



Opioids and the Courts News: June 8, 2018

Task Force News

Indiana

[Indiana's chief justice leading national effort to use court system in combating opioid abuse](#)

MDJOnline.com

State judicial system leaders from across the country convened in Indiana's capital city Monday and Tuesday to begin devising strategies for combating the opioid abuse crisis that's ravaging families and communities nationwide.

Led by Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush, the National Judicial Opioid Task Force is seeking to develop model policies and reproducible programs that effectively balance punishment for drug-related crimes with assistance for drug-addicted individuals.

Rush said there's an urgent need and a unique opportunity for state and local courts to take the lead in preventing opioid abuse, which kills more than 100 Americans every day, according to federal records.

In Indiana, she said, more than 60 percent of the Hoosier children in foster care have been removed from their homes because of parental substance abuse.

Indiana

[Judges meet in Indianapolis, talk opioid crisis](#)

TriStateHomepage.com

As the opioid crisis spreads across Indiana, some of the country's top judges are meeting in Indianapolis to talk about ways to stop it.

They want to tackle the issue head-on, from behind the bench.

Indiana's Supreme Court says 757 people died from opioids in 2016, according to the most recent data available.

The questions before the judges' benches: How do you address the crime but also help stop opioid addiction?

"I've never seen a drug have this hold. We've been through crack; we've looked at methamphetamine, both of which have a healthy hold. The treatment for this is different. The devastation to the families," Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush said.



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Indiana

[National Judicial Drug Task Force Meets In Indy](#)

Indiana Public Media

Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush says judicial leaders from around the country feel a sense of urgency as they develop an infrastructure for court systems to address the nation's opioid crisis.

Chief Justice Loretta Rush is the co-chair of the National Judicial Opioid Task Force, which formed last year. It met for the third time this week in Indianapolis.

Rush says the group develops solutions for court systems to address the country's drug epidemic. An example: urging states to enter into border agreements.

"If we have a child in Indiana who gets removed and placed in foster care, we can't get that child placed across in Illinois," Rush says. "Why? Because there's this archaic law that says it takes six, nine, 12 months and maybe you get approved, maybe you don't."

Indiana

[Hoosier Judges Want to Do More to Combat Opioid Crisis - WITZ](#)

WITZ

Judges have moved to the front lines of the fight against opioids, by ordering addicts into treatment. They're looking for ways to do more.

Judges and court administrators from two dozen states are meeting in Indianapolis to discuss solutions, and how to help local communities find the money for them. Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush, who co-chairs the National Judicial Opioid Task Force, says courts are in a unique position to bring different agencies together to coordinate anti-drug efforts. She says there's no magic bullet -- different communities will need different approaches.



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Indiana

[Opioid crisis impacting all courts](#)

Richmond Register

Setting up national judicial guidelines that can be adapted by states should be a priority in handling the opioid epidemic as it impacts nearly all courts, Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush said this week.

"Setting up a framework from a national perspective for the judges, chief justices and court administrators to take back to their states is urgent," Rush said.

Rush is co-chair of the National Judicial Opioid Task Force, which is holding its third meeting to discuss ways that courts can help people and communities hit by the opioid epidemic.

Indiana

[Courts look at opioids issue](#)

Daily Journal

The National Judicial Opioid Task Force, which is made up of state court leaders from across the country, is meeting this week to discuss how the court system can be involved in helping people and communities impacted by the opioids crisis. The issue is impacting the entire nation, with 116 people dying everyday from opioid-related drug overdoses, according to 2016 statistics from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Indiana is just as affected, if not more impacted, than other states, and judges are often on the frontlines of the crisis, said Indiana Chief Justice Loretta Rush, who is part of the task force meeting this week.



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National

[She Went to Jail for a Drug Relapse. Tough Love or Too Harsh?](#)

New York Times

As soon as Julie Eldred was granted probation for stealing jewelry to buy drugs, she got busy fulfilling the judge's conditions. She began an intensive all-day outpatient treatment program. She even went an extra step and started daily doses of Suboxone, a medication that can quell opiate cravings.

...

Should an addict's relapse be punished with a criminal sanction? Ms. Eldred has put that question before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, in a case that may have widespread ripples, as hundreds of thousands of addicted people tumble into the criminal justice system. Remaining drug-free is an almost universal requirement of probation. Violating it can bring sanctions ranging from a warning to, frequently, jail.

National

[In Rural Ohio, An Opioid Crisis Becomes A Meth Crisis](#)

NPR

Vinton County, Ohio was hit hard by the opioid epidemic. But now, as opioids are becoming harder to obtain, more and more users are turning to cheap methamphetamine.

National

[June 1, 2018 Newsletter](#)

NCJA Justice Bulletin

House and Senate Bills Would Fund Opioid Recovery Centers

House Energy and Commerce Committee approved a bill earlier this month to establish a grant program to create comprehensive opioid recovery centers. Sponsored by Reps. Brett Guthrie (R-KY) and Gene Green (D-TX), the Comprehensive Opioid Recovery Centers Act, or H.R. 5327, would authorize funding to establish up to 10 center that would provide comprehensive treatment and recovery services... A companion bill, S. 2589, has been introduced in the Senate by Senators Maggie Hassan (D-NH) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV).

House Bill Would Train Healthcare Workers on Opioid Needs

The House Energy and Commerce Committee has passed a bill earlier this month that would create regional centers of excellence for the training of healthcare workers in addressing addiction, pain and the opioid crisis.



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Bill to Reauthorize ONDCP and Address Opioid Treatment Needs Introduced in Senate

Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) have introduced a bill that seeks to prevent substance abuse and reduce demand for illicit narcotics by reauthorizing several anti-drug abuse programs and by providing support for individuals recovering from substance abuse.

National

[Opioid family court cases increase](#)

ABA Journal

Though the problem is bad in Montgomery County, where the opioid overdose death rate was the highest in Ohio in 2016, the crisis is nationwide. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the rate of babies born addicted to opioids increased by 400 percent from 2000 to 2012. There are no federal statistics on opioid-driven child removals, but child welfare agencies in Vermont, Minnesota and Ohio cite opioids as a driver behind increased removals in those states. A 2011 study also found that opioid abuse was associated with increased domestic violence.

New York

[Rensselaer County drug court program showing signs of success](#)

Troy Record

For those heavily addicted to opioids, whose lives revolve around using, once they're released to enter a treatment program it's important they enter as soon as possible.

“(When) they're released to the street, they would never quite make it to that treatment provider.” said Young. That, or they would need more than what their outpatient care was giving them.

In October 2016, the drug court was awarded a \$300,000 grant, to be spread over three years, that would fund the screening and monitoring of certain people going through drug court, those who were at a high risk of reoffending.

While the program isn't only for those addicted to opioids, it is geared towards that population.



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North Carolina

[Courts and the Opioid Crisis](#)

North Carolina State Bar Journal

Our courts are at the epicenter of this crisis, and the ripple effect of this epidemic spreads across our system, through superior courts, district courts, juvenile courts, and special proceedings, and touches the lives of our court employees as well. Ultimate solutions to this crisis can only be found by cooperating across systems, and our courts must provide leadership at the state and local level in bringing change and responding cooperatively with other systems.