

Overdose Response Strategy (ORS)

An Innovative Public Health-Public Safety Partnership

Shasta Minery, MSW, LCSW

ORS Mission and Structure

The Overdose Response Strategy (ORS) is a unique initiative that brings together public health and public safety agencies to address the overdose crisis. Funded by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the ORS operates in collaboration with the CDC Foundation and the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program.

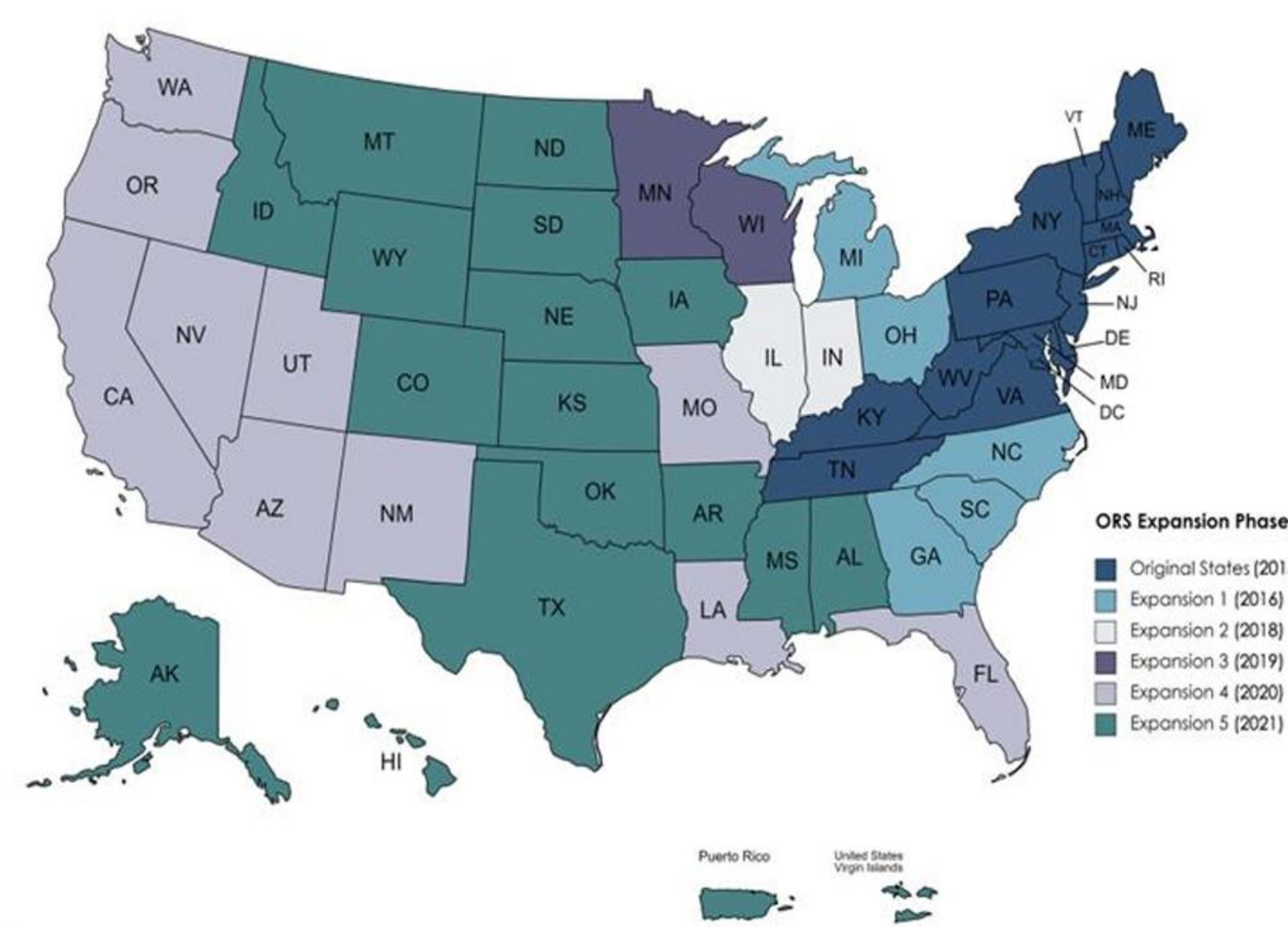


The **mission of the ORS** is to help communities reduce fatal and non-fatal drug overdoses by connecting public health and public safety agencies, sharing information and supporting evidence-based interventions.

History of the ORS

- 2015 Heroin Response Strategy
- 2018 Opioid Response Strategy
- 2019 Overdose Response Strategy

The Overdose Response Strategy, implemented by 61 teams of DIOs and PHAs, is now a national program covering all 33 HIDTAs, 50 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.



ORS Program Goals

- 1 **Share data systems** to inform rapid and effective community overdose prevention efforts
- 2 Support immediate, **evidence-based response** efforts that can directly reduce overdose deaths
- 3 Design and use promising strategies at the **intersection of public health and public safety**
- 4 Support the implementation of **evidence-informed prevention strategies** that can reduce substance use and overdose



The ORS is implemented by joint teams made up of **Drug Intelligence Officers** and **Public Health Analysts**, who work together on drug overdose issues within and across sectors and states.

The ORS creates **joint teams** that can simultaneously promote public health and public safety efforts.

Public safety officials, first responders, public health officials and people who use drugs **intersect naturally**.

The ORS is designed to increase the **positive impact** and **outcomes** of those intersections.

