

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

June 17, 2022



National

[Written Testimony of Dr. Rahul Guptan, Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy
Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control Hearing on the National Drug Control Strategy](#)

White House

As we work to bend the curve on overdose deaths, an area of focus is the intersection between substance use disorder and the criminal justice system. We must create programs nationwide that allow for the diversion, when appropriate, of individuals who commit nonviolent crimes into treatment and services that will help them find recovery. Doing so supports rehabilitation and reentry which reduce recidivism and enhance public safety. We must also establish opportunities for nonviolent offenders to participate in drug court programs, when appropriate, and that these court programs implement practices that advance equity and public safety. Further, for people who are incarcerated, we must provide them with treatment services, including MOUD, and assist them with reentry services. This work will not only reduce overdose and death, but by supporting rehabilitation and reentry, will improve public safety outcomes for our communities.

Alabama

[North Alabama county opens mental health court](#)

Associated Press

[Cullman, Alabama's] court system already holds specialized drug court and veterans court dockets for nonviolent offenders who show potential in benefiting from assistance with personal issues involving underlying substance abuse, mental health, and other conditions which could contribute to criminal activity.

Those who enter the Mental Health Court program must first plead guilty to their offenses, but they also have the opportunity to have their charges dismissed altogether by achieving court-prescribed milestones, which can include regular consultation with WellStone [Behavioral Health] over an agreed-upon period of time.

West Virginia[West Virginia juvenile caseloads up slightly in new judicial system report](#)

The Weirton Daily Times

According to the report, circuit courts across the state's 31 judicial districts, the juvenile caseload was 8,287 for 2021, an increase of 16.4 percent from 7,120 juvenile cases in 2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the slight increase in juvenile caseload numbers in between 2020 and 2021, the 2021 caseload numbers are still 10.8-percent lower than the 9,293 juvenile caseload numbers from 2019 – the highest number over a 10-year period. The 2021 numbers are also 5.2-percent lower than the 8,746 juvenile caseload number from 2011.

