

Opioid-Related News and the Courts

Weekly Review

July 7, 2023



National

[Meet the Press – July 2, 2023](#)

NBC

CHUCK TODD:

This Sunday: America's fentanyl crisis. The highly addictive synthetic opioid -- 50 times more potent than heroin -- is at the center of the deadliest drug epidemic in American history.

SEN. J.D. VANCE:

So, I think Portugal's a very different country. And in fact, if you look at some of the strategies that have been tried in Portugal, some of them have been tried in certain municipalities in the United States. And what you end up seeing is drug overdose numbers go up, addiction numbers go up. So, I think if the Portugal approach could work here, it would've, frankly, already worked. Look, some harm reduction absolutely matters, right? Suboxone is a sort of medically assisted treatment for people who are trying to break clean of this stuff. All that's part of the equation. But I think that if we believe we're going to solve the opioid problem by handing out needles, we're going to make the problem worse, and in fact, we're already seeing evidence that we've done this. So no, I don't think that's the solution. But I do think that we should follow the evidence wherever it ultimately leads here. Legalization is not going to help, but maybe doing medically assisted treatment more and making that more accessible, that's a good solution.

National

[Emerging adults in drug treatment court: program behavior, program completion, & recidivism](#)

Journal of Social Work Practice in Addictions

We compared emerging adults with older adults who were admitted to the Drug Treatment Court (DTC) in a large Midwestern county. Emerging adults were more likely to be lower risk and to be opioid/heroin users. Compared to older adults, emerging adults were more likely to have increased violations in the DTC program. Emerging



adults compared to older adults were more likely to be terminated than to graduate with no recidivism (odds ratio 1.83) and more likely to recidivate after they graduated (odds ratio 2.16). Elevated risks for program termination and recidivism for emerging adults, despite a reduced risk profile at entry, underscore the need for program modifications (such as peer support) that specifically target this age group.

Georgia

[Fentanyl on the rise in drug courts](#)

The Northeast Georgian

The accountability court system is in place to help folks get back on their feet after running into trouble with the law. The drug court arm of that organization is designed to help users get clean and kick their dependence on controlled substances.

The drug courts have [seen] a rise in the presence of fentanyl and other dangerous opioids in their program. In 2020, 72 percent of the participants in drug court used meth and only 27 percent used opioids. The latter figure has risen to 54 percent in 2023.

“Most of the meth users also have used fentanyl,” said Beth Pelaccio, director of the Habersham County Accountability Courts. “It makes it much more dangerous.”

Washington

[Newhouse's fentanyl task force seeks to assess scope of crisis, find solutions](#)

Yakima Herald-Republic

Retired Yakima County Superior Court Judge David Eloffson, who presided over the county’s drug court, said one positive thing is that the fentanyl crisis is relatively new, and that the task force is not too far behind as it seeks a solution.

In the drug court, offenders agree to go through a treatment program with strict accountability to the court in return for having their criminal cases dropped.