



Public Safety Policy Principles *Fentanyl* Adopted March 24, 2024

Did you know? A miniscule amount of fentanyl (2mg) can kill, depending on a person's body size, tolerance and past usage. Fentanyl is approximately 100 times more potent than morphine and 50 times more potent than heroin. The national Drug Enforcement Agency has found counterfeit prescription pills ranging from 0.02 to 5.1 milligrams of fentanyl per tablet.¹ Thousands of people die each year from fentanyl overdoses.

To prevent further fentanyl overdose deaths, significant legislative changes are needed to combat the proliferation of fentanyl trafficking, i.e. the manufacture, transportation, sale and possession for sale of fentanyl. The Los Angeles County Division's Board of Directors has already adopted a 2024 Strategic Priority to "Support legislation, policies, funding and other resources that would improve public safety and address law enforcement challenges." The Division is building on this Priority with the following proposed policy principles related to fentanyl trafficking.

Fentanyl Areas of Reform

- **Penalty Enhancements** Penalty increases should be restored or increased for 1) fentanyl trafficking, i.e. manufacture, transportation, sale and possession for sale; 2) fentanyl possession while armed with a firearm; 3) subsequent fentanyl trafficking following a prior drug trafficking conviction.
- **Fentanyl Trafficking Amounts** Enhancements should be added for the trafficking of larger fentanyl quantities with a threshold quantity level that reflects the minute lethal quantity of fentanyl identified by the DEA compared to other narcotics.
- **Trafficking Targeting Minors** Increased charges or penalties for those who involve minors in fentanyl trafficking, who conduct trafficking activities in close proximity to schools or other areas designated for children, or who directly sell fentanyl to minors. similar to laws and penalties that currently exist for other drugs, such as heroin and cocaine.

¹ [Opioid crisis: Big increase in CA fentanyl overdoses - CalMatters](#)

- **Court Notification** Those who are convicted of fentanyl or other drug trafficking offense should be informed, as part of a written court record, that if a person dies because of their future distribution or sale of such drugs, they can be charged with homicide or murder.
- **Social Media and Online Sales** Stronger laws need to be enacted to prohibit the trafficking of any controlled substances or nonprescriptive drugs on social media or on other online platforms.
- **Law Enforcement Tools** More legal tools need to be provided to law enforcement to identify and investigate those engaging in illegal online drug activity so that these violators can be prosecuted to the same extent as those who engage in such activity outside of online platforms.
- **Social Media Accountability** Laws are needed to hold social media and other online companies accountable and legally responsible for failing to enforce laws prohibiting online drug trafficking, such as by promoting such activity, failing to remove illegal drug-related online posts or refusing to provide information legally required to investigate/prosecute such crimes.