

# Opioid-Related Conditions and the Courts

In the News: September 4, 2020



## National

[I Thought Jail Would Help Me Get Clean. I Was Dead Wrong.](#)

The Marshall Project

I asked a drug court to send me to jail to get stabilized. But when the jail refused to give me my Suboxone, everything came crashing down.

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If the jail would have given me my Suboxone, maybe I would have stayed clean, or maybe I wouldn't have. I cannot know. I just know that the jail had an opportunity to provide evidence-based care and they chose punishment instead. And I know what happened next.

## Georgia

[Former homeless veteran accepts job with the VA hospital that helped save him](#)

11 Alive

As the first graduate of the Cobb County [Veterans Accountability Court](#), [Retired Army Sergeant Willis Hatfield-Reavis] took 11Alive on his journey back from the brink. It's a relationship status change like no other.... He had suffered a traumatic brain injury in Afghanistan. Doctors prescribed highly addictive opioids to treat the pain. When the pills ran out, he turned to heroin. He got hooked. And then he got caught.

After he was released from prison, he was homeless and started using again. But this time, he got arrested in Cobb County – and sentenced in the Veteran's Accountability Program.

“After veterans court, I was able to get an apartment, I met the love of my life, started going to school,” he listed. “Life was just so much better for me.”

## Kentucky

[Programs available to prevent drug overdose deaths](#)

Times Leader

“Fentanyl and fentanyl analogues and manufactured synthetic opioids are our largest threat, followed by methamphetamine,” said Van Ingram, the executive director of the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy.

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Drug Court is another program aimed at helping people who have been arrested on drug charges shake drug habits. Drug court has been established in 113 of Kentucky's 120 counties.

“For a felony charge, it’s an 18-month program,” said Doug Martin, the specialty court supervisor for the 56th Judicial District. “It’s kind of like probation. When they go for sentencing, the judge has to refer them for a Kentucky assessment. We run their records, and the assessment we have rates them on the severity of their drug addiction. After that, it’s a team effort. We have the commonwealth attorney’s office and different probation and parole (officers) on our staff, and we go through their records and decide whether or not to let them in.”

## **Tennessee**

### [Local Observance Promotes Overdose Awareness](#)

WJLE

An observance was held Sunday at Elizabeth Chapel Baptist Church for International Overdose Awareness Day, an event to kick off National Recovery Month in September.

While the nation is slowing down during the Covid-19 pandemic, substance-abuse isn't. That's why members of the DeKalb County Prevention Coalition in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the DeKalb County Recovery Court say this year's Overdose Awareness Day was particularly important.