

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

April 16, 2021



Massachusetts

[Massachusetts Probation Service Offers Innovative Alternatives to Incarceration](#)

Pew Trusts

The Brockton center is one of 18 community corrections centers in Massachusetts to offer evidence-based alternatives to prison and jail. Each is part of the Massachusetts Probation Service. The centers' programs include cognitive behavioral treatment to address criminal behavior and substance use disorder, adult basic and secondary education with learning support, career development, life-skills training, communicable disease education and counseling, and comprehensive case management of health and human service needs.

In June 2018, the Massachusetts Executive Office of the Trial Court partnered with The Pew Charitable Trusts' [Results First initiative](#) to review research of the probation service programs operated at community corrections centers across the state, including the center in Brockton. The goal was to determine whether there is data-driven evidence that these programs improve client outcomes and ensure that public funds are being used effectively.

New Jersey

[‘It’s not a one size fits all’: Ocean County prosecutor creates new opioid recovery programs](#)

App.com

First Step is just one of multiple programs that the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office has tested out since 2014, when the opioid epidemic started tormenting the Jersey Shore.

Other programs have included Blue Hope, which allows drug offenders to turn themselves in and avoid charges in exchange for treatment, and the Drug Court Program, which gives those charged with a non-violent drug or alcohol offense the opportunity to serve an intensive probation sentence that includes treatment instead of jail time.

Pennsylvania

[Delco joins Pa. attorney general's program that uses local cops to connect people with addiction treatment](#)

Philadelphia Inquirer

The county has become the sixth in Pennsylvania to join the Law Enforcement Treatment Initiative being spearheaded by state Attorney General Josh Shapiro. Under the program, officers at local police departments are trained to act as intermediaries with treatment programs, and can expedite getting someone into treatment who otherwise may find the process difficult.

It also gives officers discretion when making low-level drug arrests, according to District Attorney Jack Stollsteimer. If individuals who are arrested make clear that they want to enter treatment, they can work with the county's drug court to enter a rehabilitative program.

West Virginia

[The Legislative Session Is Over, But West Virginia's Overdose Crisis Rages On](#)

West Virginia Public Broadcasting

But House Bill 2918, which makes a family drug court pilot program permanent, did not include a fiscal note, which would indicate the state does not plan to put new funds toward expansion. The bill also simply permits courts to begin those programs; it does not require them.

West Virginia

[HBO Documentary 'Our Towns' Features Charleston; Debuts Tonight](#)

West Virginia Public Broadcasting

When filming for the documentary began, the first city they came to was Charleston, West Virginia. It ended up being their proof-of-concept city; the one they showed to the executives at HBO to prove they could make the film.

"There is a youth drug court run by Judge Joanna Tabit in Charleston that is really innovative and it's catching kids young," said Jeanne Jordan, the other half of the filmmaking duo. "There were many stories like that all over the country where you start out with something that's really difficult and then see how people apply positive energy to it to make things work."

West Virginia

[Family drug court programs to expand in W.Va. if funding available](#)

Coal Valley News

More parts of West Virginia may see family drug treatment courts established as House Bill 2918 heads to the desk of Gov. Jim Justice.

The West Virginia Senate passed the bill Thursday, which makes the pilot program official.

There are eight such treatment courts throughout the state, including in Boone County. The Boone program is funded by a federal grant while the Supreme Court has funding from the [McKesson opioid settlement](#) to establish 10 courts. They have plans to open three more this spring.

“Once they hit 11, though, they will reach capacity and probably need some help,” said Sen. Ryan Weld, R-Brooke, on the floor. He was responding to Sen. Ron Stollings, D-Boone, who pointed out the bill does not provide funding to expand family drug treatment courts.

