



## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Communities Experience Increase in DUI and Drug-Related Crimes**

In 2017, Louisville experienced a decrease in violent crimes and property crimes. This can be partly attributed to the Louisville Police Department implementing proactive strategies to counteract thefts and vehicle trespasses occurring within the City. The only increase from 2016 to 2017 was in the category of DUI and drug-related crimes. Neighboring communities have experienced a similar increase in the past couple of years. 2018 data will be available until later this summer, but the City expects to see a similar trend across all communities.

In the past several years, law enforcement all over the country has seen rapid increases in the use of narcotics, specifically opioids. According to the Center for Disease Control, from 1999 to 2016 over 350,000 people have died from an overdose involving opioids. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) ranked methamphetamine among the fastest-growing drugs in fatalities in Colorado from 2016 to 2017. Heroin still ranks as the top cause of fatal overdose. According to CDPHE, heroin-related deaths among Colorado residents have doubled in the last four years alone.

Louisville has not been immune to this epidemic. From 2012 to 2016 Louisville had the highest age-adjusted opioid overdose death rate in all Boulder County. Along with an increase in narcotic use and deaths, the Louisville Police Department has also seen an increase in the types of drugs encountered and the toxicity of those substances. Officers routinely seize methamphetamine and heroin, but more recently have also encountered Fentanyl. Fentanyl can be absorbed through the skin or by accidental inhalation of airborne powder, and as little as 2 milligrams of Fentanyl can cause death. These incidents are not concentrated in one area of the City either. They can be found community-wide.

The safety of the community is extremely important to the Louisville Police Department, which is why our officers now carry two doses of Narcan (an opioid antagonist used for the complete or partial reversal of opioid overdose). Since the inception of the Narcan deployment, Louisville officers have saved two lives using Narcan, and in Boulder County, there have been 193 reported saves by citizens and officers since 2014.

The Louisville Police Department continues to strive to prevent drug use in the community. The City offers a safe disposal site for unused or expired household medications. The secure drop box is located in the lobby of the Police Department (992 Via Appia Way) and is available Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm (except holidays). The drop box was provided through the Colorado Household Take-Back Program, administered by the CDPHE. Both prescription and over-the-counter medications can be disposed of in the drop box. Sharps, marijuana products and chemotherapy medications may not be disposed of in the drop box.

The Louisville Police Department also recently hired Crime Prevention Technician Jen Kenney to conduct and maintain a variety of community crime prevention programs (i.e. preventing drug misuse and addiction) and community relations programs for the benefit of the Louisville community. If you are interested in learning more about the City's programs, you can contact us at 303.335.4638. Mental Health Partners also offers resources related to overdose prevention and response in Boulder County. For more information about their services, you can reach them at 303.443.8500.

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