdose Deaths by Armed Forces Status

In 2025, a total of 70 active duty military and veteran Kentucky residents died from a drug overdose. This was an increase of 14.8% from the 61 drug overdose deaths among active duty military and veteran Kentucky residents in 2025. Of those drug overdose deaths among active duty military and veteran Kentucky residents in 2025, at least one type of opioid was involved in 38.6% of those deaths while 62.9% involved at least one type of stimulant.

Table 10.1: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by armed forces status, 2021–2025

Armed Forces Status	Drug Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Civilian	All Drugs	2,118	2,082	1,899	1,378	1,055
	Any Opioid	1,692	1,615	1,491	942	630
	Any Stimulant	1,080	1,092	1,034	753	579
Veteran or Active	All Drugs	139	118	121	61	70
Duty	Any Opioid	107	91	86	45	27
	Any Stimulant	71	59	65	32	44

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

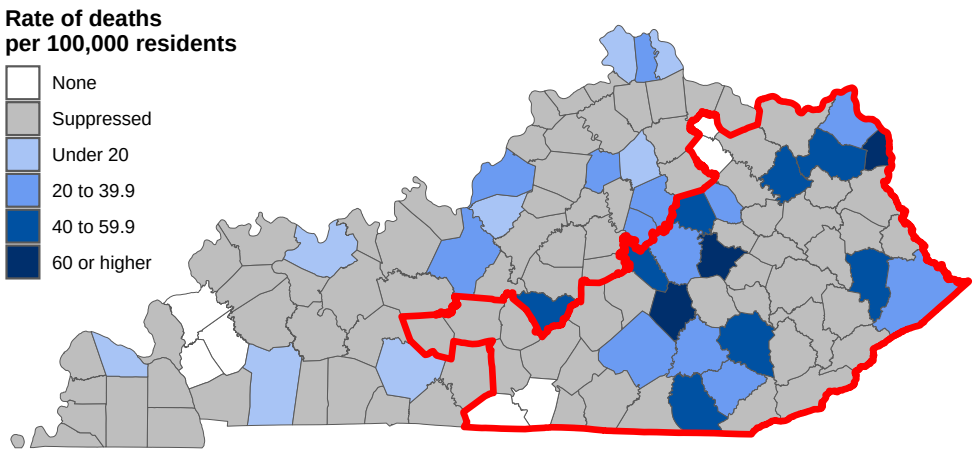
11 Drug Overdose Deaths by County of Residence

To access a complete table of the counts of all drug overdose deaths by drug type for each Kentucky county, please visit: https://kiprc.uky.edu/resources.

11.1 County Maps

Figure 11.1.1: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2025

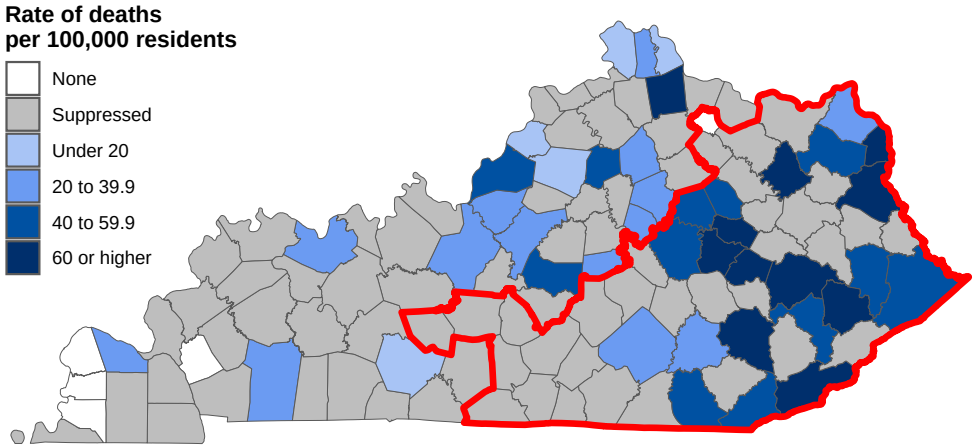
Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 11.1.2: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2024

