

The growing number of overdoses and deaths caused by opioids (including fentanyl) has been declared a national public health crisis by the Government of Canada. The concern is so great that new legislation has been passed to provide some legal protection for individuals who seek emergency help during an overdose.

The *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act* became law on May 4, 2017. The hope is that the act will help to reduce fear of police attending overdose events and encourage people to help save a life.

**What's Covered**

The *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act* provides some legal protection for people who experience or witness an overdose and call 9-1-1 for help.

The act can protect you if you are in breach of the following conditions under section 4 (1) of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act: parole, pre-trial release, probation orders, simple possession and conditional sentences.



**Be A Good Samaritan**

Source: Government of Canada

The act applies to anyone seeking emergency support during an overdose, including the person experiencing an overdose. The act protects those who either stay or leave from the overdose scene before help arrives.

**What's Not Covered**

The act does not provide legal protection against more serious offences, such as: outstanding warrants, production and

trafficking of controlled substances and all other crimes not outlined within the act.

**On Scene Help**

Drug overdoses often happen with others around. Staying at the scene is important to save the life of the person experiencing an overdose. Witnesses should:  
 1) call for emergency help  
 2) be prepared by carrying naloxone to use if you suspect an opioid overdose

- 3) provide first aid, including rescue breathing (CPR), if necessary, until emergency help arrives
- 4) stay calm and reassure the person that help is on the way

**Spread The Word**

If you know someone who uses drugs or who could be with people who do use drugs, make them aware of the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act* so they will be comfortable calling for help if it is needed.

**For More Information**

For more information on the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act* just search it in Google and choose the link to what you would like to know. The full legislation is available, along with media articles that support the adoption of the legislation.

**ASK THE EXPERT:**

Government of Canada  
 1-800-622-6232  
 Monday-Friday  
 8:00am-5:00pm

Dial 9-1-1 in case of a suspected opioid overdose.

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