

# CBP STRATEGY TO COMBAT FENTANYL AND OTHER SYNTHETIC DRUGS

## *Frontline Against Fentanyl*

The United States is plagued with an unprecedented number of overdose deaths, reaching every corner of this country. At the heart of this epidemic is illicit fentanyl, which has accelerated the abuse of synthetic drugs, to include opioids such as fentanyl, its analogues, and heroin, as well as xylazine, methamphetamine, and other chemically synthesized designer drugs.

The prevalence of an increased supply, and demand, of synthetic drugs has dramatically impacted our communities. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than one million Americans have died from a drug overdose since 1999. In 2021, synthetic opioids -- other than methadone -- were the main driver of drug overdose deaths. Nearly 88% of opioid-involved overdose deaths include synthetic opioids.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) seizes thousands of pounds of fentanyl every year, with each year outpacing the prior year. In fiscal year 2023, CBP seized 27,023 pounds of fentanyl, nearly doubling fiscal year 2022's 14,700 pounds of fentanyl.

CBP is the largest U.S. law enforcement agency and is uniquely positioned to detect, identify, and seize illicit drugs from entering the country, thereby preventing these deadly substances from taking the lives of our friends, family, colleagues, and community members.

*The CBP Strategy to Combat Fentanyl and Other Synthetic Drugs* will achieve a whole-of-CBP approach against fentanyl and position CBP to lead a whole-of-government effort against illicit synthetic drugs. It builds on the foundation and accomplishments of the *2018 CBP Strategy to Combat Opioids*.

This strategy refresh focuses on an ever-changing threat landscape and the proliferation of synthetic drugs. It considers not just finished fentanyl and its analogues, but also precursor chemicals, pill presses and parts, and other items necessary for the production of synthetic drugs.

This 2023 strategy will align resources, enhance partnerships, and build on the successful enforcement operations CBP executed in 2023, leveraging CBP's vast expertise and data holdings to disrupt the transnational criminal organizations responsible for the illicit production, distribution, and trafficking of illicit fentanyl and other synthetic drugs in the United States.

This strategy represents one mechanism to protect Americans from overdose deaths, by targeting the supply chain and preventing illicit synthetic drugs from entering the country.

### STRATEGY GOALS

*Goal 1: Promote collaboration and information-sharing to combat illicit synthetic drug networks.*

*Goal 2: Produce actionable intelligence for targeting illicit synthetic drug networks.*

*Goal 3: Conduct coordinated and unified intelligence and data-driven operations to target the production, trafficking, and distribution of illicit synthetic materials.*

*Goal 4: Promote safe handling, protocols, and educational materials to protect the CBP workforce, families, and communities.*

