



BJA's **Comprehensive**  
Opioid, Stimulant,  
and Substance Abuse  
Program



New York  
Office of Addiction Services and Supports  
Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Site-Based Program

10/01/19 Grant Start → 09/30/22 Grant End

### Overview

The New York Opioid Court Treatment Enhancement Project will enhance and evaluate substance abuse treatment and recovery support service systems treating offenders participating in ten geographically diverse opioid courts in the state. The New York Department of Health's Opioid Annual Data Report 2018 shows that New York State experienced more than 3,000 opioid overdose deaths in 2016, a 5 percent increase from the approximately 2,253 deaths in 2015. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 3,224 opioid overdose deaths in the state in 2017. Estimates from the 2015 and 2016 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health indicated that 70,000 New Yorkers 12 years and older had used heroin within the past year and 648,000 had misused a prescription opioid, for a total of 718,000 people needing treatment services. The incidence of opioid use disorder (OUD)-related consequences, such as opioid overdose deaths and emergency department visits, has rapidly increased in New York. As these data illustrate, every region in the state has been affected by the opioid

crisis and community resources have been tremendously strained—the need for ambulance drivers has increased, as has the number of hospital admissions and the number of public health officials and community members requiring training in naloxone administration.

### Grant Focus

- Link data sets to identify trends and focus resources.
- Develop and disseminate research on opioid policies and interventions.

### Program Approach

The Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) is partnering with the New York State Unified Court System (UCS), the Center for Court Innovation, and the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University on the New York Opioid Treatment Court Enhancement Project. This COAP project will enhance and evaluate

substance abuse treatment and recovery support service systems treating offenders participating in ten geographically diverse state opioid courts through the following four goals:

1. Train and certify clinicians and recovery advocates working in opioid courts in evidence-based cognitive behavioral interventions. Partners will coordinate with Correctional Counseling Inc. and the Change Companies to train ten cohorts of clinicians, clinical supervisors, and recovery advocates on Moral Reconciliation Therapy and Interactive Journaling.
2. Create detailed descriptions of the opioid court collaborative care model of treatment in each of the ten sites, which will provide the structure that Lerner will use to study the opioid courts for the process evaluation. Lerner will study this integrated treatment, supervision, and supportive service model to understand how the program identifies potential participants, what the intake process is, how promptly participants enter the opioid court after being deemed eligible, how risk and needs assessments are used, which staff members and key stakeholders are providing resources to the program, what evidence-based practices are delivered, what the timing of those services is, and how the court monitors and responds to participants' compliance.
3. Determine the effectiveness of the cognitive behavioral interventions for programs treating the same population and measure the outcomes affected by these cognitive behavioral models. For the outcome/impact evaluation, Lerner will work with each site to develop and implement a randomized controlled trial, which is the gold standard for measuring effectiveness and are critical for estimating impacts at scale. Individuals with OUD in each participating opioid court will be randomized to either (1) treatment as usual, (2) treatment as usual plus Moral Reconciliation Therapy, or (3) treatment as usual plus Interactive Journaling. Treatment-as-usual participants will be the comparison group.

4. Update evidence-based cognitive behavioral curricula and manuals for implementation of the opioid court model. The results from this statewide opioid court evaluation will be used in meetings organized by the project coordinator with OASAS and UCS, other state agency partners, local treatment providers, medication-assisted treatment prescribers, recovery community representatives, court administrators, and judges to make funding and policy decisions for statewide replication of opioid courts. The information will be useful for the development of OUD treatment and criminal justice policy, particularly as they pertain to the opioid epidemic. The information will also be used to recommend process changes in each of the opioid court programs to maximize its effectiveness.

## Project Partners

- Center for Court Innovation
- New York Unified Court System
- Syracuse University Lerner Center for Public Health

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