

# Trump administration extends opioid emergency as fentanyl deaths drop

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US Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr., himself in long-term recovery from opioid addiction, says a national emergency declaration linked to opioid overdose deaths will be extended past Friday's expiration date. **JIM WATSON/AFP via Getty Images/AFP** **hide caption**

The Trump administration is extending through mid-June [an emergency declaration](#) linked to the opioid overdose crisis that was set to expire on Friday.

In a statement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. acknowledged drug deaths in the U.S. "are starting to decline" but said the Trump administration will continue treating the opioid crisis as "the national security emergency that it is."

President Trump has linked fentanyl smuggling to his tariffs against Canada, China and Mexico. In doing so, Trump has [often made factually inaccurate claims](#) about the number of drug deaths in the U.S. He's also said repeatedly Canada is a significant source of street fentanyl reaching U.S. communities, which is untrue according to [data gathered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#).

In fact, drug overdose deaths have been declining rapidly in the U.S. since the summer of 2023, with fatalities linked specifically to fentanyl down roughly 30 percent. In all, roughly 30,000 fewer people are dying each year from street drugs compared to the peak of the crisis in June 2023. That's [according to the latest data from October 2024 gathered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

According to Kennedy, renewing the public health emergency declaration for 90 days will allow the federal government continued flexibility responding to the crisis.

It's unclear why drug deaths are declining so rapidly, though many experts credit public health measures implemented by the Biden administration. Opioid-treatment medications such as buprenorphine, methadone and naloxone, also known as Narcan, are far more widely available now.

Under the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid has also emerged as a leading source of insurance coverage for addiction treatment and healthcare related to street drug recovery. Some Republicans have proposed deep budget cuts that could impact Medicaid funding.

Democrats in Congress, meanwhile, have criticized the White House for firing roughly 10 percent of federal workers focused on addiction at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.