



Use of OARRS Reports by Fatality Review Committees

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For the purposes of this guidance, a fatality review committee includes the following:

- Drug overdose fatality review committee (ORC [307.631](#));
- Suicide fatality review committee (ORC [307.641](#)); or
- Hybrid drug overdose fatality and suicide fatality review committee (ORC [307.6410](#)).

NOTE: *Except as outlined in Q6 of this document, OARRS **cannot** be accessed by members of any other fatality review committees (e.g., child, domestic violence, etc.).*

For questions regarding access to OARRS reports by members of a fatality review committee, please review the following frequently asked questions. If you need additional information, the most expedient way to have your questions answered will be to e-mail the Board office by visiting: <http://www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/contact.aspx>.

For additional guidance on operating a fatality review committee, visit:

<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/violence-injury-prevention-program/fatality-reviews>

Q1) Who can access an OARRS report for the committee's review?

Ohio law ([ORC 4729.80](#)) permits any of the following who have been invited to serve on a fatality review committee to access a patient's OARRS report:

- A prescriber or prescriber's delegate;
- A pharmacist or pharmacist's delegate; or
- A coroner, deputy coroner, or coroner's delegate.

The law also requires a written agreement in place under which the information is to be used and disseminated according to the laws of this state. Please be advised that this agreement has been incorporated into the OARRS User Agreements for the users listed above. Therefore,

no separate agreement is necessary as long as the OARRS user complies with the requirements of the Ohio Revised Code.

Q2) Who is allowed to view an OARRS report?

While the individuals listed in Q1 are permitted to access a report, the report may be reviewed and discussed by any person, including staff such as an epidemiologist or OFR coordinator, invited to participate in the fatality review committee. Those who are not officially invited to be part of the fatality review committee are **not** permitted to review a decedent's OARRS report.

REMINDER: Any information, document, or report presented to a fatality review committee, all statements made by review committee members during meetings of the review committee, all work products of the review committee, and data submitted by the review committee to the Department of Health, other than the annual report submitted to the Department of Health (see ORC [307.646](#) and ORC [307.636](#)), are confidential and shall be used by the review committee, its members, and the Department of Health only in the exercise of the proper functions of the review committee and the Department.

Q3) How long should a fatality review committee keep a copy of a decedent's OARRS report?

Each fatality review committee is responsible for maintaining records in accordance with a retention schedule set by the committee. The Board strongly encourages the deletion or shredding of a decedent's OARRS report following the review and abstract of the report.

It is important to ensure that a decedent's report is not viewed or accessed by individuals who have not been formally invited to join the fatality review committee. Fatality committees should also be careful when electronically transmitting a decedent's OARRS report. Failure to properly encrypt or safeguard this information is a violation of Ohio law.

As a reminder, unlawful dissemination of an OARRS report is a misdemeanor of the third degree (see [ORC 4729.99 \(J\)\(1\)](#)).

Q4) I am a prescriber, coroner, or pharmacist serving on a drug overdose or suicide fatality review committee. Do I need to obtain a separate OARRS account?

No. Those authorized individuals should not sign up for a new account. Rather, they should use their existing account to obtain a decedent's OARRS report. If you do not have an account, you can sign up for an account by visiting:

<https://www.ohiopmp.gov/Registration/Default.aspx>.

Q5) Can I use prescriber, coroner, or pharmacist delegates to run an OARRS report?

The law restricts the use of OARRS to those who are formally invited to participate on the committee. If a delegate of a committee member is also serving on the committee, that delegate would be able to request a decedent's OARRS report as part of the standard delegate process.

Q6) Can prescribers, pharmacists, or coroners utilize OARRS as part of a child or domestic violence fatality review committee?

Prescribers and pharmacists serving on a fatality review committee are **NOT** permitted to access OARRS outside of a suicide, drug overdose, or hybrid (drug overdose/suicide) fatality review committee.

However, if a coroner is conducting an autopsy or investigation on a decedent who happens to be the subject of a fatality review committee, that coroner may, as authorized under ORC [4729.80](#), access OARRS for the purposes of conducting an autopsy or investigation:

(A)(17) On receipt of a request from a coroner, deputy coroner, or coroner's delegate approved by the board, the board shall provide to the requestor information from the database relating to a deceased person about whom the coroner is conducting or has conducted an autopsy or investigation.

The coroner is permitted to share information from an autopsy or investigation that is obtained from the decedent's OARRS report with a child fatality or domestic fatality review committee as part of the coroner's role on the committee.