



ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

ARTICLES

RESEARCH & REPORTS

RESOURCE

PODCAST

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS (OJP) ANNOUNCES THE INAUGURAL CLASS OF REACHING RURAL FELLOWS

The Office of Justice Programs' Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) announced the 67 fellows selected to participate in the inaugural class of the [Reaching Rural: Advancing Collaborative Solutions initiative](#). Co-sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the State Justice Institute, the initiative will support the fellows' work to address the overdose crisis that has disproportionately affected rural communities across America.

Throughout the year-long initiative, the fellows will meet to examine their local and regional challenges and identify opportunities to serve justice-involved individuals with substance use or co-occurring disorders more effectively. The fellows were selected through a competitive application process and will participate in the Reaching Rural Initiative through one of two tracks, either as part of a cross-sector team from their community or as individuals. The Initiative is part of an ongoing interagency partnership to strengthen public safety and public health collaboration under BJA's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program.

The selected fellows reflect a diverse network of professionals representing 80 rural communities in 14 states.



RURAL JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE

Rural communities face unique challenges that impact their ability to deliver fair and equitable justice. Despite these challenges, rural communities rely on their many strengths to address the needs of their residents.

The National Center for State Courts, in partnership with Rulo Strategies, launched the [Rural Justice Collaborative \(RJC\)](#) to showcase the strengths of rural communities and highlight the cross-sector collaboration that is a hallmark of rural justice systems.

The work under the RJC is supported by a cross-sector advisory council composed of rural judges along with additional stakeholders in the justice, child welfare, and behavioral health systems. The advisory council guides and identifies innovative programs and practices.

GREATER COLORADO FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Greater Colorado Fellowship will provide a lawyer or recent graduate with an [opportunity](#) to develop a successful law office in an area that the Office of the Alternate Defense Counsel (OADC) considers to be an underserved area of legal representation. Focus will be on the areas surrounding five cities - Alamosa, Sterling, Canon City, Grand Junction, and La Junta – but are open to other possibilities if a candidate has ties to a different Greater Colorado community.

PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

LEARNING COMMUNITY FOR RURAL JURISDICTIONS

The [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) leadership, in collaboration with the [Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program](#) (COSSAP) team at the Institute for Intergovernmental Research, invite you to this no-cost Learning Community for Rural Jurisdictions occurring the **second Tuesday of each month beginning February 14 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET.**

This eight-part series will feature each COSSAP TTA provider and rural community partners/COSSAP grantees to demonstrate how COSSAP TTA providers can support rural jurisdictions and the innovative work made possible by rural partnerships.

The Learning Community for Rural Jurisdictions is **free and open to any rural community partners** that are interested in addressing substance use. Please register at [Learning Community for Rural Jurisdictions Registration](#) to receive calendar invites.

THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION SEEKS APPLICANTS ENHANCING SUPPORT SERVICES IN APPALACHIA'S RECOVERY ECOSYSTEM

The Appalachian Regional Commission issued a [Request for Proposals](#) for its [Investments Supporting Partnerships In Recovery Ecosystems \(INSPIRE\)](#) Initiative. The grant program addresses the disproportionate impact of the



substance use disorder crisis on Appalachian communities and workforces with investments of up to \$13 million in projects that create or expand services in the recovery ecosystem and help facilitate workforce entry and reentry.

Learn more about the [INSPIRE Initiative](#) and [how to apply](#).

RECOVERY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES EMPOWERING ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES IMPACTED BY SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

The [Recovery Friendly Workplaces-Missouri](#) initiative led by [MU Extension](#) was launched to empower workplaces to support people affected by substance use disorders and those in recovery. Douglas Swanson, who coordinates the program, explains, “We’re seeing construction projects that are screaming for more help, and the journeymen tradesmen are telling us anecdotally they can’t get back into the workforce because they’re on MAT, medication-assisted treatment. There’s a stigma and an education that hasn’t yet gotten there for their industry.” Recovery Friendly Workplaces-Missouri [provides education](#) to increase understanding about substance misuse and behavioral health through evidence-based training and offers valuable resources, including a [Recovery Friendly Workplace Toolkit](#), to assist businesses and organizations.

ARTICLES

AS OVERDOSES SOAR IN RURAL AMERICA, MORE CLINICIANS ARE PRESCRIBING ADDICTION MEDICATIONS

Federal agencies are [spending millions](#) to expand access to medication to treat addictions, including in rural areas. In 2016, just 40% of rural counties nationwide had at least one healthcare provider certified to prescribe buprenorphine, according to a [University of Washington study](#). That figure climbed to 63% by 2020, the study found. The study credited the rise to changes in federal rules that allow nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other midlevel health care providers to prescribe buprenorphine.

