

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

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National

[Opioids rip through US workforce](#)

Bloomberg News

Opioids are behind about three-fourths of the overdoses, according to Wednesday's data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Washington was among the deadliest regions, seeing a 50% surge in deaths. Some of the impact is visible, such as the growing clusters of tents downtown where many overdoses occur, a sight so common that Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell mentioned them several times this year.

Much of the devastation in the capital and far beyond, though, is seen only by people on the ground like Armstrong [a 57-year-old recovered heroin user and peer counselor] and offers an early warning of cracks in the broader economy.

National

[In pandemic, drug overdose deaths soar among Black Americans](#)

Associated Press

The timeline of the current opioid epidemic begins in the late 1990s and unfolds in three waves. The first arrived when pharmaceutical companies campaigned to expand prescribing painkillers and addiction spread through struggling, predominantly-white communities like Appalachia.

The second came when the government cracked down on prescriptions and many turned to heroin; then the third when fentanyl, 50 times more potent than heroin, was laced into opioids sold on the street.

Some researchers believe the nation is entering a fourth wave. The drug supply is so messy and unpredictable that people overdosing have multiple drugs in their system: dangerous cocktails of fentanyl, a depressant, and stimulants like cocaine and methamphetamine.



Guam

[‘I am in a nightmare,’ Mom raises question of involuntary drug rehab](#)

Guam Daily Post

There are pros and cons to involuntary commitment. Factors include personal rights and the concept that recovery is a personal choice, and that there is a greater chance of maintaining sobriety when a person decides to make the change to stay with treatment, according to [Theresa] Arriola [Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center Director].

A National Judicial Opioid Task Force [report](#) on involuntary commitment and guardianship laws notes that professionals generally agree that involuntary commitment can and often does save lives, but a person must receive effective, evidence-based treatment while in confinement.