

# Opioid-Related News and the Courts

## Weekly Review

October 9, 2020



### National

#### [‘There was nothing to help me’: how the pandemic has worsened opioid addiction](#)

The Guardian (UK)

Many addiction treatment centers around the US have [shut down or turned away patients](#) because of the pandemic, as they struggle with financial losses and adhering to safety protocols. [Destiny] Rozek is currently in an outpatient program, but complained she was only given medicine to try to detox at home and in person support groups aren’t currently available.

“I’m genuinely trying but it feels like I’m stuck, and so do a lot of the other addicts I know,” Rozek added.

Mass layoffs, furloughs, isolation, and cuts to resources for recovering addicts have been [cited as contributing factors](#) to reported rises in opioid use and overdoses during the pandemic.

Based on [data](#) from the Overdose detection mapping application program, opioid overdoses increased in March 2020 by 18% compared to the same month in 2019, 29% in April 2020, and 42% in May 2020. According to the American Medical Association, over 40 states have [reported](#) increases in opioid related deaths during the pandemic, even as the US experienced a [record](#) of nearly 71,000 opioid related deaths in 2019.

### Ohio

#### [‘Second Chances’ Drug Court Film Wins Emmy Award](#)

Court News Ohio

The documentary film “[Second Chances: One Year in Ohio’s Drug Courts](#)” that reveals an up-close look at opioid addiction in three Ohio counties won an Emmy during the 56th annual Ohio Valley Regional Emmy Awards ceremony.

“Second Chances” and Anne Fife, its editor and producer, were honored in the best writing category. The awards were held virtually on Sunday night.

The one-hour film shows the complicated struggle of drug addiction and how courts play a crucial role in the recovery attempts of users, their families and communities.

Fife and her film crew spent an entire year chronicling 19 drug court participants in the counties of Medina, near Cleveland; rural Marion in north-central Ohio; and Hocking, in Appalachia.

“One thing I took away from this process was not to give up on people. There are many times that people surprised us by making small changes that really affected their lives in a positive

way,” said Fife, who works for Ohio Government Television under contract with the Public Information Office of the Ohio Supreme Court.

“I’m incredibly proud that this documentary received this well-deserved recognition from the television industry,” Chief Justice Maureen O’Connor said. “This film captures the compassion and dedication of drug court judges and the treatment teams that help those struggling with addiction. The daily struggle of those suffering from the disease of addiction is real and it was accurately portrayed in this documentary.”

### Ohio

[Hamilton County Felony Veterans’ Treatment Court helps give veterans a second chance](#)

WCPO

Hamilton County Felony Veterans’ Treatment Court isn’t your usual court; it’s a two-year program designed to help military veterans who are homeless, struggling with addiction, or facing a conviction.

[The program](#) has helped numerous vets in the past, and Mickey Harlow is one of the latest graduates from the program.

After Harlow served in the Marines, he became hooked on opioids after he was in a car crash.

Harlow’s addiction is all too common nowadays. Hamilton County Judge Ethna Cooper runs the program, and she said she has seen an increase in the number of people who are arrested for substance abuse since the start of the pandemic.

Now, Harlow hopes his success story inspires others to not give up hope.