

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

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Alabama

[AG awards \\$1.5 million from opioid lawsuit to Alabama specialty courts](#)

Alabama Political Reporter

Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall announced Monday the first distribution of funds awarded to the state from [its settlement](#) with McKinsey & Company, one of the world's top management-consulting firms, for its role in the opioid crisis in Alabama.

According to the Attorney General's Office, \$1.5 million was awarded to prosecutors to invest in Alabama's drug court, veteran's courts and mental health courts. The terms of the state's settlement with McKinsey stipulate the funds are to be used "to remediate the harms caused to the State and its citizens by the opioid epidemic" and refund the state for expenses incurred in "investigating and pursuing its claims" against McKinsey.

Michigan

[New momentum in Michigan's treatment-based addiction approach](#)

Ludington Daily News

The program is part of an expansion of a 2014 bill [U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow] coauthored, the Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Act. The move is part of a broader trend to treat rather than punish addiction.

The idea of a drug treatment court in Michigan was first introduced in 1961, and the first was established in Kalamazoo 20 years ago, advocates say.

Since then, these systems have adapted and expanded. The initial goal was to address the underlying reasons why offenders continually return to crime remains, according to a 2020 report by the Michigan Supreme Court.

Today, there are 199 treatment courts around Michigan, providing service primarily to "high-risk, high-needs" participants, meaning those most likely to reoffend, said Katharine Hude, the executive director of the Michigan Association of Treatment Court Professionals.

Ohio

[A different kind of pain treatment](#)

The Post Athens

One consequence of the opioid epidemic has been the overburden of addiction-related criminal cases in local court systems.

Between 90% and 95% of all cases seen by the prosecutor's office have something to do with addiction, [Athens County Prosecutor Keller Blackburn] said. But only about a quarter of those are possession charges.

Most felony cases related to addiction are ancillary to addiction itself, including property theft and more violent offenses related to drugs.

One in three people convicted and sent to jail in Athens County will either commit another crime or break the terms of their parole. This occurrence, known as recidivism, is especially high for people suffering from addiction who choose not to get treatment, Blackburn said.