

# Opioid-Related News and the Courts

## Weekly Review

May 26, 2023



### National

#### [FDA approves prescription nasal spray to reverse opioid overdoses](#)

The Hill

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [approved](#) a prescription nasal spray this week that can reverse opioid overdoses.

Opvee is an almeferene hydrochloride nasal spray that is the first of its kind to be used to treat opioid overdoses in adults and children over the age of 12.

The FDA said that if the product is administered quickly, it can reduce the effects of opioid overdoses, including respiratory depression, sedation, and low blood pressure.

“The agency continues to advance the FDA Overdose Prevention Framework and take actionable steps that encourage harm reduction by supporting the development of novel overdose reversal products,” FDA Commissioner [Robert Califf](#) said in a statement on Monday.

### Oregon

#### [H.O.P.E. Drug Court program celebrates 102nd graduation ceremony](#)

KPIC

H.O.P.E. stands for Help, Opportunity, Pride, and Emancipation. According to the County, it is an abstinence-based program that connects participants with treatment services, provides supervision through probation, and holds participants accountable through frequent court dates. Six hundred and eleven (611) participants have graduated from the program since its inception – 324 men and 287 women.

“Drug courts and other treatment courts are considered the most effective strategy for reducing addiction, crime, and recidivism while saving taxpayer dollars,” the County stated in a media release.

## **Pennsylvania**

### [United States v. Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania](#)

U.S. Department of Justice

On May 22, 2023, the United States filed an amended complaint against the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania (UJS), the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and the Courts of Common Pleas for Blair, Lackawanna, Jefferson, and Northumberland Counties. The United States filed its original complaint on February 24, 2022, against the UJS for violating Title II of the ADA by prohibiting the use of lawfully prescribed medication to treat Opioid Use Disorder by individuals under court supervision. The United States previously notified the UJS that its courts had engaged in discrimination in a letter of findings issued on February 2, 2022. That letter demanded that the UJS address the violations identified by taking corrective actions, including revising relevant policies, appropriately training relevant personnel, and paying compensatory damages to aggrieved individuals. The District Court dismissed the United States' original complaint on April 21, 2023 without prejudice and with leave to amend. Prior to that decision, the United States filed an opposition to the UJS's motion to dismiss on July 1, 2022 and a letter brief addressing two questions raised by the Court on March 23, 2023.

[Amended Complaint](#)

## **South Carolina**

### [‘I choose to live’: ‘Drug Court’ helps change lives around](#)

WSOC

Drug Court is a new program through the justice system in Lancaster and Chester counties that helps dozens of people free themselves from addiction.

“This is not a script. This is not a commercial,” said Billy Barnes, a graduate of the program. “This is real life, and I choose to live today.”

## **Tennessee**

### [A rural Tennessee county’s choice: Use opioid funds to pay off debt or pay them forward to curb crisis](#)

Times Free Press

Over the past two years, rural Greene County in northeastern Tennessee has collected more than \$2.7 million from regional and national settlements with opioid manufacturers and distributors. But instead of helping people harmed by addiction, county officials are finding other ways to spend it.

They have [put \\$2.4 million](#) toward paying off the county's debt and have [directed](#) another [\\$1 million](#) arriving over more than a decade into a capital projects fund. In March, they appropriated \$50,000 from that fund to buy a “litter crew vehicle” — a pickup truck to drive inmates to collect trash along county roads.

“It’s astounding,” said Nancy Schneck, a retired nurse who has seen addiction infiltrate the community, where employers avoid drug testing for fear of losing too many employees and mental health crises and homelessness are rampant. She wants to see the money go toward mental health and addiction treatment. Why can’t county leaders “see treating some people and maybe getting them out of this cycle might be advantageous?” she said.

## **Washington**

[“This has saved lives,” drug court’s impact on those battling addiction](#)

KIMA

Graduates of Yakima County’s Drug Court program were recognized on Thursday night as local leaders and those behind the program spoke on what drug court is all about and the impact it’s had on those struggling with addiction.

“It’s not how many times you fall, it’s how many times you get up from falling to move forward.” says Jeffrey Cozzetto, a graduate of Yakima County’s drug court.

Jeffrey Cozzetto says he was facing 144 months in prison when he decided to join the Yakima County Drug Court program.

He says he was penniless, homeless, and jobless. But a relative of his that was in the drug court program told Cozzetto to give it a shot.