

# Opioid-Related News and the Courts

## Weekly Review

May 14, 2021



### National

[West Virginia trial puts spotlight on sprawling opioid cases](#)

ABC News

The trial in West Virginia, as well as legal proceedings underway in California, could set the stage for resolutions to similar lawsuits brought by thousands of local governments across the United States. Opioid overdoses have been linked to the deaths of nearly 500,000 Americans since 2000 and reached a record of nearly 50,000 in 2019.

Yet the sprawling nature of litigation over the addiction epidemic around the country means it could take years to wrap up, years to get money to communities to expand treatment and to make up for some of the economic losses caused by the crisis.

The trajectory of the lawsuits is unlikely to mirror the [lawsuits] that states brought against the tobacco industry during the 1990s. The landmark litigation over what cigarette companies knew about the health risks of smoking resulted in a few sweeping settlements that distributed money to nearly every state, while the opioid cases involve a variety of plaintiffs suing companies up and down the pharmaceutical chain in state and federal courts.

### Michigan

[‘We want to get on the bright side of life.’ New opioid recovery housing open in Jackson](#)

MLive

The space at 2388 W. Michigan Ave. in Blackman Township has two buildings that began construction in early 2020. The first 42,000-square-foot building has 39 single-bedroom units, along with a resource center, exercise equipment, and other community space. The second building has 11 two-bedroom family units.

Tenants come from the Michigan drug court system. Instead of leaving jail and heading to rehab or probation, they can interview for housing that provides wrap-around resources onsite. They have meetings daily—whether [they] be sobriety group meetings or lectures about how to apply for jobs or get good credit.

## Tennessee

[Tennessee Voices, Episode 180: Jeff Moseley, board president, 21st District Recovery Court](#)  
Knoxville News

While COVID-19 [has] dominated headlines, the opioid epidemic still rages and is worsening. However, there are concerted efforts to assist people addicted to drugs to heal and help them return to a normal life. Among them are the [21st District Recovery Court](#) that serves Hickman, Lewis, Perry, and Williamson counties.

Jeff Moseley, board president of 21st District Recovery Court...discussed how the drug court works and how people of all socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds suffer from the disease of addiction.

The court's work was especially tough during the strictest of COVID restrictions when support groups could not meet in person. However, recovery meetings switched to video conferencing and the work continued to help clients as best as possible avoid falling into further distress and legal trouble.

The 21st District Court reports that 65% to 70% of drug court graduates remain arrest-free.

## West Virginia

[New Family Treatment Court Reunites Nicholas County Families Dealing with Addiction](#)  
West Virginia Public Media

Nicholas County Circuit Judge Steve Callaghan oversees the local family treatment court.

As a judge, Callaghan couldn't speak about the federal trial in Charleston, but he spoke at length about the difference he thinks family treatment court programs are making in the state's struggle with addiction and the separation of families.

"Before treatment courts, the only thing we had was law enforcement and probation," Callaghan said. "There was some rehab, but not a whole lot. But now, after treatment courts, we have a new way to try to solve the problem."

Nicholas County celebrated its graduation ceremony weeks after the governor signed House Bill 2918 into law, allowing the state supreme court to assist more counties in creating their own family treatment court programs.