



## COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH 2024 GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPICIOUS LETTERS AND PACKAGES – NARCAN USE

The threat posed by reports of suspicious letters, packages, and unknown substances ranges from none to credible, and no set of guidelines can cover every possible variation. Every incident will have unique features and the responder must use his or her own judgment in applying these guidelines. The following gives a basic uniform and logical guideline for dealing with suspicious packages.

### **Identifying Suspicious Packages**

Suspicious packages should be risk assessed for articulated threats.

Examples would include:

- Actual threat message in or on the package.
- Addressee in position of authority, e.g., government employee, political figure, private sector executive.
- Addressee in controversial business, e.g., chemical industry, forestry. What kind of packages should be considered suspicious?

### **Possible Characteristics of suspicious packages and envelopes include:**

- Inappropriate or unusual labeling
- Excessive postage
- Handwritten or poorly typed addresses.
- Misspellings of common words
- Strange return address or no return address
- Incorrect titles or titles without a name
- Not addressed to a specific person
- Marked with restrictions, e.g. "Personal," "Confidential" or "Do not x-ray"
- Marked with any threatening language
- Postmarked from a city or state that does not match the return address
- Excessive weight
- Ticking Sound

### **Possible Appearance**

- Powdery substance felt through or appearing on the package
- Oily stains, discolorations, or odor
- Lopsided or uneven envelope
- Excessive packaging material such as masking tape, string, etc.
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil

**If a package or envelope appears suspicious, DO NOT OPEN OR TOUCH IT. IMMEDIATELY notify your direct supervisor then call 911.**

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The following steps should be taken when encountering a suspicious package:

- Isolate the suspicious package and leave the immediate area. If the package has been touched during normal handling or processing, then the handling personnel should immediately wash their hands with soap and water.
- Notify the following people:
  - District Health Director- Dr. Taylor
  - Emergency Preparedness Director - Mark Palen
  - District Nursing Director- Alan Satterfield or
  - Deputy District Nursing Director- Brooke Smith
- If a person has come into contact with a suspicious package and is unconscious, follow the Narcan (Naloxone) response protocol below, then immediately call 911 or have somebody call 911.

### **Opioid-Associated Life-Threatening Emergency Response Sequence**

#### **Signs of an overdose**

Look for the following signs of an opioid overdose:

- Slow, shallow, or no breathing
- Choking or gurgling sounds
- Drowsiness or loss of consciousness
- Small, constricted pupils
- Blue skin, lips, or nails

Do not delay lifesaving actions. After confirming scene safety, rescuers may perform the assessment at the same time as the resuscitation attempt.

#### **Narcan (Naloxone)**

The drug naloxone can temporarily reverse the effects of respiratory depression that opioids can cause. Give naloxone quickly by using the intranasal naloxone provided. The intranasal naloxone can be found in the following locations:

- Receptionist's Desk
- Drug Room

Intranasal naloxone is an easy to-to-use device that delivers naloxone into the nose. There is no risk of needle-stick injuries with this method of delivery. The body quickly absorbs intranasal naloxone because the nasal cavity has a relatively large surface of mucus membranes rich in capillaries.

#### **Response for suspected Opioid poisoning**

The first rescuer who arrives at the side of an unresponsive victim and suspects opioids should quickly follow these steps. *As with any life-threatening emergency, do not delay lifesaving actions.*

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- Step 1: If you suspect opioid poisoning:
  - Check to see if the person responds.
  - Shout for nearby help.
  - Call 911
  - If you are alone, get naloxone and an AED. If someone else is present, send them to retrieve these items.
  
- Step 2: Is the person breathing normally?
  - If the person is breathing normally, proceed with Steps 3 and 4.
  - If the person is not breathing normally, go to Step 5.
  
- Step 3: Prevent deterioration.
  - Tap and Shout. Check for responsiveness by tapping the victim’s shoulder. Shout, “Are you OK?”.
  - Open and reposition the airway if needed to maintain normal breathing. This may be necessary if the victim is unresponsive or is responsive but unable to maintain an open airway due to a depressed level of consciousness.
  - Consider administering naloxone. If you suspect an opioid overdose, it is reasonable to give naloxone according to package directions. Monitor for response.
  - Transport to the hospital via EMS.
  
- Step 4: Assess for responsiveness and breathing.
  - Continue to assess responsiveness and breathing until the victim is transferred to advanced care. Victims with opioid-associated emergencies may not be able to maintain an open airway or breathe normally. Even those who receive naloxone may develop respiratory problems that can lead to cardiac arrest.
  
- Step 5: Does the person have a pulse?
  - Assess for a pulse for no more than 10 seconds.
    - If yes (a pulse is felt), go to Step 6.
    - If no (a pulse is not felt), go to Step 7.
  
- Step 6: Support ventilation.
  - Open and reposition the airway before giving rescue breaths.
  - Provide rescue breathing or bag-mask ventilation. This can help prevent cardiac arrest. Continue until spontaneous, normal breathing occurs. Reassess the victim’s breathing and pulse every 2 minutes. If there is no pulse, provide CPR (see Step 7).
  - Give naloxone according to package directions.

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- Step 7: Start CPR
  - If the victim is not breathing normally and no pulse is felt, provide high-quality CPR, including ventilation. Use the AED as soon as it is available.
  - Consider naloxone. If you suspect an opioid overdose, it is reasonable to give naloxone according to package directions. High-quality CPR should take priority over giving naloxone.

**REMEMBER, REMAIN SAFETY CONSCIOUS AT ALL TIMES! IF YOU BECOME INCAPACITATED, YOU WILL BE UNABLE TO ASSIST ANOTHER PERSON IN NEED.**