

# Maximizing the Impact of Opioid Settlement Funds

Presentation to the County Commissioners  
Association of Missouri

March 1, 2024

# Introductions



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National Association of Counties



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Program Director, Bloomberg Overdose Prevention Initiative  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

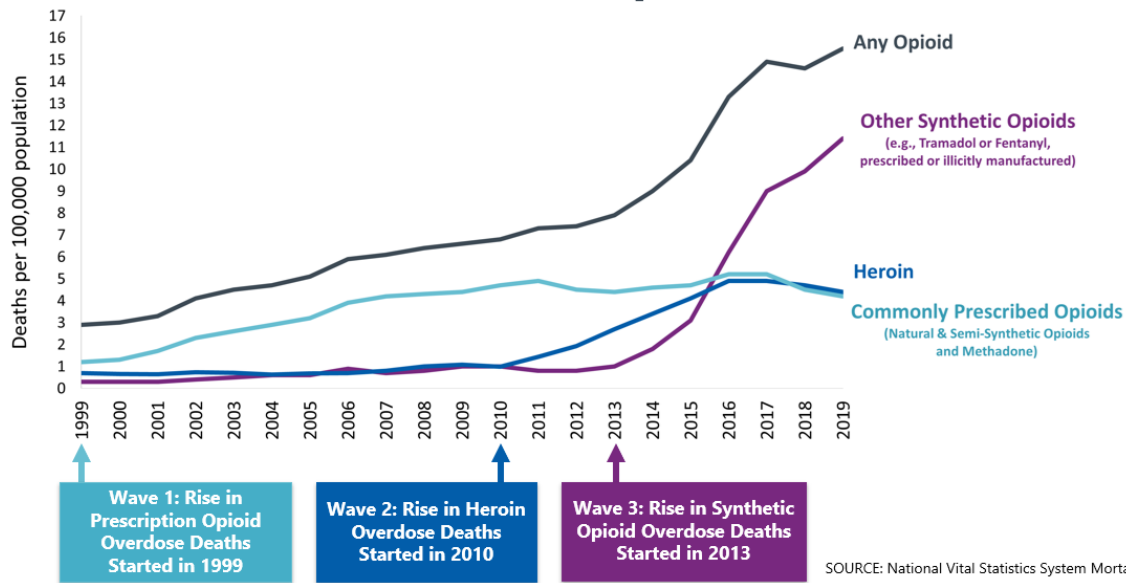
# Where are we?



## The Opioid Crisis

# The Opioid Epidemic

## Three Waves of the Rise in Opioid Overdose Deaths



# The Opioid Epidemic

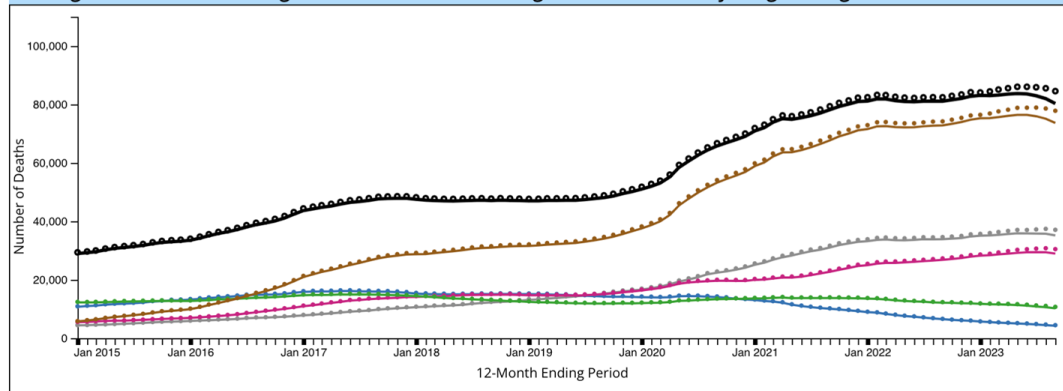
## 12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug or Drug Class

Based on data available for analysis on: February 4, 2024

After opening the **drug class dropdown**, click the top of the dropdown menu again to make the checkboxes disappear.

