



# Opioids and the Courts News: September 7, 2018

## National

### ["Fentanyl: The Real Deal"](#)

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

The Fentanyl Safety Recommendations for First Responders, and this companion training video [Fentanyl: The Real Deal](#), provides unified, scientific, evidence-based recommendations to first responders so they can protect themselves when the presence of Fentanyl is suspected during the course of their daily activities such as responding to overdose calls and conducting traffic stops, arrests, and searches.

## National

### [Fentanyl Safety Recommendations for First Responders](#)

Federal Interagency Working Group

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Fentanyl can be present in a variety of forms (e.g., powder, tablets, capsules, solutions, and rocks).
- Inhalation of airborne powder is MOST LIKELY to lead to harmful effects, but is less likely to occur than skin contact.
- Incidental skin contact may occur during daily activities but is not expected to lead to harmful effects if the contaminated skin is promptly washed off with water.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is effective in protecting you from exposure.
- Slow breathing or no breathing, drowsiness or unresponsiveness, and constricted or pinpoint pupils are the
- specific signs consistent with fentanyl intoxication.
- Naloxone is an effective medication that rapidly reverses the effects of fentanyl

## National

### [Fentanyl Safety Recommendations for First Responders](#)

Office of National Drug Control Policy

The increased prevalence of [fentanyl](#) and other synthetic opioids in the illicit drug market means that first responders need to understand how to protect themselves from exposure in the field. Law enforcement, fire, rescue, and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel must balance safety with mobility and efficiency when responding to scenes where the presence of fentanyl is suspected.

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### New Jersey

#### [Pioneering program helping addicted inmates in Atlantic County jail](#)

Press of Atlantic City

Prisons are an important front line in the war on the opioid crisis. Nationwide, half of state prisoners and two-thirds of jail inmates meet the clinical criteria for drug dependence or abuse. In New Jersey, 80 percent of inmates with a substance use disorder were under the influence when they committed their crime.

Recently released inmates are about a hundred times more likely to die from an opioid overdose than the general public. The administration of Gov. Phil Murphy sees preventing those deaths as a key to reversing the state's increasing overdose fatalities.

This month, Health Commissioner Dr. Shereef Elnahal visited the John Brooks Recovery Center in Pleasantville to draw attention to a program with the Atlantic County jail that is making a difference.

It is the first in the state to bring medication-assisted treatment such as methadone to addicted county inmates, and officials hope to expand the program to other counties. In it, a converted bus with exam and intake rooms provides inmates with daily doses of methadone — which reduces the symptoms of drug withdrawal and blocks the euphoria of opioids. Eligible patients include those already on methadone, addicts at high risk of returning to crime and pregnant women who are addicted.

### Ohio

#### [Two Different Views On Drug Treatment Issue On Ohio's Fall Ballot](#)

WCBE

Republican Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor is concerned about a constitutional amendment on the fall ballot.

Issue One requires low-level drug offenders to be charged with misdemeanors instead of felonies. Supporters say money could then go to treatment instead of overcrowded prisons. Ohio Public Radio's Karen Kasler reports.

O'Connor says she's worried Issue 1 would take away drug court as an incentive judges can offer drug offenders, the only way she says the courts can ensure they get treatment. And it would allow for reduced sentences for inmates not convicted of murder, rape or child molestation — terms O'Connor says aren't clearly defined.

“I think what's been created here is some, via imprecise language and some unintended consequences, grave concern for the implementation of this, should it pass, and a tremendous burden on the courts.”



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## Oklahoma

[New documentary looks at opioid crisis in Oklahoma](#)

NewsOK.com

In a new documentary, U.S. Sen. James Lankford warns that the opioid addiction problem in Oklahoma is not being overblown and is actually worse in some parts of the state than most anywhere else in the nation.

"I think Oklahoma is in a crisis they don't realize they're in," Lankford said in "Killing Pain," a seven-part series that became available online last week.

"They seem to think that the opioid addiction is still something that's out in other places. It's not. It's here," said Lankford, R-Oklahoma City. "That's a serious issue for us and we should treat it as a serious issue."

Among the other voices in the documentary are experts, state officials, a drug court judge, and individuals who have been personally affected by the epidemic.

## South Dakota

[Argus Leader Editorial: New strategy needed to deal with drug crisis](#)

Argus Leader

David Gilbertson, chief justice of the South Dakota Supreme Court, advocated for an inpatient program for drug courts when addressing the state legislature in his State of the Judiciary speech in January. He sees a need to expand beyond those who meet the work and housing criteria.

"We cannot expect those with these addictions to work full time and move successfully through the drug court program if they are living under a bridge or in a cardboard box," Gilbertson said. "The reality is that they go to the penitentiary because we cannot take them into our programs."

## Tennessee

[Karen Pershing: Going 'upstream' to combat the opioid crisis](#)

KnoxNews.com

In 2010, Karen Pershing was [reading some national data](#) on overdose deaths, opioid prescriptions and opioid sales.

"Usually you see this very gradual bell curve, and then you start seeing a problem getting better once it levels off," said Pershing, executive director of [Metro Drug Coalition](#). "And all the data I saw around the opioid epidemic was this steep, upward curve."