




Massachusetts for Overdose  
Prevention Centers

**HD.4212**  
**SD.2483**

## Overdose prevention centers:

- Save lives 
- Increase access to health care services 
- And link people to treatment 

**An Act preventing overdose deaths and increasing access to treatment  
(Rep. Marjorie Decker, Rep. John Lawn, and Sen. Julian Cyr)**

## THE GRIM REALITY: 2,000+ DIE FROM OVERDOSE EVERY YEAR

- For 8 straight years, **more than 2,000** people have died from opioid overdose in MA each year.
- In 2022, the annual death toll had risen **35% from 2015 to a record high of 2,357 deaths.**
- Racial disparities are also growing. DPH data show black residents are disproportionately dying from overdoses.



**6**

people die every day in Massachusetts from overdose

## WHAT THE BILL DOES

- Defines **harm reduction programs**, describing a range of services that include monitoring participants for signs of overdose and intervening to prevent overdose death
- Gives regulatory authority to the **Department of Public Health**
- Includes **legal protections** for staff, clients, and operators of DPH-approved programs
- Requires **data collection** to better inform public health efforts



## WE NEED STATE ACTION

- Several communities across the state are interested in providing comprehensive harm reduction programs including overdose prevention services, but legislation is needed to establish the legal and regulatory framework for them to do so successfully.
- Municipalities need to know the state will not stand in the way of local, evidence-based public health efforts. Providers need to know working at a center will not jeopardize their professional license. Clients need to know they will not go to jail for getting help.
- **This bill is NOT a mandate.** It simply creates the framework for comprehensive harm reduction programs to include overdose prevention services with authorization from DPH.



Overdose prevention services are an **evidence-based** public health measure proven to save lives by monitoring participants for signs of overdose and intervening to prevent overdose death. As one component of substance use harm reduction programs, they provide connections to community while treating individuals with dignity and respect.

## Services Provided

- ✓ A safe, stigma-free setting in which to engage with healthcare services
- ✓ Emergency response to overdose
- ✓ Counseling, medical and behavioral health services, and substance use treatment at a critical intervention point
- ✓ Connection to essential, wraparound community services
- ✓ Drug checking to increase safety
- ✓ Exchange and disposal of sterile supplies
- ✓ Reduction of infection and the transmission of infectious diseases

## OVERDOSE PREVENTION CENTERS SAVE LIVES AND MONEY

Rhode Island and Vermont's Legislatures voted to authorize overdose prevention services, providing a regulatory framework and liability protections for operators and visitors. A program in Providence, RI opened in early 2025 and **saved a life on day one**.

In 2021, the OnPoint program in New York City opened the first overdose prevention centers in the United States. As of January 2025:

- **Over 5,800** people used the site
- **Nearly 1,700** overdoses were reversed, saving lives

**Boston:** A [comprehensive study](#) found an overdose prevention center in Boston would realize **cost savings of \$4 million** by reducing reliance on costly ambulance rides, Emergency Department visits, and hospitalizations.

# \$4m

in potential cost  
savings with an  
overdose  
prevention center  
in Boston

Every visit to an overdose prevention center gives a person the opportunity to connect with trusted healthcare providers, start treatment, and take the first step on the road to recovery.

**Every person who uses drugs deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.**

Learn more at [www.ma4opc.org](http://www.ma4opc.org)