

Somerville Police Department 		TYPE: GENERAL ORDER		POLICY NUMBER: 104	
		Subject: Nasal Narcan			
		Issuing Authority: David Fallon Chief of Police		Signature: 	Effective Date: April 12, 2016
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Purpose

Opiate overdose is one of the leading causes of accidental deaths in Massachusetts. Fatal and nonfatal overdoses can result from the abuse of opiates because opiate drugs slow or stop respirations. When breathing slows or stops, death ensues. Narcan may quickly and safely reverse the effects of opiate overdose.

Narcan, which is also known by its generic name Naloxone, is an opioid antagonist which displaces the opioid from receptors in the brain, thereby reversing an opiate overdose. It is a controlled drug which has no euphoric properties and minimal side effects. If administered to a person who is not suffering an opiate overdose, it is not likely to cause harm. Only recently has Narcan been available in nasal form. Many police and other public safety departments are using Narcan and although there is no guarantee that the use of it will save a life, its use has been successful in saving lives.

Policy

Narcan will be deployed in all marked department vehicles for the treatment of drug overdose victims and shall be stored in the glove box. Two Patrol units shall be dispatched to any call that relates to a potential drug overdose. The goal of the responding officers shall be to:

- A. Provide assistance via the use of Narcan where appropriate.
- B. Provide any treatment commensurate with their training as first responders.
- C. Assist other EMS personal on scene.
- D. Request the assistance of criminal investigators if the need may arise.

Definitions

Opiate: An opiate is a medication or drug that is derived from the opium poppy or that mimics the effect of an opiate, a synthetic opiate. Opiate drugs are narcotic sedatives that depress activity of the central nervous system, reduce pain, and induce sleep. Some of the more common opiates include: Heroin, Morphine, Fentanyl, OxyContin, Percocet, Percodan, and Vicodin.

Narcan: Narcan is an opioid antagonist that can be used to counter the effects of opiate overdose. Specifically, it can displace opioids from the receptors in the brain that control the central nervous system and respiratory system.

Medical Control Physician (MCP): The Medical Control Physician shall be a designated physician who is licensed to practice medicine in Massachusetts. The Somerville Police Department shall maintain an affiliation with an MCP.

Procedures

1. Arrival

When officers arrive at the scene of a medical emergency before the arrival of EMS, and make a determination that the patient may be suffering from an opiate overdose, the responding officer should take the following steps:

- A.** Use universal precautions.
- B.** Conduct a medical assessment of the patient, to include taking into account statements from witnesses and/or family members regarding the patient's drug use.
- C.** If the determination is made that there has been an opiate overdose, the Narcan kit should be opened.
- D.** Use the Narcan to administer either an intra-nasal or auto injector dose of Narcan. During the observation period, if the victim is still unresponsive, additional doses may be needed. Officers should be aware that a rapid reversal of an opiate overdose may cause projectile vomiting by the patient and/or violent behavior.
- E.** The patient should continue to be observed and treated as the situation dictates.
- F.** The treating officer shall inform arriving EMS personnel about the treatment and condition of the patient, and shall not relinquish care of the patient until relieved by a person with a higher level of training.

Note: Officers should avoid making promises that the use of Narcan will save a person's life.

2. Reporting

The treating officer, or the primary responding officer, before the end of his/her shift, shall complete a Narcan Administration Form.

- A.** Completed Narcan Administration Forms shall be forwarded to the Records Bureau. The Record's Clerk shall enter an "Administrative Item" under the code number 929, "Narcan Administered," making sure the original Incident Number for the initial call is cross referenced in the notes.

3. Equipment and Maintenance

- A. It shall be the responsibility of officers to inspect Narcan kits stored in the department vehicle glove box at the start of each shift to ensure that the kits are intact.
- B. Damaged kits, or kits missing Narcan, shall be reported to a shift supervisor immediately.
- C. The Academy Lieutenant will maintain a written inventory documenting the quantities and expirations of Narcan replacement supplies, and a log documenting the issuance of replacement units.

4. Replacement

Street Supervisors shall immediately replace Narcan kits that have been used during the course of a shift.

5. Training

Officers shall receive a standard two (2) hour training course administered by the department before being allowed to carry and use Narcan. The department shall provide refresher training every two (2) years.

6. Liability

A. Massachusetts Tort Claims Act - Massachusetts G.L. c. 258 § 2 provides the exclusive remedy for persons in this state that want to sue police officers or local governments for negligence. So long as the police officer was “acting within the scope of his office or employment,” the municipality **not the officer** will be liable, and then only to the maximum of \$100,000. Several provisions of M.G.L.A. 258 § 10 make it clear that an officer is not liable for many of the claims one might anticipate following the administration of Narcan, including:

- 1. G.L. c. 258 § 10(a) Any claim based upon an act or omission of a public employee when such employee is exercising due care in the execution of any statute or any regulation of a public employer, or any municipal ordinance or by-law, whether or not such statute, regulation, ordinance or by-law is valid;
- 2. G.L. c. 258 § 10(h) Any claim based upon the failure to establish a police department or a particular police protection service, or if police protection is provided, for failure to provide adequate police protection, prevent the commission of crimes, investigate, detect or solve crimes, identify or apprehend criminals or suspects, arrest or detain suspects, or enforce any law, but not including claims based upon the negligent operation of motor vehicles, negligent protection, supervision or care of persons in custody, or as otherwise provided in clause (1) of subparagraph (j).

3. G.L. c. 258 § 10(j) Any claim based on an act or failure to act to prevent or diminish the harmful consequences of a condition or situation, including the violent or tortious conduct of a third person, which is not originally caused by the public employer or any other person acting on behalf of the public employer.

Note: Officers should avoid making promises that the use of Narcan will save a person's life, etc. A promise or assurance of safety or assistance can operate as an exception to governmental immunity from a claim based upon the failure to provide adequate police protections, prevent or solve crimes, or enforce any law.