The Maine ORS Team



Collaborate across public health and public safety sectors



Share data, insights, and trends related to drug overdose in our communities



Inform & help local communities develop local solutions to reduce overdoses and save lives

Maine ORS Team Public Health-Public Safety Partnerships:

- *Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention*
- *Maine Department of Corrections*
- *Maine Health and Environmental Testing Lab*
- *Maine Information and Analysis Center*
- *National Guard Counterdrug Program*
- *Office of Behavioral Health*
- *University of Maine Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center*

The Maine ORS Team Shares Data, Insights, and Trends by:

- Writing the *Maine Drug Monitoring Initiative*
- Writing the *Maine Law Enforcement Drug Intelligence Report*
- Supporting the *Maine Accidental Overdose Death Review Panel*
- Supporting the *State of Maine Data Team*
- Supporting the *OPTIONS program*
- Contributing to the *Maine Threat Assessment*
- Sharing Information at the National Level
- Presenting at *Governor Mills' Monthly Opioid Response Seminar Series* and the *Maine Osteopathic Association's Midwinter Symposium*

The Maine ORS Team Informs and Helps by:

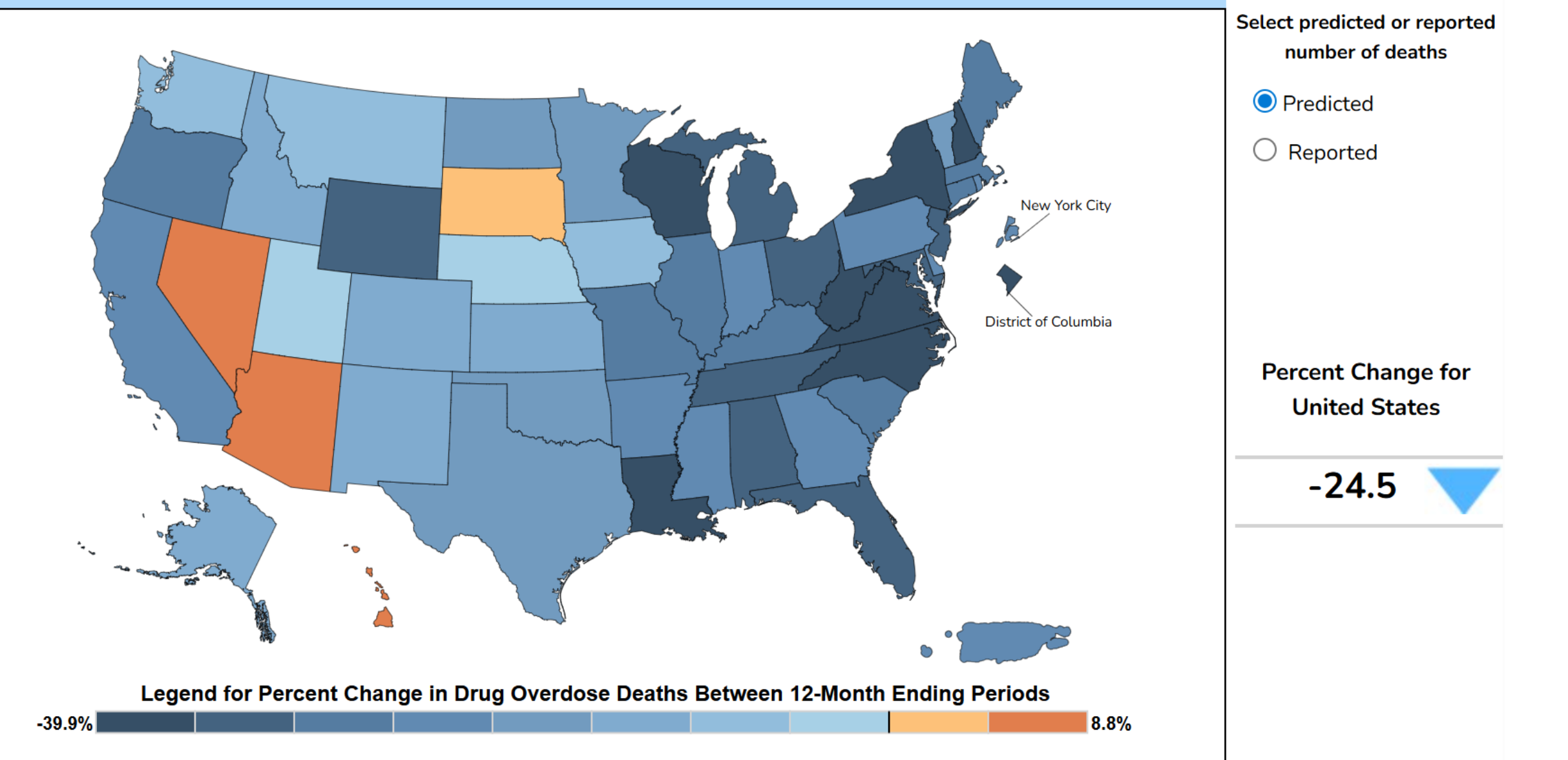
- Building relationships and engaging with public health–public safety agencies and organizations throughout local Maine

Overdose Data

The map below, from the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, shows the **percent change in predicted 12-month-ending drug overdose deaths** by state from **April 2024 to April 2025**. Nationally, overdose deaths are predicted to decline by **24.5%**. Most states are expected to see decreases, while a few – such as Arizona, Nevada, and South Dakota – may see increases. The darkest blue areas reflect the largest predicted declines, up to **-39.9%**.

Source: CDC National Vital Statistics System – Drug Overdose Data

Figure 1b. Percent Change in Predicted 12 Month-ending Count of Drug Overdose Deaths, by Jurisdiction: April 2024 to April 2025



The most recent state of Maine data, as of August 2025, reports that the total number of confirmed and suspected fatal overdoses in Maine during 2025 is **23.8% lower** than during the same period in 2024.

Source: [Maine Monthly Overdose Report for August 2025](#)

Maine ORS Team Contact Information

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