



Opioids and the Courts News: June 29-July 6, 2018

National

[National Judicial Opioid Task Force Meets to Address the Opioid Crisis](#)

SJI News

Earlier this month, the [National Judicial Opioid Task Force \(NJOTF\)](#) convened in Indianapolis, Indiana. Presenters from national organizations with knowledge and expertise on the opioid crisis shared information and resources, and discussed collaboration with state courts and the NJOTF.

Content from each presentation is now available [online](#) and linked below:

- [Pregnant and Parenting Women with Opioid Use Disorders: Implications for Child Welfare and Juvenile Dependency](#) by Nancy Young, Executive Director, Children and Family Futures.
- [Collaboration Opportunities: Addiction Medicine, Justice and the Opioid Crisis](#) by Penny S. Mills, Executive Vice President/CEO, American Society of Addiction Medicine.
- [Substance Use Disorders: A Public Health and Public Safety Priority](#) by Kathryn Cates-Wessel, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director, American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry.
- [Opioid Addictions Outbreak: A Response to a Public Health Crisis in Erie County, New York](#) by Matt Chase, Executive Director, National Association of Counties and Mark Poloncarz, County Executive, Erie County, New York.
- [Combating the Opioid Epidemic](#) by Carrie Hill, Director, National Center for Jail Operations, National Sheriffs' Association.
- [How Governors and States Are Approaching the Opioid Epidemic](#) by Chelsea Kelleher, Senior Policy Analyst, Best Practices Health Division, National Governors Association.
- [Overview of State Opioid Policy and Legislation](#) by Alison Lawrence, Program Director and Amber Widgery, Senior Policy Specialist, Criminal Justice Program, National Conference of State Legislatures.
- [Advancing Justice: The Opioid Crisis](#) by Carson Fox, Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Drug Court Professionals.
- [NAAG Efforts Against the Opioid Epidemic](#) by Chris Toth, Executive Director, National Association of Attorneys General.

This content builds on and expands previous NJOTF efforts. Sharing this information is consistent with [principles](#) developed in January 2018. SJI provided key support in launching the Task Force and remains a partner in these efforts.



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National

[Bystanders to Fatal Overdoses Increasingly Becoming Criminal Defendants](#)

NPR

The definition of drug dealer

More and more, trouble is following fellow drug users, friends and relatives of those dying from overdoses. With the country's opioid crisis widening – having killed more people in 2016, for instance, than the deadliest year of the AIDS epidemic – bystanders to fatal overdoses are increasingly becoming criminal defendants.

Pennsylvania prosecutors in Delaware County who are pursuing the case against [Alexandria] Santa Barbara declined an interview request. But among the criminal charges they are pressing against her is drug delivery resulting in death, a first-degree felony carrying the maximum punishment of 20 to 40 years in prison.

In Pennsylvania, the number of people charged with this version of third-degree murder from an accidental overdose went from 15 in 2013 to 205 last year.

In roughly the same period, news reports of such cases tripled nationwide, according to the Oakland-based nonprofit Drug Policy Alliance. Twenty states have drug-induced homicide laws on the books that criminalize helping someone obtain drugs. And in recent months, the alliance found that 13 additional states have created or beefed up drug-induced homicide laws.

Iowa

[Johnson County drug treatment court program ending July 1](#)

KCRG

A program to treat drug offenders is out of time and out of money. The Johnson County Drug Court has provided an alternative to incarceration but now it's ending July 1...

The drug court has a different sort of support system: job training, mental health treatment and education. When he [Justin Brown] graduates from drug court in July, he'll be part of the last class. The program is ending as a result of lack of funding in the department.

"We've had some budget crunches over the years," said Treatment Services Manager Rob Metzger.



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Rob Metzger runs the Linn and Johnson County drug courts. With the Johnson County one closing, clients could go to the program in Linn County, but that distance could be a challenge.

