

# Preparedness for Overdose Response Among Law Enforcement

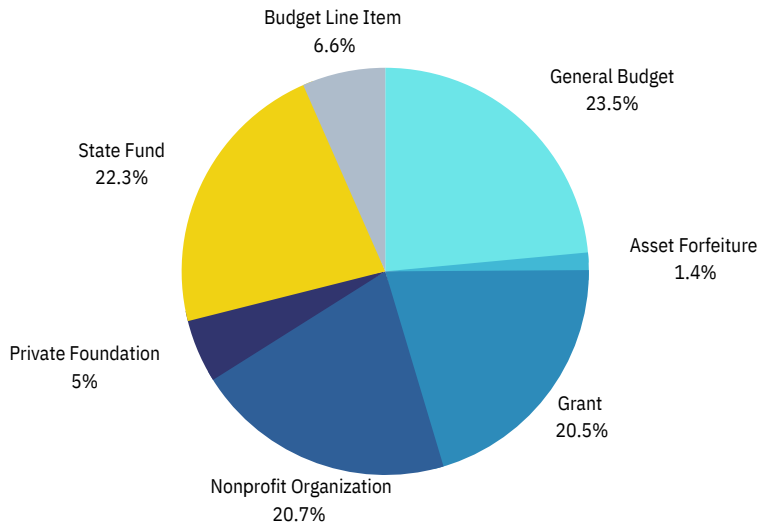
## OVERVIEW

In 2020, RTI International fielded the **Law Enforcement Overdose Response Survey**, funded by Arnold Ventures, to a **nationally representative sample of law enforcement agencies**, including municipal police departments, county sheriffs' offices, and state police. The sample was provided by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), which served as a project partner. Agencies participating in the survey differed in rurality and size, thereby providing a comprehensive view of how diverse law enforcement agencies across the country have **equipped their officers to respond to illicit drug use in their communities**. The survey included questions regarding the use of naloxone, training, overdose incidents in the community, and other programs for overdose response.

Based on the results of the survey, **80 percent of respondents equipped officers with naloxone** (n=1,927 agencies). This fact sheet provides details about how agencies obtain their naloxone, training content surrounding overdose response for officers, and respondents' beliefs on whether administering naloxone and other programs aimed at reducing opioid use in the community is a responsibility of law enforcement agencies.

## NALOXONE PROCUREMENT AND FUNDING

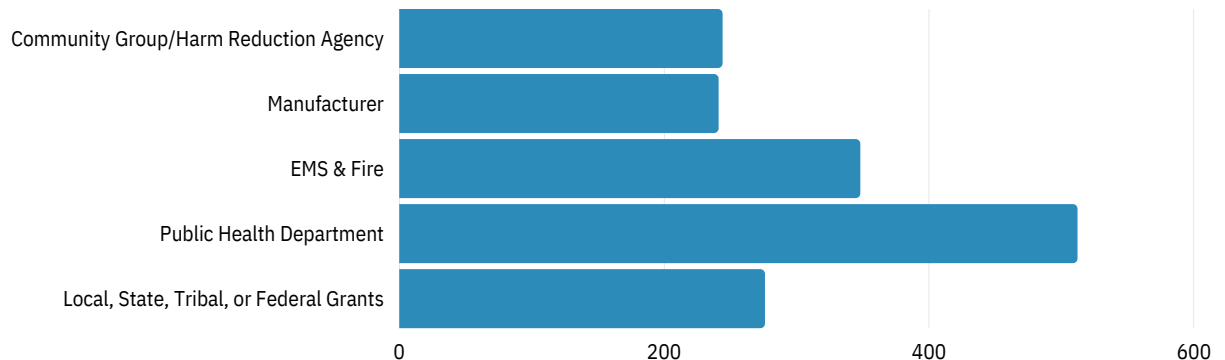
### Funding Source for Purchasing Naloxone



- Approximately 26 percent of respondents purchased naloxone, **39 percent received naloxone via donation**, and 35 percent received naloxone through other means.
- **Agencies with fewer than 10 officers relied heavily on donations** (53 percent), while agencies with 250 or more officers purchased naloxone (44 percent).
- **State funds were most frequently utilized** (22 percent) for purchasing naloxone, indicating strong support at the state level for criminal justice efforts aimed at addressing illicit drug use.
- In addition, **86 percent of agencies equipped their officers with NARCAN®** as their form of naloxone.

### Supplier of Naloxone

Nearly one-third of agencies (31 percent) received naloxone from their local public health departments, indicating **strong public health and criminal justice partnerships**.

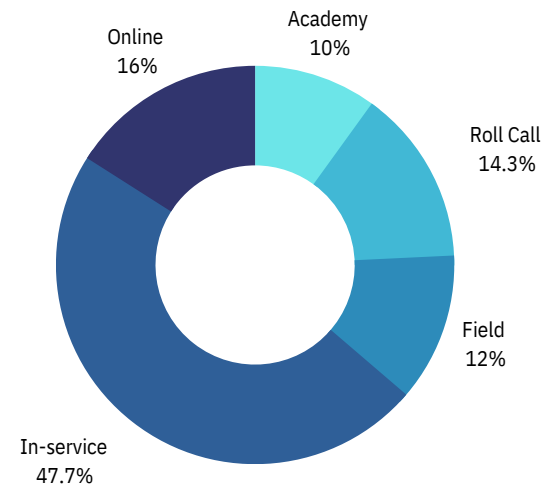


## TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT NALOXONE USE



- **Ninety-five percent** of responding agencies require all sworn officers to **complete a standard training before carrying naloxone**.
- **More than one-third** (37 percent) of respondents indicated that their agencies **require refresher trainings** for naloxone administration.
- **More than 60 percent** of respondents indicated that their sworn officers receive **other training on substance use disorders**.

## Naloxone Training Setting



## LAW ENFORCEMENT ATTITUDES TOWARD NALOXONE



- Approximately **54 percent** of respondents believe **administering naloxone** and other programs aimed at reducing opioid use in the community is a **responsibility of law enforcement**.

- Agreement was **highest** among respondents who had **less than a year of experience** as a law enforcement officer (67 percent) and respondents who had **more than 35 years of experience** (62 percent).
- Agreement was **highest** among respondents who were part of a **state trooper/highway patrol** agency (68 percent) and **lowest** among respondents who were part of a **county sheriff's office** (48 percent).

## INNOVATIVE OVERDOSE RESPONSE TRAINING

Naloxone distribution and utilization is a critical harm reduction strategy that has been adopted by the criminal justice field, especially law enforcement agencies. As harm reduction needs continue to evolve, so do naloxone distribution methods and training for law enforcement. To fill this need, occupational safety trainings have been created to provide knowledge, skills, and resources for law enforcement agencies and other first responders to respond to the opioid crisis effectively. RTI International, a training and technical assistance (TTA) provider for the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP), partners with evidence-based harm reduction training programs for law enforcement agencies to address their specific needs regarding responding to illicit drug use in their communities. **TTA can be requested using this link: <https://cossup.org/Program/TTA>.**

## RELATED COSSUP RESOURCES

- Publication: [Naloxone Distribution and Regulations](#)
- Webinar: [Innovative Efforts to Distribute Naloxone to Justice-involved Populations](#)
- Publication: [How Law Enforcement Agencies and Officers Can Work Proactively With Health-adjacent Programming](#)