

Bureau of Justice Assistance

Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Program

Support to States and Territories

Introduction

The opioid epidemic is a pressing public health and public safety concern in states and communities across the country. To address this concern, state governments have introduced legislation and signed into law measures to curb the opioid epidemic by addressing opioid education, awareness, prevention, and treatment. In addition, some governors have declared the opioid epidemic a state emergency and established administrative orders to address the impacts in communities. States have also led efforts to enhance the coordination, quality, and use of data to better understand opioid use and the associated risks, needs, and gaps in service. States across the country continue to provide leadership and commitment to addressing the nation's opioid epidemic by enhancing and improving prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs); expanding access to naloxone as well as treatment and recovery services including medication-assisted treatment (MAT); coordinating efforts among multiple state agencies; working with rural communities; and expanding Medicaid.

Ensuring public safety and the health of communities and families is a core component of state, local, and tribal governments; however, this epidemic (and its enduring financial costs) are straining the ability to provide critical services.

COAP Goals and Strategies

The Bureau of Justice Assistance's Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Site-based Program (COAP) was developed as part of the 2016 Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) legislation. COAP's purpose is to provide financial and technical assistance to states, units of local government, and Indian tribal governments to plan, develop, and implement comprehensive efforts to identify, respond to, treat, and support those impacted by the opioid epidemic. The Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) has been incorporated into the FY2019 COAP solicitation. The purpose of the Harold Rogers PDMP is to improve collaboration and strategic decision making among regulatory and law enforcement agencies and public health entities to address prescription drug and opioid abuse, save lives, and reduce crime. Since 2017, BJA has supported innovative work in more than 200 COAP sites.

COAP focuses on effective policy strategies that include the following:

- ◀ **Supporting our nation's first responders** and strengthening their partnerships with behavioral health, public health, and agencies that serve crime victims.
- ◀ **Expanding diversion programs** for nonviolent individuals who abuse illicit and prescription opioids.
- ◀ **Implementing and enhancing PDMPs.**
- ◀ Encouraging and supporting comprehensive **cross-**

system planning and collaboration among officials who work in law enforcement, pretrial services, the courts, probation and parole, child welfare, reentry, PDMPs, and emergency medical services, as well as health-care providers, public health partners, and agencies that provide substance abuse treatment and recovery support services.

- ◀ Developing and implementing strategies to **identify and provide treatment and recovery support services to high-frequency utilizers of multiple systems** (e.g., health care, child welfare, criminal justice) who have a history of opioid abuse.
- ◀ **Increasing the availability of treatment** and recovery support services in rural or tribal communities by expanding the use of technology-assisted treatment and recovery support services.
- ◀ **Enhancing public safety, behavioral health, and public health information sharing** partnerships that leverage key public health and public safety data sets (e.g., de-identified PDMP data, naloxone administrations, fatal and nonfatal overdose data, drug arrests) to create a holistic view of the environment and develop interventions based on this information.

Courts, and assist in the implementation of diversion agreements.

Ohio

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) is partnering with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services under the Bureau of Correctional Recovery Services to develop and explore new technologies, such as virtual reality (VR), aimed at enhancing treatment services at two correctional and two community pilot sites for people with opioid use.

The state is partnering with BetaGov/Litmus at New York University (NYU) to serve as the research and evaluation partner, and Nsenia will provide VR software. The project may provide opportunities to learn about developing, implementing, delivering, and evaluating VR treatment that can be applied in other correctional settings across the country.

COAP Grantee Spotlight

Alaska

In response to the continued and changing opioid crisis, the state of Alaska has been implementing multiple strategies to address the impacts of the opioid epidemic. In 2017, the governor declared the opioid epidemic a statewide disaster, providing the state with expanded opportunities to coordinate, manage, respond, and implement responses. Because of Alaska's size, sparse and geographically distributed population, and lack of infrastructure, delivering services to rural tribal areas has created challenges to reach areas of need.

The Department of Law, the Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Health and Social Services are collaborating on and supporting the State of Alaska Tribal Diversion Project. This effort works directly with Alaskan tribes to develop diversion agreements in rural areas, support culturally relevant processes in Alaskan Tribal

COAP Training and Technical Assistance Program

The COAP TTA program offers information, training, technical assistance, and learning opportunities to support BJA grantees, states, tribes, and communities in building and sustaining multidisciplinary criminal justice responses to the opioid epidemic. Expertise is available to support a wide range of programs, including first-responder and overdose prevention; technology-assisted treatment; diversion and alternative sentencing; reentry and community corrections; and PDMP and data-driven projects. Training and technical assistance is provided in a variety of formats, including expert consultations, virtual and in-person training events, workshop and meeting presentations, and online resources.

Tribes, states, and localities are invited to request TTA to meet their specific needs and goals. Here are some of the ways in which the COAP TTA Program can support your community:

- ◀ **Facilitating peer-to-peer learning opportunities** in which communities can learn from experienced programs through virtual consultations and on-site visits.

- ◀ **Providing speakers for conferences** and workshops or skilled subject-matter experts for training events to educate stakeholders and build capacity.
- ◀ **Facilitating strategic and cross-system planning** to identify community resources, establish priorities, and develop a road map to achieving goals.
- ◀ **Identifying materials** such as policies and procedures, guidelines, and data sharing agreements that support program activities.

In addition to self-identified TTA, the COAP TTA Program offers special learning opportunities such as the Peer Recovery Support Services Mentoring Initiative (PRSSMI). The purpose of this initiative is to advance the inclusion of peer recovery support services into jurisdictions' portfolios of substance abuse intervention and treatment strategies. PRSSMI participants are matched to an experienced "mentor site" program that provides consultation and support through virtual learning sessions and an on-site visit. Mentor sites are experienced collaborators with first responders, law enforcement, courts, jails, prisons, and community corrections to help people who abuse opioids to achieve and maintain recovery from addiction.

For More Information About COAP and Technical Assistance Requests

Visit the COAP Resource Center at www.coapresources.org for more information about the program. BJA also provides free training and technical assistance related to state programs to both COAP grantees and nongrantees. To explore technical assistance opportunities, please visit the COAP Resource Center.

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About BJA

BJA provides leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support local, state, and tribal law enforcement in achieving safer communities. To learn more about BJA, visit www.bja.gov and follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DOJBJA) and Twitter (@DOJBJA). BJA is part of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.