Ohio

[Group Scrambles to Submit Petition Signatures to Put Issue On November Ballot](#)

Statehouse News

A group that wants the state to spend more money on treatment for drug addiction instead of prison hopes to present more than 700,000 signatures from registered voters to the Secretary of State's office to put the issue on the statewide ballot this fall – more than double the number they'd need to be valid to make that happen. What's being called "The Neighborhood Safety, Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation" amendment is backed by the Ohio Safe and Healthy Communities campaign – a coalition of community, law enforcement, faith and business leaders from around the state. In a written statement, the group says the large number of signatures gathered are [a] "testament to the number of Ohioans who want our state to invest in proven treatment for addiction instead of more spending on bloated prisons."

Ohio

[The Neighborhood Safety, Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Amendment \(proposed\)](#)

Ohio Secretary of State

Require each trial court with jurisdiction to revoke an adult's or juvenile's probation for a non-criminal violation to prepare guidelines, subject to approval by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, or its successor, for graduated responses that may be imposed for non-criminal probation violations.

Provide that individuals who, prior to the effective date of this Amendment, were convicted of obtaining, possessing, or using a drug or drug paraphernalia, or were adjudicated delinquent based on such offense, may petition the court in which the conviction or adjudication occurred to have such charge changed to the respective class of offense as determined by the general assembly in accordance with this Amendment. Individuals who have not completed their sentences for such offense as of the Amendment's effective date and who petition the sentencing court shall be re-sentenced and/or released, unless the court determines that the individual presents a risk to the public and should not be re-sentenced and/or released.



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Pennsylvania

[How 1 county has been a pioneer in the fight against opioids](#)

Associated Press

“We’ve always done that with respect to addressing the needs of our community,” said District Attorney Kat Copeland, who heads the county’s heroin task force. “We created our first treatment court in 1998, when heroin and opioids weren’t the problem you see today. We’ve always tried to stay a little bit ahead of the issue.”

Pennsylvania

[Essays, prizes and drug tests: Welcome to treatment court](#)

Associated Press

Seeking another way to combat the opioid crisis and other forms of drug addiction, officials in Schuylkill County started the Drug Treatment Court in January 2017 using a carrot-and-stick approach to help participants beat their addictions.

Judge James P. Goodman, a former district attorney in the county, helped develop the court and presides over its weekly session each Thursday morning.

Pennsylvania

[Intervention court gives users a chance to change](#)

Allentown Morning Call

“The benefit of the program is that they get immediate access to significant treatment for free. That’s it,” [Cumberland County Common Pleas Judge Jessica] Brewbaker said. “So, if they are mature enough or they have a family supportive enough to say ‘you have to do this,’ then we have all these services for them and all this accountability and all this team rooting for them, and it’s all for free. That’s why they do it.”

The court is the first in the state, second in the country and modeled after one in Buffalo, N.Y.

Pennsylvania

[Solutions to Pennsylvania's opioid epidemic: A county-by-county look](#)

Allentown Morning Call

Pennsylvania newsrooms have been documenting the opioid crisis for many years. But now, in a special project, “State of Emergency: Searching for Solutions to Pennsylvania’s Opioids Crisis,” they are marshaling their resources to spotlight county by county what Pennsylvanians are doing to try to reverse the soaring number of overdose deaths.



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Journalists have produced stories, photos, video and audio in more than 50 counties to cast a spotlight on strategies and initiatives that are showing promise. This initiative is a joint effort of the Pennsylvania Associated Press Media Editors, the Pennsylvania Society of News Editors and the Pennsylvania Associated Press.



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Pennsylvania

[County's coordinated approach on opioid addiction yields results](#)

Lancaster Online

Lancaster County Joining Forces includes representatives from government, businesses, social services, law enforcement, the courts, health care providers, faith communities, and community-based groups. Many of these groups and institutions had already been doing good work to address the opioid crisis. What makes Lancaster County Joining Forces different is its aim to coordinate and strengthen efforts already underway, to identify and fill in gaps in services or programs, and, in all cases, to apply evidence-based solutions to preventing and reducing the misuse and abuse of opioids.