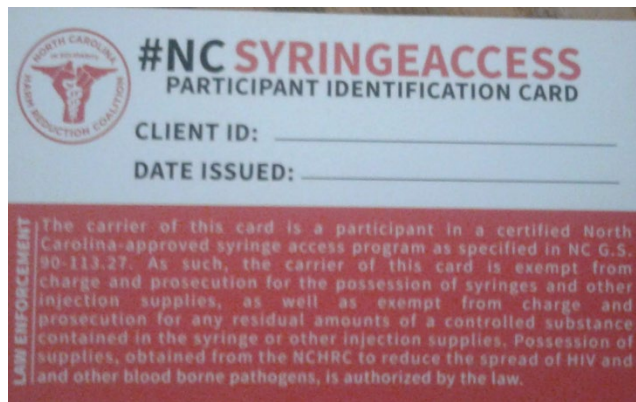


Quick Reference for NC Harm Reduction Laws

Syringe Services Program Law (GS § 90-113.27) Allows syringe services programs (SSPs) registered with the NC Division of Public Health to distribute syringes and other injection supplies to participants. SSPs are required to distribute supplies at no cost and to provide participants with education on treatment options. SSP employees, volunteers, and participants **cannot be charged with possession of needles, syringes, or other injection supplies (or with residual amounts of controlled substances contained within these items), if they have been obtained from an SSP.**

A person claiming immunity must provide “written verification” that their needles, syringes, or injection supplies were obtained from an SSP. SSPs will supply a card or other documentation to participants. SSP identification cards do not contain a person’s name, because SSP participation is necessarily anonymous. (See sample identification card below.)



A list of SSPs registered with the NC Division of Public Health can be accessed here: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/north-carolina-safer-syringe-initiative/syringe-services-program-north-carolina>

Good Samaritan Law (GS § 90-96.2; GS § 18B-302.2)

Provides immunity for people who call for assistance for a person experiencing an overdose and for the person experiencing the overdose. Protected people **cannot be prosecuted** for possession of paraphernalia, misdemeanor possession of drugs, felony possession of less than a gram of heroin or cocaine, or underage possession/consumption of alcohol. A person shall also not be subject to arrest or revocation of pretrial release, probation, parole, or post-release if the arrest or revocation is based on an offense for which there is immunity under this law. Persons calling for help must be calling in good faith (e.g., must reasonably believe they were the first ones to call for help) and give their name to 911 or law enforcement. They cannot receive protection if calling for help during execution of an arrest or search warrant.

“Tell an Officer” Law (GS § 90-113.22(c))

If a person alerts an officer that s/he has a needle or other sharp object on her or his person, premises, or vehicle prior to a search, s/he **cannot be charged with or prosecuted for possession of drug paraphernalia for that object** or for residual amounts of controlled substances contained in that object. This exemption does not apply to other types of paraphernalia found during the search.

Drug Testing Equipment Law (GS § 90-113.22(d))

De-criminalizes possession of drug testing equipment (for example, fentanyl test strips) by a person who plans to use the equipment to test the strength or purity of drugs the person will consume. Allows organizations to possess and distribute testing equipment to people who use drugs. Does not protect people who are using drug testing equipment in order to sell drugs rather than use drugs.

Naloxone Law (GS § 90-12.7)

Allows organizations to distribute and pharmacists to dispense naloxone (an opioid overdose antidote) to people who are at risk of an overdose or in a position to help someone at risk of an overdose without an individual prescription.

NOTE: Naloxone is not a controlled substance. Naloxone is not drug paraphernalia.