Select Jurisdiction: United States  
Select specific drugs or drug classes: Select drug class

Figure 2. 12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug or Drug Class: United States



### Legend for Drug or Drug Class

- Cocaine (T40.5)
- Heroin (T40.1)
- Natural & semi-synthetic opioids (T40.2)
- Opioids (T40.0-T40.4, T40.6)
- Psychostimulants with abuse potential (T43.6)
- Synthetic opioids, excl. methadone (T40.4)
- Reported Value
- Predicted Value

# The Opioid Epidemic

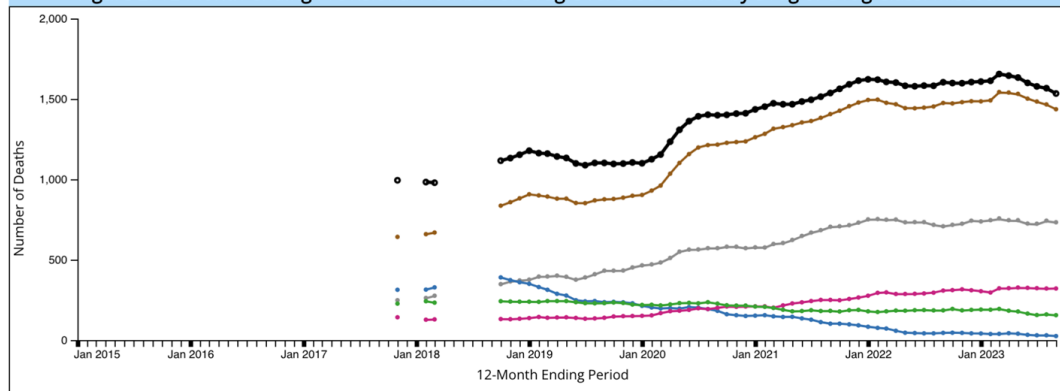
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Select Jurisdiction: Missouri  
Select specific drugs or drug classes: Select drug class

Figure 2. 12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug or Drug Class: Missouri



### Legend for Drug or Drug Class

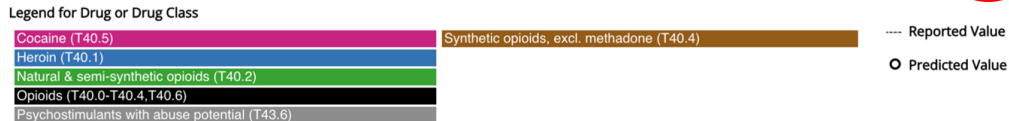
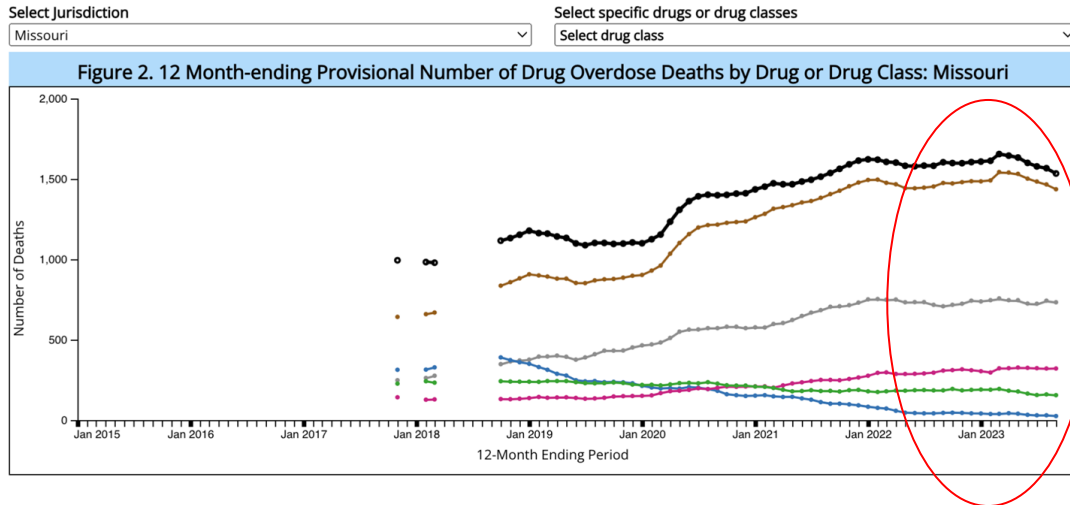
Cocaine (T40.5)	Synthetic opioids, excl. methadone (T40.4)	--- Reported Value
Heroin (T40.1)		○ Predicted Value
Natural & semi-synthetic opioids (T40.2)		
Opioids (T40.0-T40.4, T40.6)		
Psychostimulants with abuse potential (T43.6)		

