

# **SNOHOMISH OVERDOSE PREVENTION**

**— A COMMUNITY COMING TOGETHER TO STOP —**  
**SNOHOMISH COUNTY'S OPIOID EPIDEMIC**

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## **Executive Dave Somers Extends Innovative Response to Opioid Crisis**

*By activating the emergency management system, Snohomish County can better use resources and time*

**EVERETT, Wash., November 29, 2018** – Today, Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers signed a directive for the extension of the activation of the emergency management system to address the opioid crisis. By signing the directive, the Snohomish County Opioid Response Multi-Agency Coordination Group [MAC Group] will continue their innovative work to reduce overdose deaths and other negative impacts in the community. [A copy of the Directive is attached and below.]

“By getting all of our partners in one room, we are able to break down organizational silos and more effectively organize ourselves for the many challenges of the opioid epidemic,” said Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive. “The past year has shown that we can be more efficient and effective when working in collaboration. The activation of our emergency management system has been a key innovation in the fight against opioid abuse and overdose.”

“We are seeing positive results from the county-wide effort to help those suffering from substance abuse and the negative impacts it has on our community,” said Stephanie Wright, Chair of the Snohomish County Council. “This collaboration has been an effective way to line up county resources with common objectives. The council will continue to support these efforts to address this critical community need.”

“One of the advantages of having a MAC Group to address the opioid epidemic is that it strengthens existing partnerships in Snohomish County,” said Sheriff Ty Trenary. “From law enforcement/embedded social worker teams addressing homelessness to multi-agency collaborations addressing nuisance

properties, we can tackle the negative, quality of life issues opioid misuse has on our communities and neighborhoods.”

“This coordinated effort has allowed us to gain access to new data sources,” said Dr. Mark Beatty, health officer for the Snohomish Health District. “By analyzing the information being shared from multiple agencies, we are better able to target our interventions and evaluate the impact being made in our communities.”

“Our City team is focused on providing pathways to treatment and housing for those on our streets, and collaborating with our neighborhoods and businesses to create a safe, healthy community for all of our residents,” said Cassie Franklin, Mayor of Everett. “The MAC Group’s work is crucial because the opioid challenge affects all of our communities, and we can accomplish more by working together.”

“Arlington appreciates our partners across the county and state who help us address this complex and damaging epidemic,” said Barb Tolbert, Mayor of Arlington. “We are committed to staying engaged with this regional effort to lessen impacts on our community.”

“We appreciate having the opportunity to work closely with others who are facing the tough task of dealing with the human costs of the opioid epidemic,” said Bruce Stedman, Chief, South County Fire. “For every person that our firefighters and paramedics help, there is a complex story that needs an entire community’s response.”

More details about the Opioid Response MAC Group—including its objectives, action team leads and future progress reports—can be found at [www.snohomishoverdoseprevention.com](http://www.snohomishoverdoseprevention.com).

The website [www.snohomishoverdoseprevention.com](http://www.snohomishoverdoseprevention.com) is an information portal available in Snohomish County. The website—and accompanying social media accounts—were developed to be a one-stop shop for resources. Whether trying to understand the problem, prevent addiction, or save a life, this is a place to find information for that first next step.

**Date:** November 28, 2018

**To:** Jason Biermann, Director  
Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management

**From:** Dave Somers  
Snohomish County

**Subject:** Executive Directive Extension

### **Opioid Epidemic**

Opioid use disorder is a life-threatening, chronic medical condition that is continuing to have calamitous impacts across Snohomish County. Snohomish County continues to experience an opioid epidemic that damages our community and burdens local governments, social services, law enforcement agencies, emergency medical services, and public health agencies.

More important than the impact on governmental and service agencies, the opioid epidemic continues costing lives and human potential. Although Snohomish County comprises only 11% of Washington's population, the county has experienced 14% of all opioid-related deaths and nearly 16% of all heroin-related deaths within the last five years.

In the fall of 2017, I convened the Snohomish County Opioid Response Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Group to focus on using multiagency coordination tools to respond to the opioid epidemic in Snohomish County. Partner jurisdictions and other key stakeholders worked together to develop goals and objectives for reducing opioid-related deaths and collateral damage to communities. In response to the Opioid Response MAC Group's initial recommendations, I sent an Executive Directive to the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management activating the Snohomish County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and partially activating the Snohomish County Emergency Coordination Center (ECC).

Since I issued this Executive Directive on November 20, 2017, I have received weekly updates regarding the MAC Group's work, successes, and areas of need. In the MAC Group's first year, 63% of their objectives were completed. Some of the MAC Group's key accomplishments include:

- Reduced the Snohomish County Medical Examiner's wait time for toxicology results in fatal overdoses from an average of 15 weeks to 12 days. That's nearly nine times sooner that family members receive answers and law enforcement is able to intervene in response to drug-related deaths and crimes.
- Trained more than 800 people during a 1-hour first aid course through a curriculum designed and implemented by South County Fire and Rescue. This training includes direction on using Naloxone (Narcan) to reverse an overdose, CPR, and the use of tourniquets to stop severe bleeding while awaiting emergency medical response.
- Collaborated with Workforce Snohomish to secure \$2.4 million in funding to develop a comprehensive program using employment navigators to help those struggling with substance use disorder and/or homelessness obtain employment.

