

Documentation for OPTIC-Vetted Naloxone Policy Data
Years of Data: 1990-2023; Last Updated: June 2025

This document includes final documentation for the Naloxone Access Law (NAL) policy variables (1990-2023) included in the OPTIC Vetted Policy Data Warehouse.

Specific dimensions of naloxone policy data included in this public version of the data are based on a review of relevant protections granted through different variations of these laws as described in:

- Davis, C. S., & Carr, D. (2015). Legal changes to increase access to naloxone for opioid overdose reversal in the United States. *Drug and alcohol dependence*, 157, 112-120.
- Davis, C., & Carr, D. (2017). State legal innovations to encourage naloxone dispensing. *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association*, 57(2), S180-S184.

Unless specified otherwise, information was obtained from PDAPS (last downloaded December 2024), with modifications made in consultation with Corey Davis.

Constructed Variables Contained in Analytic Files

Variable Name	Description
any_nal	Fraction of year any type of Naloxone law is effective
nal_protocol_standing	Fraction of year state has an effective Naloxone law allowing distribution through a standing or protocol order
nal_Rx_prescriptive_auth	Fraction of year state has an effective Naloxone law allowing pharmacists prescriptive authority
date_any_nal	Date (MY) any type of Naloxone law effective
date_nal_protocol_standing	Date (MY) Naloxone law allowing distribution through a standing or protocol order effective
date_nal_Rx_prescriptive_auth	Date (MY) Naloxone law allowing pharmacists prescriptive authority effective
drange_nal_Rx_prescriptive_auth	Date range (MDY-MDY) Naloxone law allowing pharmacists prescriptive authority effective*

Fractions of a year are calculated based on the number of months out of 12 that a law is effective. A law is considered effective for a given month:

- if a law becomes effective by the 7th for January
- if a law becomes effective by the 3rd for February – December

* This variable is currently specific for DC as this is the only jurisdiction with a law that is effective for only a portion of our time period.

These naloxone variables can be found in the following data files:

Data File for Excel: WEB_NAL_1990-2023.xlsx

Data File for STATA: WEB_NAL_1990-2023.dta

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Please cite the use of these data as " RAND-USC Schaeffer Opioid Policy Tools and Information Center. [YEAR]. OPTIC-Vetted Naloxone Policy Data. Obtained from <https://www.rand.org/health/centers/optic/resources/datasets.html> on [DATE]."

Notes on effective dates:

- In Iowa, the legislature adopted two different bills (one house bill and one senate bill) regarding this section, both with an effective date of May 27, 2016. However, one amended the section and made those amendments retroactive to April 6, 2016. However, given no action could be taken on the retroactive date, we assume the PDAPS effective date of 5/27/2016 – thus, it is coded as June 2016.
- In January 2008, California piloted naloxone programs in several counties (including the most populous LA and SF). However, this was not expanded statewide until January 2014. PDAPS uses the pilot date for the first law (2008), which is what we use here for "any NAL." However, one could make the argument that the 2014 date is preferable.
- District of Columbia: permitted pharmacists to prescribe for two years from March 2017 through April 10, 2019. This was probably just a drafting error that was later corrected.

UPDATES IN CURRENT RELEASE REFLECT CHANGES MADE SINCE PRIOR RELEASE DATES (Updated June 2025 from PDAPS download in December 2024)

Following a re-download of PDAPS data in December 2024, we compared the PDAPS dates with those downloaded in 2022. After additional review and consultation with the legal team, the OPTIC team made the following changes to the previous OPTIC Vetted Naloxone Policy Data in the newly updated version of the data (June 2025):

1. Any Naloxone Law

State	Old Date	Revised Date	Explanation
Georgia	None	May 2014	Stata code error corrected

2. Any Protocol or Standing Order

State	Old Date	Revised Date	Explanation
Georgia	None	May 2014	Stata code error corrected
Oregon	None	July 2013	The law says: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a pharmacy, a health care professional with prescription and dispensing privileges or any other

			person designated by the State Board of Pharmacy by rule may distribute unit-of-use packages of naloxone, and the necessary medical supplies to administer the naloxone, to a person who...,” which reflects the content of a protocol order.
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3. Pharmacist Prescriptive Authority

State	Old Date	Revised Date	Explanation
Alaska	None	September 2022	New since update
District of Columbia	March 2017	March 2017 thru April 10, 2019	Likely drafting error that was later corrected by legislature.
Florida	None	July 2022	New since update
Maine	July 2017	June 2018	A statute (32 M.R.S.A. § 13815) directing the board to “establish procedures and standards for authorizing pharmacists to prescribe and dispense naloxone hydrochloride” first went into effect on June 24, 2017. The procedures and standards did not go into effect until May 23, 2018, which means that pharmacists were not able to prescribe until June 2018.
Oregon	July 2013	May 2016	Some pharmacists were treating the 2013 law as a pharmacist prescriptive authority law however it is more accurately described as a protocol order. The state passed a law that specifically says, “In accordance with rules adopted by the State Board of Pharmacy under ORS 689.205, a pharmacist may prescribe naloxone and the necessary medical supplies to administer the naloxone.” The rules were effective May 1, 2016.
South Carolina	June 2015	None	Stata code error corrected