# The Opioid Epidemic

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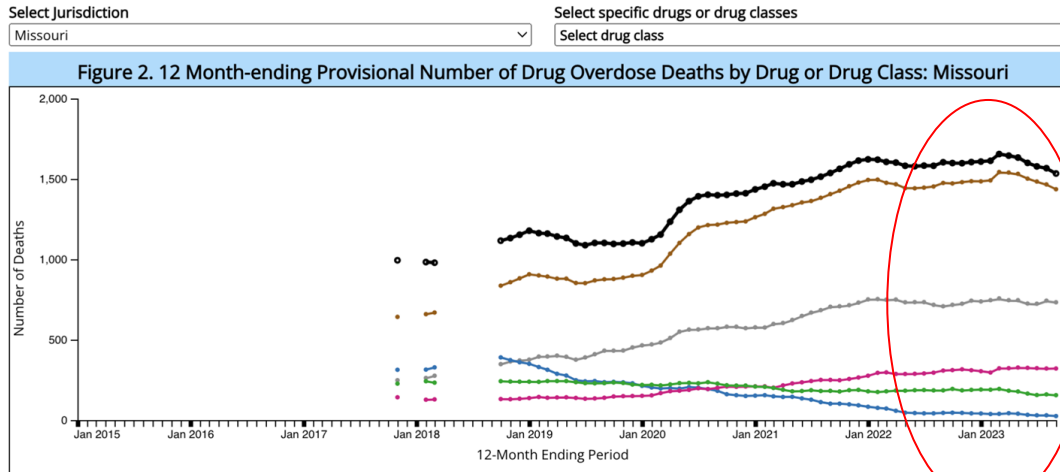


# The Opioid Epidemic

## 12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug or Drug Class

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All Opioids

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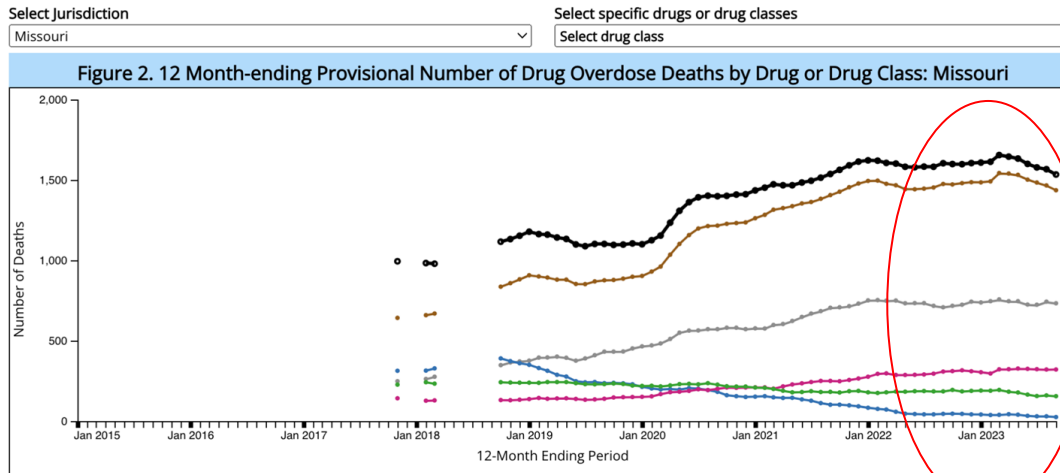


# The Opioid Epidemic

## 12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug or Drug Class

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Fentanyl

### Legend for Drug or Drug Class

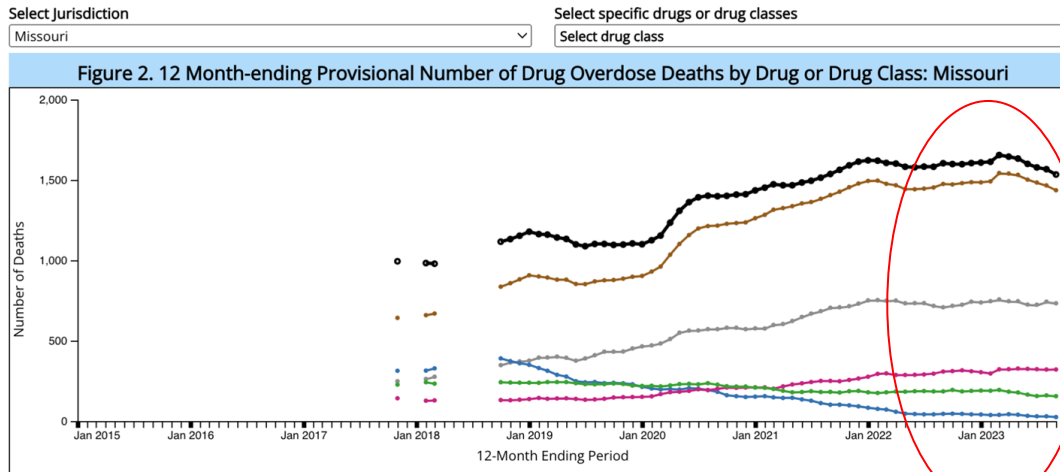
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# The Opioid Epidemic

