

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

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National

[US: Discrimination based on opioid treatment violates law](#)

ABC News

A deepening opioid epidemic is prompting the U.S. Department of Justice to warn about discrimination against those who are prescribed medication to treat their addictions.

In guidelines published Tuesday, the department's Civil Rights Division said employers, [health](#) care providers, law enforcement agencies that operate jails and others are violating the Americans with Disabilities Act if they discriminate against people for taking prescription drugs to treat opioid use disorder.

“People who have stopped illegally using drugs should not face discrimination when accessing evidence-based treatment or continuing on their path of recovery,” Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke said in a statement.

National

[Justice Department Issues Guidance on Protections for People with Opioid Use Disorder under the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

U.S. Department of Justice

The Civil Rights Division, together with U.S. Attorneys’ offices, has been working to remove discriminatory barriers to recovery for individuals who have completed, or are participating in, treatment for OUD. Through outreach, technical assistance and enforcement under the ADA, the Civil Rights Division seeks to ensure that those in treatment and recovery can successfully participate in their communities and the workforce. For example:

- On March 24, the department entered into a [Settlement Agreement](#) with the Massachusetts Trial Court to resolve allegations that its drug court violated the ADA by discriminating against individuals with OUD.
- On Feb. 24, the department filed a [lawsuit](#) against the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania, alleging that it prohibits or otherwise limits participants in its court supervision programs from using medication to treat OUD.

National

[How a troubled Marine led a veterans court judge to confront his own survivor's guilt](#)

Task & Purpose

For [traumatic brain injury], Matt was prescribed oxycontin. President Trump's 2017 declaration that opioids were causing a "public health emergency" affirmed something the VA had known for at least six years: opioids were killing our veterans. According to a 2011 study by the VA healthcare system, veterans were twice as likely to die from an opioid overdose than non-veterans.

Matt married Melody in 2009. Their daughter Samantha was born in 2010. A second child, Emily, was born in 2011. Eventually the VA stopped prescribing opioids for Matt. But by then, he was an addict and had turned to street drugs, primarily meth.

Indiana

[Seminar to explore rise in fentanyl, substance use trends](#)

The Goshen News

Oaklawn will host Sam Quinones, author and veteran reporter on immigration, gangs, and drug trafficking, at events on May 4 and 5, exploring trends in substance use and how communities across the U.S. are supporting prevention, treatment, and recovery.

Panelists include the Hon. Gretchen Lund, Elkhart County Drug Court Judge; Dr. Brandon Zabukovic, Michiana Opioid Task Force and Medication-Assisted Treatment advocate; Becky Savage, President and Co-Founder of the 525 Foundation, and John Horsley, Oaklawn's Vice President of Adult and Addiction Services.

West Virginia

[Trial begins in West Virginia lawsuit against opioid manufacturers](#)

PBS Newshour

Drug manufacturers misrepresented the risks and benefits of opioids in West Virginia and [contributed to the state's opioid crisis](#), Attorney General Patrick Morrisey said in opening arguments at a trial that began Monday.

Morrisey asked a judge to hold Johnson & Johnson subsidiary Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc., along with Teva Pharmaceuticals Inc., AbbVie Inc.'s Allergan and their family of companies accountable for their "unlawful, unreasonable, callous and destructive conduct."

The defendants "participated in a highly sophisticated scheme to mislead healthcare providers and consumers about the addictive nature of their products," Morrisey said.