



MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

REIA #26-15 Opioid Abatement Fund

Requesting Agency/Department(s)	Dollar Amount
Department of Health and Human Services	\$1,665,478
Funding Source	
Opioid Abatement Funds	

Finding

The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that *Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #26-15 Opioid Abatement Funds* does not appear to substantively alter programming that differs from the Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) of *Supplemental Appropriation #24-22 Opioid Abatement Funds*¹. Therefore, ORESJ's finding remains unchanged:

“The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #24-22 Opioid Abatement Funds is likely to advance racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County, assuming effective utilization of disaggregated data, continuation of multi-tiered, targeted approaches, and the prioritization of harm reduction and diversion. Given the information that accompanied this request, requirements of the State law identified racial disparities associated with opioid overdose rates and existing coordinated response efforts; it is possible that funding involved with Supplemental Appropriation #24-22 will help to shrink racial disparities in opioid overdoses, particularly those affecting youth.”

Background

Purpose

As the Opioid Abatement Fund is a new, restricted revenue source that must be spent in compliance with settlement agreement terms and State requirements, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) planned some expenditures for new initiatives that were not encumbered before the end of the FY25 year. As a result, as of September 8, 2025, \$1,665,478 remains from fiscal year 2025. The settlement and State allow the funds to be used for the following purposes:

- programs, services, supports, and resources for evidence-based substance use disorder prevention, treatment, recovery, or harm reduction;
- evidence-informed substance use disorder prevention, treatment, recovery, or harm reduction pilot programs or demonstration studies that are not evidence-based if the Opioid Restitution Fund Advisory Council² approves them; and
- evaluations of the effectiveness and outcomes reporting for substance use disorder abatement infrastructure, programs, services, supports, and resources for which money from the Fund was used, including evaluations of the impact on access to harm reduction services or treatment for substance use disorders and the reduction in drug-related mortality.
- A small percentage of the funds can be utilized for past opioid remediation.

While FY26 Budget Resolution #20-820³ allowed the unencumbered balance of Special Appropriation #24-22 to be reappropriated in FY26, a similar provision to reappropriate unspent FY25 funds was inadvertently omitted. The request for funding for this specific supplemental appropriation provides resources equivalent to the amount unspent in FY25, ensuring that planned initiatives to provide opioid abatement measures can continue as DHHS ramps up implementation.

Additional Background Information

As ORESJ finds that SA #26-15 is likely to advance racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County, it is essential to note the process by which we arrived at this conclusion. While the finding largely aligns with SA #24-22, additional information accompanying this supplemental request detailed planned use of this funding to support culturally responsive substance use disorder (SUD) programming that directly engages youth and young adults, those with low incomes, and those who most often identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC). Specifically, while the SUD program is open to all youth and young adults, its primary focus is on

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providing outreach to those who identify as BIPOC, aiming to facilitate connections to treatment, recovery, and other supportive services and reduce barriers to accessing care. The program is designed to address traditional systemic barriers and historical factors that contribute to inequities in substance use outcomes. Multilingual and multicultural staff help mitigate language and cultural barriers when assisting young people in accessing care, while also providing their families with resources to support them throughout recovery.

Additionally, funding from SA #26-15 provides resources for medically monitored, high-intensity residential detox and treatment services for youth and young adults who are uninsured, which research has historically found disproportionately impacts those who identify as BIPOC.

Relevant REIAs and Other Assessments

ORESJ has conducted REIAs since 2021. The below REIAs are relevant to supplemental appropriation #26-15, specifically REIA #24-22, which is the original appropriation for the opioid abatement funds.

- REIA #25-33 State Opioid Response IV Grant
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/25-33.pdf>
- REIA #24-22 Opioid Abatement Fund
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/24-22.pdf>
- REIA #22-43 Crisis 2 Connection
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-43.pdf>
- REIA #22-36 SAMHSA Community Block Grant
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-36.pdf>

Caveats

This REIA has been conducted with the best available information at the time of writing, including department responses to the Racial Equity and Social Justice template and research conducted by ORESJ Policy Team Analysts. While the assessment examines specific racial equity and social justice impacts of the funding request, it cannot fully address all systemic inequities that affect the communities in question, nor do we seek to examine impacts outside the scope of the funding request. We recommend using this assessment as a starting point for discussions about the program's impact on advancing racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County.

References

¹ <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/24-22.pdf>

² <https://stopoverdose.maryland.gov/orf/>

³ <https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/ResolutionDetailsPage?RecordId=12511&searchAllDatesFrom=2025-05-18&searchAllDatesTo=2025-06-07>