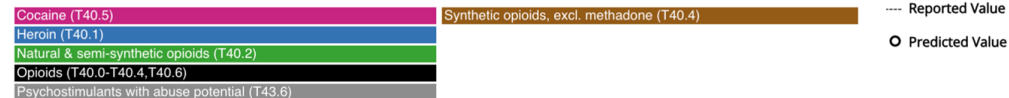
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### Legend for Drug or Drug Class



methamphetamine

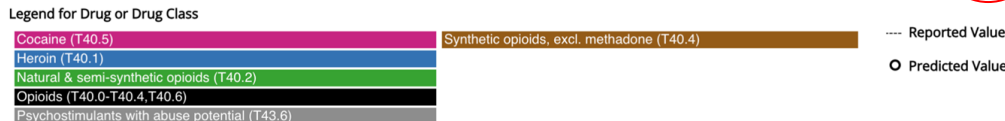
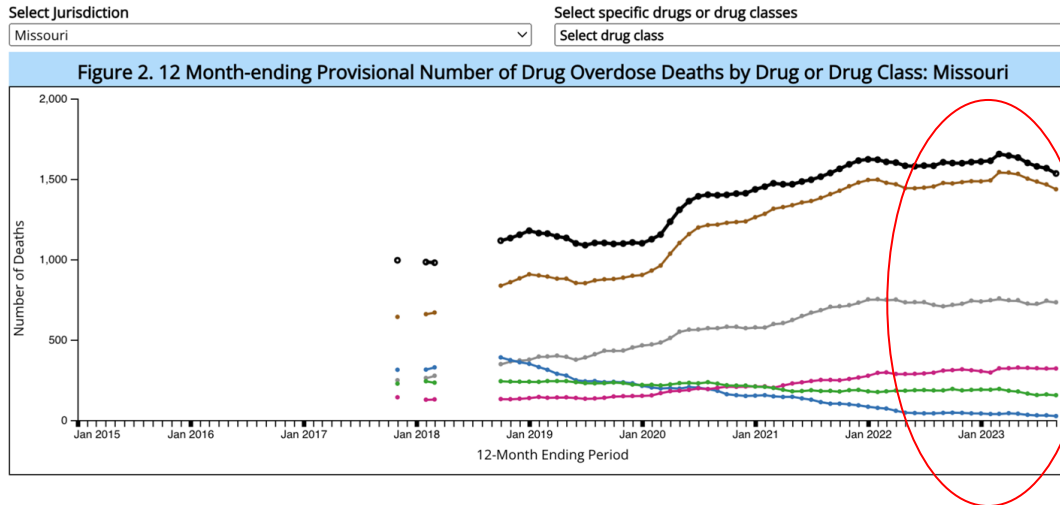
Cocaine

