



Opioids and the Courts News: October 19, 2018

Indiana

[LSC opioid task force to look at Indiana in first field hearing](#)

Indiana Lawyer

The Legal Services Corporation's Opioid Task Force is coming to Indianapolis for its first field hearing, which will include an examination of Indiana's statewide response to the opioid crisis.

In the Circle City, the field hearing will begin at 12:45 p.m. Wednesday in the Jennings Ballroom at the Omni Severin Hotel, 40 W. Jackson Place. It is open to the public and will be livestreamed on [LSC's Facebook page](#).

LSC formed the task force in April 2018 to bring together a variety of stakeholders from health care, legal services, business and the judiciary to examine the impact of the opioid crisis on the civil legal needs of low-income Americans. The primary goals of the task force are to educate and engage with public health officials and others to promote a comprehensive model of recovery.

Indiana has a healthy representation on the task force. Members with Hoosier ties include Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush; Indiana Legal Services managing attorney Jay Chaudhary; Abby Kuzma, former assistant attorney general for the Indiana Attorney General's office and founder of the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic; and former Indianapolis Colts quarterback Jim Harbaugh.

Indiana

[Opioid Task Force Hearing Highlights Solutions](#)

WBAA

A national Opioid Task Force held a field hearing in Indianapolis this week and provided a chance for the group to hear how legal interventions aid people with a substance use disorder.

The justice system is often the first point of entry for someone with an addiction.

Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush sits on the [Legal Services Corporations opioid task force](#) as well as a [federal judicial one](#). She says people often overlook the intersection of opioids and the law – which makes recovery more difficult.

"Whether it's getting your license back, whether it's debt, issues getting your children back, foreclosure, eviction," says Rush.



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Michigan

[Southeast Michigan's approach to opioids could be model for others](#)

Detroit News

Southeast Michigan's use of peer sobriety coaches and collaboration to fight the opioid crisis could become a model for the country, said an official from the U.S. Health and Human Services in Livonia on Monday.

Leaders from social services, health care, law enforcement, local courts and nonprofits met for a roundtable discussion with HHS Deputy Secretary Eric Hargan at St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia as part of a national listening tour by federal health officials focused on the epidemic.

"We've seen three years in a row [of] a lowering American life expectancy, and that is due to the amount of deaths [that] are occurring because of the opioid epidemic. This is unprecedented in U.S. history," Hargan said at a news conference following the closed-door roundtable. "This is something that has permeated society in a very broad way, in rural communities ... to areas like Detroit, to suburban areas — everywhere at this point."

New Hampshire

[At Keene event, opioid crisis viewed through two lenses](#)

The Keene Sentinel

[Gubernatorial policy adviser David Mara] did not rule out the criminal justice system's role in treatment. He said drug courts, which have been in use in the state since 2006, have proven effective in connecting people with treatment and diverting them from prisons and jails.

"They are working," he said of the courts. "We just have to increase the number of people that are going to drug courts, so if there are people being incarcerated that would not have committed those crimes if not for their addiction, those would be the people that we want to keep out of the correctional system."

Ohio

[What Ohio's governor candidates plan to do about the opioid crisis](#)

MyDaytonDailyNews

Mike DeWine, the Republican candidate, has a 12-point plan that calls for greatly expanding the number of drug courts where treatment can be ordered in lieu of incarceration. His plan also includes incentives for business owners to hire people in recovery, and he wants to implement what he calls age-appropriate K-12 prevention education.



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Pennsylvania

[Pa. Supreme Court should exercise compassion when grappling with issues related to pregnancy and drug addiction](#)

Philly.com

[Kayla E. Kressler] In my role as director of prevention programs for the state leader in child-abuse prevention, I appreciate [the ethical dilemma Pennsylvania Supreme Court justices face](#) in how to intervene with pregnant, substance-abusing women.

Last month, they heard oral arguments in a case involving a woman who gave birth in January 2017 in Williamsport Hospital, about 175 miles northwest of Philadelphia. The mother tested positive for marijuana, opioids, and antianxiety drugs that can heighten the effects of opioids, and her infant spent 19 days at the hospital [being treated for drug-withdrawal symptoms](#). Clinton County Children and Youth Services (CYS) took the baby into custody, accusing the mother of child abuse under Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law.

South Dakota

[Second Circuit Could Add Another Judge For Drug Cases](#)

KELOLAND TV

Chief Justice [David] Gilbertson credits drug courts which are now available in 15 South Dakota communities with helping defendants turn away from a life of drugs.

"80 percent of those people graduate and do not re-offend. The people that go to the pen, you can expect over half of them will re-offend," Gilbertson said.

South Dakota judges can expect their caseloads to keep growing as opioids more and more become the drug of choice among addicts.

West Virginia

[Candidates for Supreme Court cover everything from opioids to AR-15s](#)

Beckley Register-Herald

Kanawha Circuit Judge Joanna Tabit spoke about being a "proven, qualified judge," [and] ... an "active litigator," appearing before the Supreme Court while working in the state attorney general's office, clerking for former Justice Thomas McHugh and serving as an acting justice.

She said she serves as the presiding judge in Kanawha drug court, and that the opioid epidemic is a "health crisis" and that it can be a struggle to differentiate addicts fueling their addictions from "criminals with recreational drug habits."