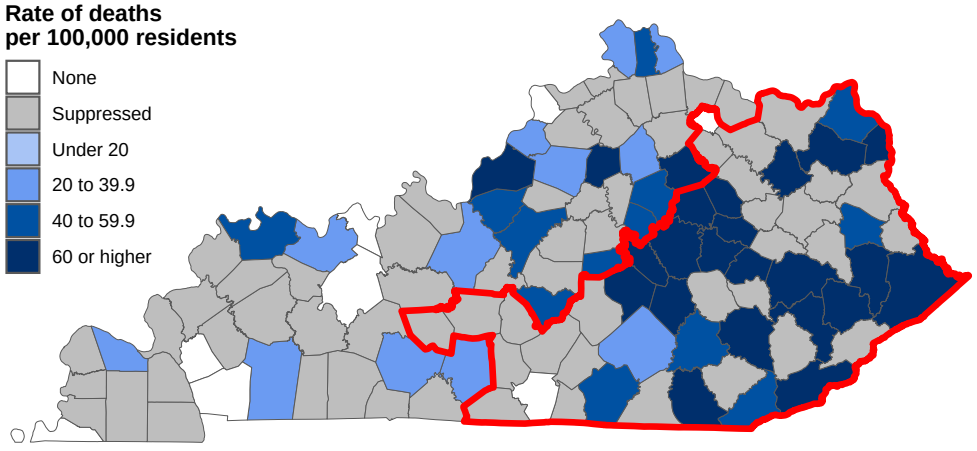
Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 11.1.3: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2023

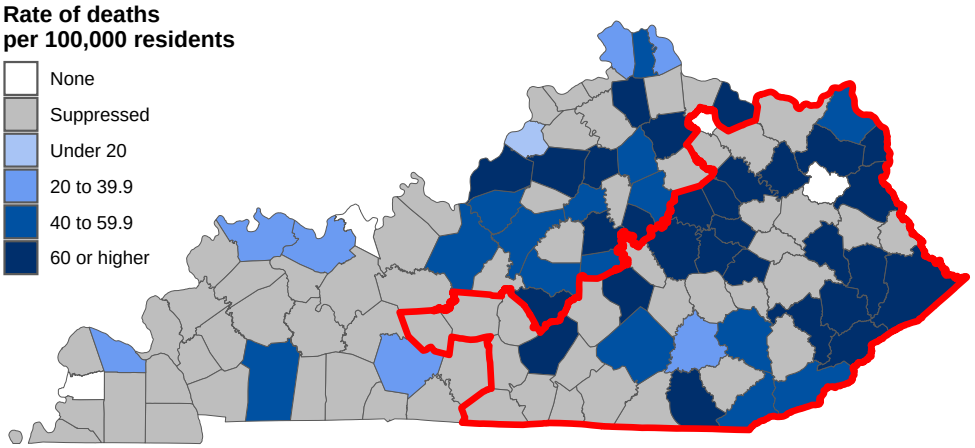
Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 11.1.4: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2022