# The Opioid Epidemic

## 12 Month-ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths by Drug or Drug Class

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RX Opioids

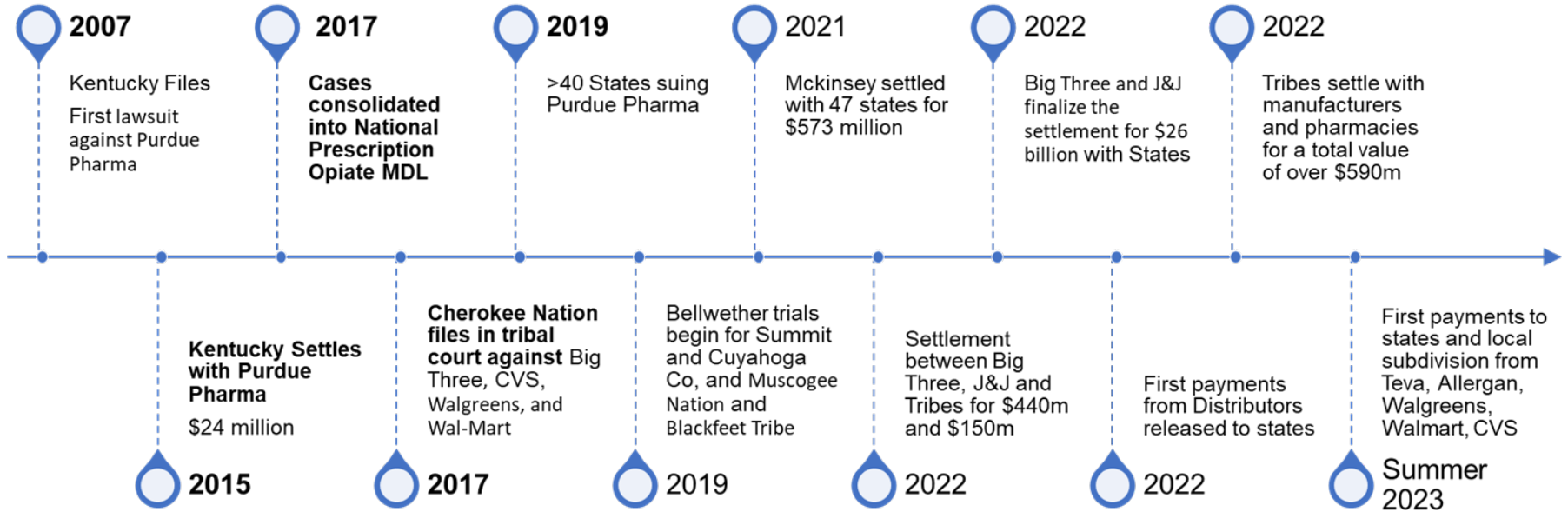
Heroin

# Where are we?

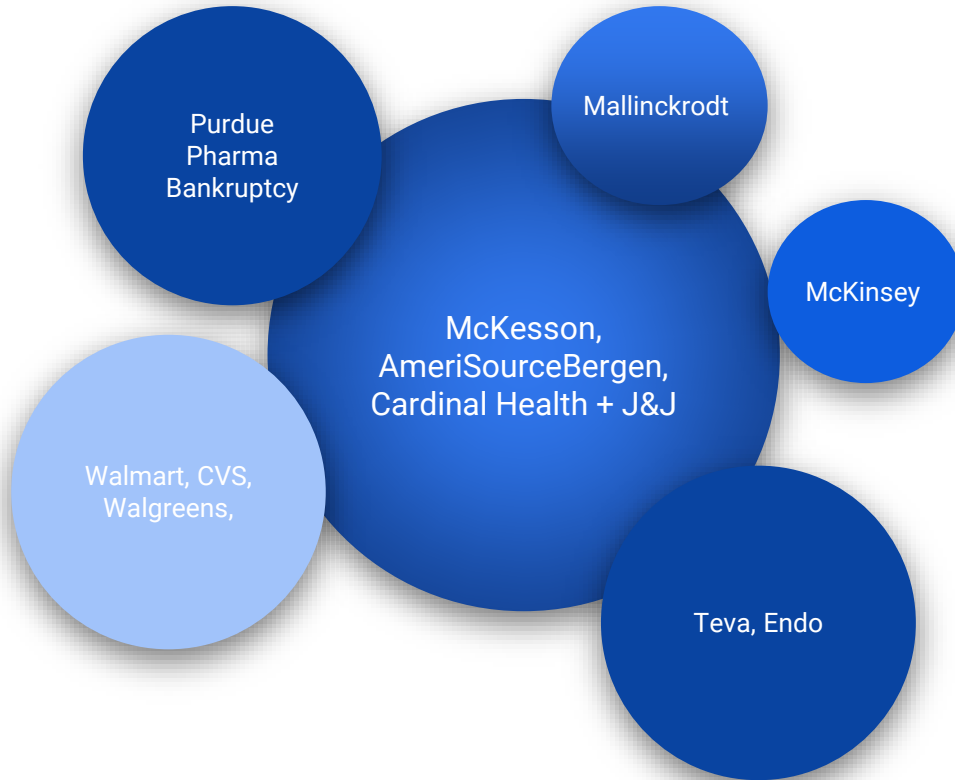


## The Opioid Litigation

# Opioid Litigation Timeline

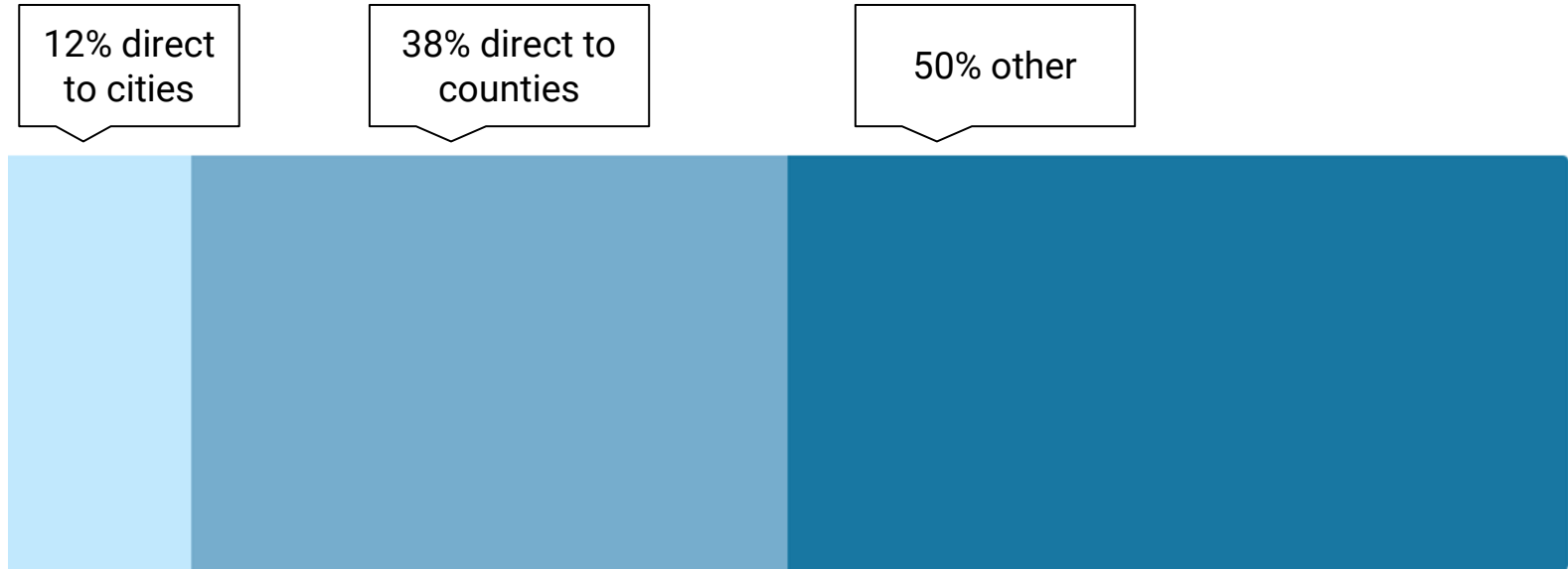


# ~\$56 Billion to State & Local Govs



**~\$458 million to MO**

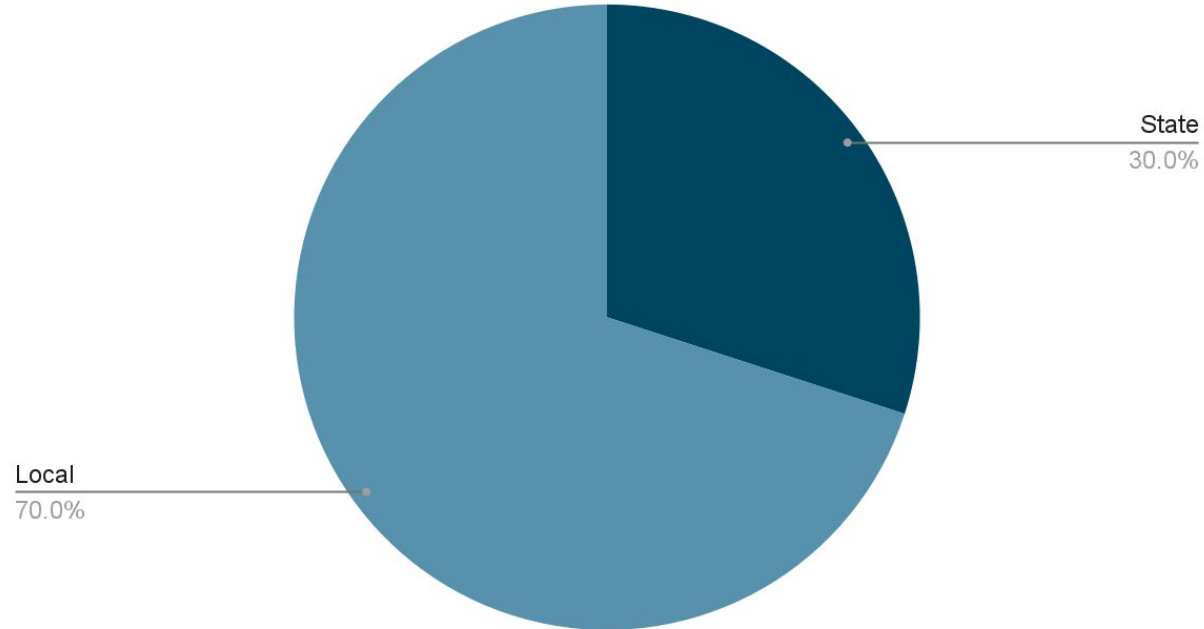
# Across the country





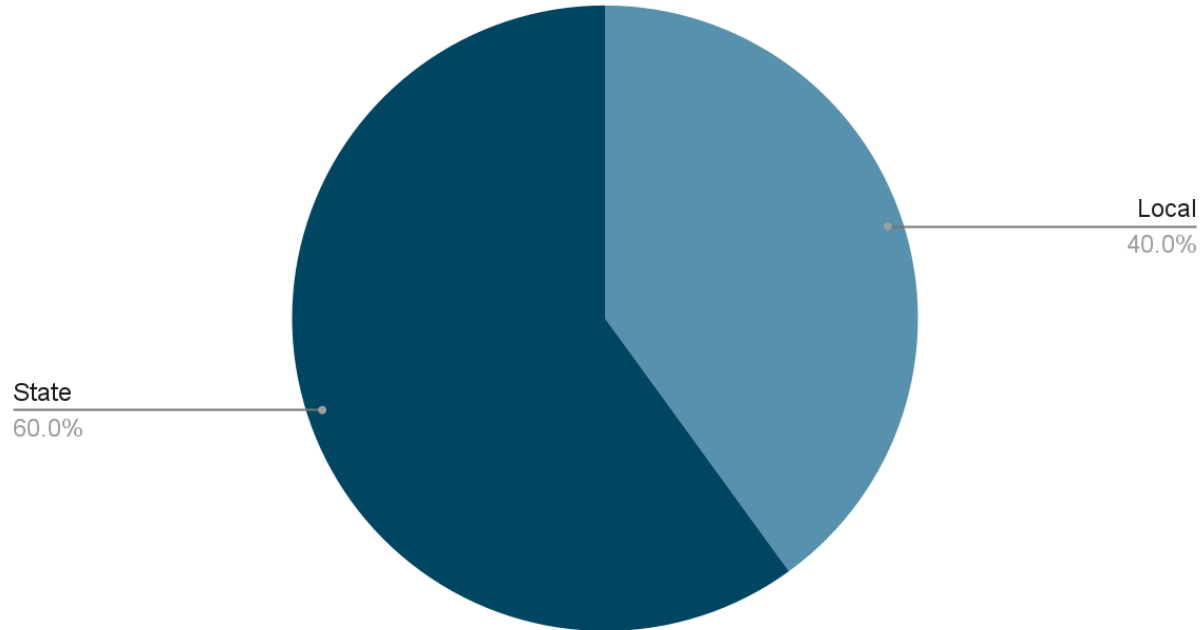
# Majority Local

Wisconsin



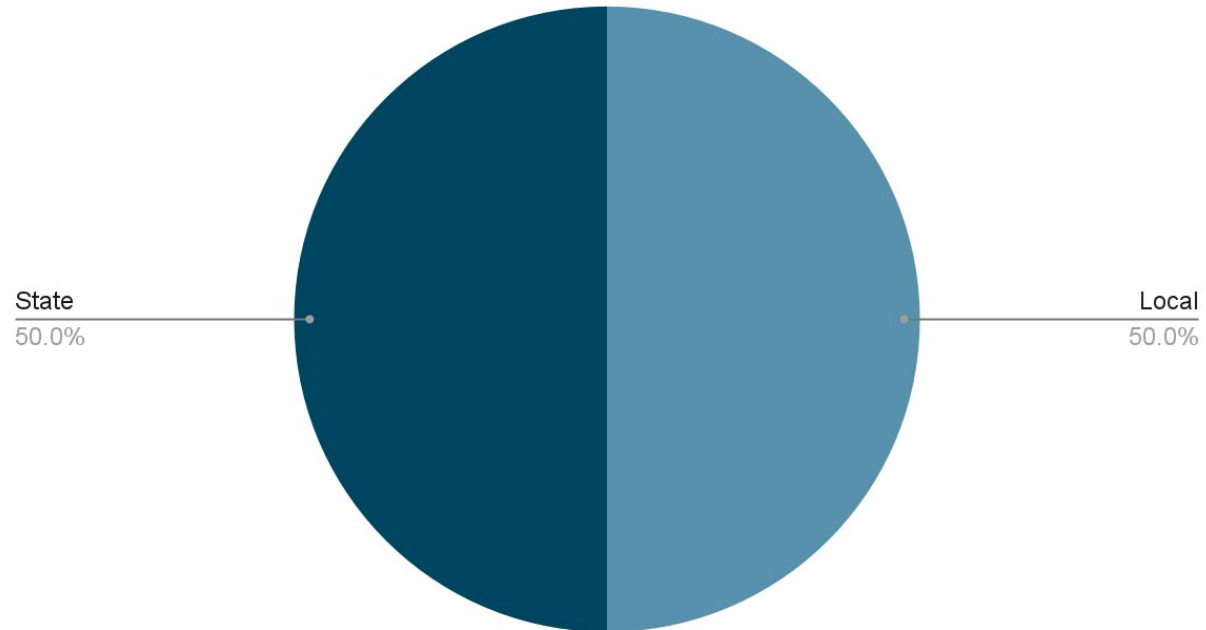