IN RURAL AMERICA, DEADLY COSTS OF OPIOIDS OUTWEIGH THE DOLLARS TAGGED TO ADDRESS THEM

The opioid epidemic began in rural communities across America. Since then, state and local governments have filed thousands of lawsuits against drug companies and wholesalers accused of fueling the crisis, resulting in many settlement deals. The money from national settlements with opioid manufacturers and distributors is divided among states and localities using formulas partially based on population. Some smaller counties hit the hardest are left with smaller awards.

RESEARCH & REPORTS

RURAL AREAS COME OUT ON TOP FOR QUALITY OF INPATIENT PSYCHIATRIC CARE

Recent research from the [Rural and Minority Health Research Center](#) has revealed that the quality of inpatient psychiatric care is better in most rural settings. Published in [Psychiatric Services](#), the study examined data from 1,644 healthcare facilities between 2015 and 2019 to assess the quality of inpatient psychiatric services available to rural residents. They found that rural hospitals were more likely to focus primarily on general medicine and surgery, whereas urban areas were more likely to have dedicated, specialized psychiatric hospitals. Despite this and other disadvantages, rural inpatient psychiatric care outperformed urban services on all quality-of-care measures except follow-up care performance trends.

RURAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM: TRANSFORMING CRIMINAL JUSTICE: AN EVIDENCE-BASED AGENDA FOR REFORM

While the national conversation on criminal justice research and reform focuses almost exclusively on urban legal systems, the success of criminal justice reform in the United States depends, in large part, on rural criminal justice systems. This research paper offers an overview of how rural demographic and economic trends shape rural criminal systems and how rural criminal justice systems are defined and described by their operational characteristics: geographic isolation, small scale, and professional scarcity, and challenges unique to rural jurisdictions. Finally, the authors conclude with three ideas for advancing criminal justice reform in rural settings.

POLL: RURAL OPIOID ATTITUDES PROGRESS. RURAL POLL FINDS IMPROVED ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES ON OPIOIDS FRONT

Although the number of hospitals and healthcare facilities continues to decline in rural America, more rural residents can access mental health services and are more open to talking about opioid addiction, according to a recent poll funded by the [American Farm Bureau Federation](#). The national poll includes 2,010 rural residents and compares data collected in 2017 and 2022.

RESOURCE

A Substance Use Cost Calculator for Employers

The National Safety Council has collaborated with an independent research institution, NORC at the University of Chicago, to update "The Real Cost of Substance Use to Employers" tool, originally developed in 2017 with national nonprofit Shatterproof. This cost calculator is an authoritative, easy-to-use tool providing business leaders with specific information about the cost of substance use (including prescription drug use and misuse, alcohol use and misuse, opioid and heroin addiction, as well as use of other illicit drugs and cannabis) in their workplace based on size of employee base, industry and state. [Learn More](#)

Calculate Your Workplace Costs

Where are your facilities/offices located?

How many employees in your organization?

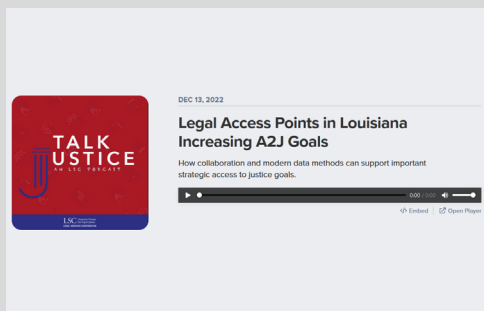
What is your industry?

We will email you the results of this calculator.

SUBSTANCE USE EMPLOYER CALCULATOR

The National Safety Council collaborated with NORC at the University of Chicago to update "The Real Cost of Substance Use to Employers" tool, originally developed in 2017. This cost calculator is an authoritative, easy-to-use tool providing business leaders with specific information about the cost of substance use in their workplace based on the size of the employee base, industry, and state.

PODCAST



TALK JUSTICE, AN LSC PODCAST: CREATING LEGAL ACCESS POINTS IN RURAL LOUISIANA

Founder and Executive Director of [Lagniappe Law Lab](#), Amanda Brown, talks about her research on the justice gap in Louisiana and creating legal access points on the latest episode of LSC's "Talk Justice" podcast. To understand the gaps in Louisiana's justice system, Brown's team began by launching a geographic information systems research project to map people's access to courts and resources like transportation and the internet. Talk Justice Co-host Cat Moon, who serves as director of innovation at Vanderbilt University's Law School, interviews Brown about the project's origins and outcomes.