

# Opioid-Related News and the Courts

## Weekly Review

July 3, 2023



### Illinois

#### [Champaign County drug court recertified by state, in line for grant money](#)

News-Gazette

Champaign County’s drug-court team is about to wrap up a pretty darn good month.

Not only did they get notice the court has been recertified to keep on doing what they do, but they also landed federal grant money that will go directly toward helping people who are in the program.

“Every three years, any existing specialty court has to be recertified to make sure they are following best practices. Last summer, we were told it was our time and we needed to turn everything in by November,” said Presiding Judge Randy Rosenbaum, who took over the helm of the 24-year-old specialty court in 2020.

### Missouri

#### [Synthetic opioids becoming more common in fatal drug overdoses in Missouri](#)

KSMU

Treatment court

If a person is charged and they committed that crime because of their substance use disorder, they can apply for treatment court—also known as drug court—instead of serving jail time.

Kevin Austin, commissioner for Adult Treatment court in Greene County, says tampering with a motor vehicle is the most common charge in his court.

“Drug court is not a punishment, it is not a right of an individual. Drug court is something of a privilege. For someone to come into drug court, it’s a little bit of a process,” says Austin.

Within that process, they decide if that defendant would be a good fit for treatment court.

## Ohio

### [Hamilton County drug court focuses on ‘compassion, not punishment’](#)

Spectrum News 1

Over the past 27 years, thousands of people have had their lives changed thanks to the Hamilton County Drug Treatment and Recovery Court.

The specialty court is considered an alternative to felony convictions and prison time for individuals known to have committed nonviolent crimes because of their addiction.

Now, Judge Nicole L. Sanders and her staff are working to ramp up their efforts and provide greater awareness and support to those battling drug abuse personally or who know someone going through those struggles.

The Hamilton County Common Pleas specialty docket recently received certification from the Ohio Supreme Court that unlocked millions in grant funds to help with services and data collection.

## Tennessee

### [Once-resistant rural court officials begin to embrace medications to treat addiction](#)

Chattanooga Times Free Press

A study conducted a decade ago found that [barely half of drug treatment courts](#) offered medication treatment. Those that didn't cited uncertainty about its efficacy and noted political, judicial, and administrative opposition. But research in the years since has persuaded many of the most insistent abstinence-only advocates.

According to Monica Christofferson, director of treatment court programs at the [Center for Justice Innovation](#), amid an accelerating opioid crisis there has been a “[huge shift](#)” among judges, prosecutors and law enforcement agencies away from the stigma associated with medication treatment. Simply put, “[MOUD works](#),” Christofferson asserted.

By 2022, more than 90% of drug courts located in communities with high opioid mortality rates that responded to a survey said they allow buprenorphine and/or methadone, the medications most commonly used to treat addiction. The study also found that 65% of drug court program staffers have received training in medication for treatment, and a similar share have arranged for clients to continue receiving medications while serving jail time for program violations. Still, almost 1 in 4 programs told researchers they overrule medication decisions.

### Virginia

#### [Funding awarded to address opioid addiction in New River Valley](#)

Roanoke Times

Giles County Administrator Chris McKlarney said his locality sees the [Opioid Abatement Authority] OAA funding as an important resource for continuing work addressing opioid addiction through their FOCUS programs and specifically the drug court recovery fitness program, which he described as unique and highly successful.

“Integrating this resource to support our citizens toward successful recovery is key to improving life for them and their families,” he said.