

## RESOLUTION NO. 2024-0031

**A Resolution adopting a plan to address the fentanyl and opiate overdose crisis in the City of Spokane and declaring that exigent circumstances exist that demand coordination of resources available between the City of Spokane and the State of Washington, in partnership with community organizations.**

**WHEREAS**, the United States, the State of Washington, and the City of Spokane are facing a drug crisis, with resulting tragedies decimating families and individuals and contributing to extraordinary levels of despair in Spokane communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Department of Drug Enforcement (DEA) identifies fentanyl as a potent synthetic opioid drug approximately 100 times more potent than morphine and 50 times more potent than heroin, and these opiate derived substances, categorized as schedule II-controlled substances under RCW 69.50.206, have exacerbated the opioid epidemic; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Spokane recognizes that drug addiction is a disease, reflecting a commitment to a health-centered approach to this issue; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Spokane affirms that the circumstances created by the opioid/fentanyl crisis pose a significant risk to public health, safety, and the continuity of essential services by community organizations, supported by the City of Spokane; and

**WHEREAS**, in the City of Spokane, overdose calls have gone up 30% since last year, amounting to 249 overdose calls from January 1 to February 7, an average of 6.4 overdose calls per day, compared to 4.4 in 2023, and 3.3 in 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, seven out of ten Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) tested pills were found to contain fentanyl, and potentially deadly, making it likely that 'one pill can kill', and in 2023 the DEA seized over 360 million deadly doses of fentanyl; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2023 the Spokane Police Department, with assistance from the FBI Violent Crimes Task Force and the DEA, seized 193,307 illicit fentanyl pills as well as 81 grams of fentanyl powder (which could produce an additional 54,482 pills) making the total approximately 247,789 illicit fentanyl pills seized; and

**WHEREAS**, there exists a substantial likelihood of risk to persons and property unless further efforts are taken to reduce the threat from opiates and fentanyl; and

**WHEREAS**, the use of fentanyl and other opiates continue to spread throughout our city within the housed and unhoused communities, and new and immediate avenues to enhance capabilities, coordination, and collaboration across local, state, tribal, and federal agencies are needed to promote public health and safety; and

**WHEREAS**, in King County, and Snohomish County, Washington, officials provide an overdose dashboard, summarizing fatal drug overdoses, including trends over time, data on decedent characteristics, and geography; (see [Overdose deaths data dashboard - King County, Washington](#); [EDAP | Snohomish County, WA - Official Website \(snohomishcountywa.gov\)](#)) and this model would be instrumental in providing real-time data to Spokane County government entities throughout the region, as well as non-profit organizations and community groups working with affected people; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Spokane received a letter from Experience Matters, containing the signatures of almost 400 community members, service providers and community organizations, requesting that the City of Spokane declare an emergency due to the alarming increase in fentanyl use, and the effect that use has on the escalating public health crisis, the overwhelmed healthcare system, the toll on emergency responders, and the profound impact Fentanyl has on the entire community; and

**WHEREAS**, declarations of emergency at the federal, state, county and city levels can open up additional resources, funding, and assistance to address the fentanyl emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, on Thursday, October 26, 2017, the U.S. President officially declared the opioid crisis a “public health emergency,” adding that the “epidemic is a public health emergency”; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 26, 2017, and after consultation with public health officials as necessary, Eric D. Hargan, Acting Secretary of Health and Human Services, pursuant to the authority under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act, determined that a public health emergency (PHE) exists nationwide; and

**WHEREAS**, the governor of the state of Washington is authorized under RCW 43.06.010 and RCW 43.06.220 to proclaim a State of Emergency after finding that a public disorder, disaster, energy emergency, or riot exists within the state or any part thereof that affects life, health, property, or the public peace.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Spokane City Council respectively requests that the Governor of the State of Washington declare a state of emergency for the opioid and fentanyl crisis, and open additional resources and authorities to address

the crisis, including increased funding to peer support programs, unfettered access to Naloxone, and education around prevention, education, intervention and treatment; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Spokane City Council respectfully requests that the Washington State Legislature partner with the Governor of Washington to rapidly reassess a response to this crisis; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Spokane City Council respectfully requests that the Washington Department of Health add fentanyl overdoses to the list of notifiable conditions in order to improve the public's health through data collection, which will assist with gathering broader health-related patterns, including historical trends, geographic clustering and risk factors; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Spokane City Council respectfully requests that the Spokane County Regional Health District endeavor to provide more real-time overdose data, on a dashboard format similar to the sites used by both King and Snohomish Counties; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Spokane City Council requests the Mayor direct the Spokane Fire Department and the Spokane Police Department to report on overdose calls, as well as resulting deaths from overdose; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Spokane City Council further requests a voluntary monthly report from all shelters serving the unhoused population setting forth the number of demonstrated uses of naloxone in their facilities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, any monthly data the Spokane City Council receives will be made publicly available during the City Council Public Safety Committee Meeting; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Spokane City Council will schedule and coordinate an Opioid and Overdose Town Hall meeting to engage community members, providers, and local leaders to encourage and facilitate a meaningful conversation on ways to decrease the number of fentanyl and opioid overdoses in the City of Spokane.

Passed by the City Council this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

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City Clerk

Approved as to form:

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Assistant City Attorney