

Opioids and the Courts

In the News: March 13, 2020



National

[COVID-19 Guidance for Opioid Treatment Programs](#)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

New York

[Bethlehem treatment court strives to save defendants' lives](#)

Spotlight News

The town's treatment court hopes to give people battling drug addiction or alcoholism and facing serious charges for addiction-related crimes a second chance, according to Town Justice Ryan T. Donovan, the program's head.

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Donovan was inspired in 2017 to develop the treatment court to address the statewide opioid crisis. He also did not like how many defendants died without receiving enough assistance or resources to confront their addiction.

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"But this treatment court does not only take people in with opioid addiction, we'll take anybody with addiction that wants help," Donovan said. "However, the court system can be viewed negatively by people where a judge throws someone in jail and a prosecutor is insensitive. I'm here to be an example of how that's not the way it is."

Ohio

['I'm going to help them': Franklin County judge improving lives afflicted by opioids](#)

WSYX/WTTE

A court in Franklin County is taking an alternative to prosecuting those charged with felony drug charges by offering a therapeutic approach.

The HART program, which stands for "helping achieve recovery together," is run by Judge Jodi Thomas. In this court, the judge isn't sitting at the bench, she is actively engaging with participants to help them recover and live a better life.

Those accepted into the program were charged with anything from felony possession, to theft or a DUI. Opioid use has become a major reason people enter the program