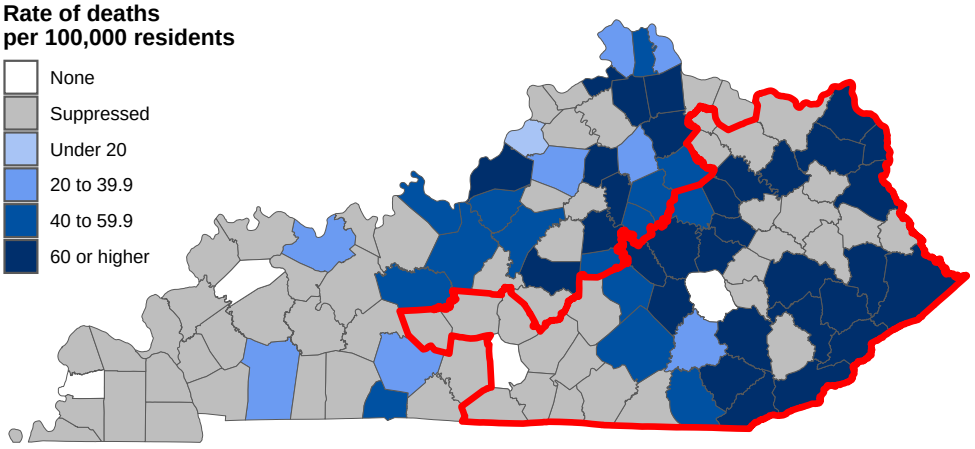
Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Figure 11.1.5: Age-adjusted rates of drug overdose deaths by Kentucky county of residence, 2021

Red line denotes Appalachian counties



Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

11.2 Appalachian Counties

In 2025, counties in the Appalachian region of Kentucky experienced a drug overdose mortality rate of 35.7 deaths per 100,000 residents. This was a decrease from the 43.9 deaths per 100,000 residents in 2024 and higher than the rate for non-Appalachian counties in 2025 of 20.9 deaths per 100,000 residents. Of the drug overdose deaths that occurred among residents of Appalachian counties in 2025, 228 (54.8%) involved at least one type of opioid and 242 (58.2%) involved at least one type of stimulant. Of the drug overdose deaths that occurred among residents of non-Appalachian counties in 2025, 429 (60.5%) involved at least one type of opioid and 381 (53.7%) involved at least one type of stimulant.

Note: The Appalachian region in Kentucky includes the counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe.

Table 11.2.1: Counts and rates of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region, 2021–2025

		All Drugs		All Opioids		All Stimulants	
Region	**Year**	**Count**	**Rate**	**Count**	**Rate**	**Count**	**Rate**
Appalachian[1]	2021	748	68.4	555	51.5	418	39.6
	2022	718	65.8	506	47.1	386	36.4
	2023	706	63.8	525	48.3	393	36.2
	2024	491	43.9	325	29.7	299	27.1
	2025	416	35.7	228	20.5	242	21.3
Non-Appalachian	2021	1,509	47.4	1,244	39.3	733	23.2
	2022	1,482	46.5	1,200	38.0	765	24.2
	2023	1,314	40.4	1,052	32.8	706	21.9
	2024	948	28.3	662	20.1	486	14.6
	2025	709	20.9	429	13.0	381	11.3

[1] The Appalachian region includes the Kentucky counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, or Wolfe.

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.

Table 11.2.2: Counts of drug overdose deaths among Kentucky residents by Appalachian region and drug type, 2021–2025

Region	Drug Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Appalachian[1]	Heroin	10	10	9	5	4
	Prescription Opioids	165	119	123	103	92
	Synthetic Opioids	487	450	464	270	171
	Unspecified Opioids	6	9	10	5	2
	Cocaine	27	23	34	19	20
	Other Psychostimulants	401	372	371	286	230
	Benzodiazepines	119	101	85	68	54
	Cannabis	38	43	25	20	19
Non-Appalachian	Heroin	42	21	15	10	14
	Prescription Opioids	258	226	191	131	143
	Synthetic Opioids	1,137	1,106	964	589	334
	Unspecified Opioids	44	28	38	38	15
	Cocaine	193	204	247	172	134
	Other Psychostimulants	590	614	509	360	278
	Benzodiazepines	188	151	144	145	94
	Cannabis	67	71	58	45	51

[1] The Appalachian region includes the Kentucky counties of Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Robertson, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe.

Produced by the Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center, as bona fide agent for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. Data source: Kentucky Death Certificate Database, Kentucky Office of Vital Statistics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Data extracted June 2026. Data are provisional and subject to change.