- Successfully partnered to obtain a grant for \$323,000 from the Center for Disease Control to continue funding rapid toxicology testing, develop real-time tracking of overdoses, and develop a multidisciplinary approach to administering access to treatment and services.
- Increased the number of medical providers that are prescribing Suboxone, one of the most effective compounds for medication-assisted treatment of opioid addiction, by 10 percent.
- Worked in local schools to ensure that more than 3,600 at-risk students and their families were connected to behavioral health and other needed services through the work of the Student Support Advocates.
- Distributed over 1,000 needle clean-up kits to community members and 500 lock bags designed to keep prescriptions secure.
- Provided Training on the appropriate use, handling, and disposal of prescription opioids at 14 Snohomish County-supported senior centers.

Due to the success of the MAC Group to date and our need to continue our collaborative efforts, I am extending the activation period through November 30, 2019.

An amended copy of my executive directive is attached to this memo.



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**Snohomish County**

**Executive**

**Dave Somers**  
*County Executive*

## **Extending Executive Directive to the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management**

**Date:** November 28, 2018

**To:** Jason Biermann, Director  
Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management

**From:** Dave Somers  
Snohomish County Executive

**Subject:** Opioid Epidemic

**Extending the Activation of the Snohomish County  
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and  
Emergency Coordination Center (ECC)**

The Snohomish County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) coordinates the county's response to emergencies and disasters in partnership with jurisdictions and other key stakeholders throughout the county. The CEMP contains annexes titled "Emergency Support Functions" (ESFs) that assign roles and responsibilities to agencies and departments supporting the response.

The Snohomish County Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) is the physical location where implementation of the CEMP occurs. When staffed, the mission of the ECC is to ensure coordinated planning, information sharing, and resource prioritization and allocation occurs in support of response operations throughout the county.

On November 20, 2017, I issued an Executive Directive to the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management activating the CEMP, partially activating the ECC, and requesting representation from the partner agencies named in the CEMP to support the following Emergency Support Functions:

- ESF #3 - Public Works and Engineering (to coordinate solid waste disposal, as well as water and waste water management)
- ESF #4 - Firefighting (to address the coordination of basic medical care and immediate life safety services delivered by fire and EMS agencies)
- ESF #5 - Emergency Management (to support management and administrative functions of the ECC and overall Snohomish County Government)
- ESF #6 - Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services (to address the non-medical mass care, emergency assistance, housing, and human services needs of impacted populations)
- ESF #7 - Logistics Management and Resource Support (to manage the provision of services, personnel, commodities, and facilities)
- ESF #8 - Public Health and Medical Services (to maintain health and sanitation supervision, prevent the spread of any dangerous, contagious or infectious diseases, and to prevent, control or abate nuisances which are detrimental to the public health)
- ESF #13 - Public Safety and Security (to address and support public safety and security capabilities and resources)
- ESF #15 - External Affairs (to provide accurate, coordinated and timely information and warnings to impacted communities, the general public, first responders, governments, media, tribes and other stakeholders)

In conjunction with the ECC activation, I directed the activation of the joint information center (JIC) under the purview of ESF #15 and establishment of a joint information system (JIS), which is facilitating the delivery of accurate and timely information to the public and other stakeholders.

As of November 30, 2018, I am directing the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management to extend this activation period for one additional year through the date of November 30, 2019. I continue to welcome and encourage collaboration with jurisdictions and agencies throughout Snohomish County.

### **Directive for Activation**

1. The overarching purpose of this activation is to align the countywide efforts in responding to the opioid epidemic.
2. The initial activation period lasted through November 30, 2018. Due to the success of the multiagency coordinating group (MAC Group) and objectives that are in progress, I am extending my executive directive through November 30, 2019. The need to shorten or lengthen this extension will be reassessed based upon the recommendation of the MAC Group.
3. In addition to staffing the MAC Group, executive department directors may be asked to provide other support to the ECC. Such requests will come from the Department of Emergency Management Director.
4. The MAC Group documented initial operational goals and objectives, and established one month operational periods. Progress toward the objectives and updates to planned activities will continue to be documented and shared on a regular basis.
5. The MAC Group formed the data collection committee, which provide more comprehensive data about the epidemic. In the upcoming year, activated ESFs should focus their work on objectives supported by the available data.
6. Agencies use the ECC/JIC's established processes and procedures for developing coordinated plans, requesting resources, and sharing information.
7. Agencies may establish other incident management systems (e.g. departmental operating centers, unified command structures, etc.) to address tactical actions within their purview. I expect those structures to work closely with the ECC to ensure that we maintain unity of effort.

### **ECC Goals**

Below are the current goals against which ESFs have established objectives. Goals and objectives will continue to be reassessed throughout the duration of the activation.

**Goal:** *Reduce opioid misuse and abuse.*

**Goal:** *Lessen the availability of opioids.*

**Goal:** *Reduce criminal activity associated with opioids.*

**Goal:** *Use data to detect, monitor, evaluate, and act.*

**Goal:** *Reduce collateral damage to the communities.*

**Goal:** *Provide information about the response in a timely and coordinated manner.*

**Goal:** *Ensure the availability of resources that efficiently and effectively support response efforts.*

#### **Contact for Further Information**

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact Jason Biermann, Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management Director, at [Jason.Biermann@snoco.org](mailto:Jason.Biermann@snoco.org).

***SIGNED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of November, 2019.***

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***Dave Somers***

*Snohomish County Executive*

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