# Majority State

Missouri



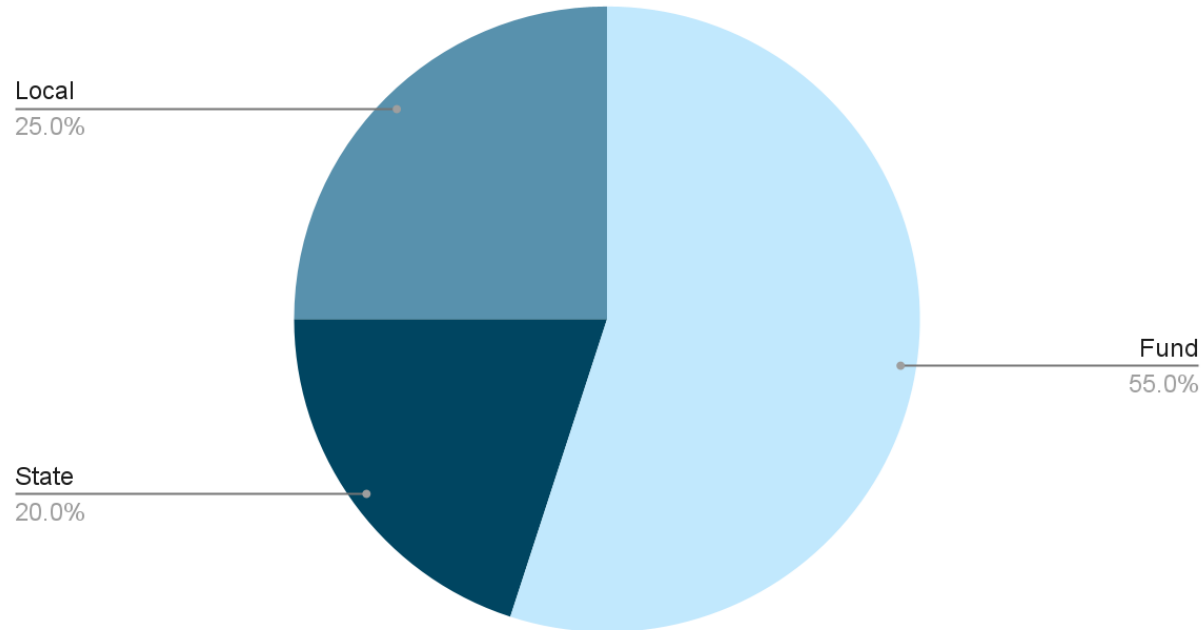
# 50/50

Iowa



# Other

## Illinois



# Where are we?



Creating  
Lasting  
Solutions

# The Principles

**NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED GUIDANCE FOR  
OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS**

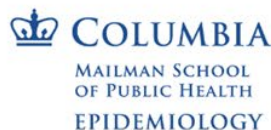
## Principles for the Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation

Developed by a coalition of organizations across the spectrum of the substance use field including physicians, addiction medicine specialists, recovery, treatment, and harm reduction. The Principles for the Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation provide planning and process level guidance for state and local policymakers on how to effectively spend money from the opioid settlements.

**Explore the Principles**

<http://opioidprinciples.jhsph.edu>

# More than 60 National Groups



# Principle 1: Spend Money to Save Lives

*Invest in programs*



Example: Rock  
County, WI

Community-Based  
Needs Assessment



# Principle 2: Use Evidence to Guide Spending

*Proven programs*

*Promising programs*

# Example: Beaufort County, South Carolina

## Investing in Proven Practices

### Medications for Opioid Use Disorder



- SBIRT Training
- Comprehensive wrap-around services to individuals in recovery, including housing, transportation, job placement/training, and childcare

# Example: Milwaukee County, WI

## Investing in Promising Practices

### Vending Machines



**\*\*When a promising practice, fund evaluation to confirm anticipated benefit\*\***

# Principle 3: Invest in Youth Prevention

*Building Youth Resilience*

Example: Cambria  
County, PA

Supporting School  
Mental Health



## Principle 4: Focus on Racial Equity

*Invest in Disproportionately Impacted Communities*

Example: Cuyahoga  
County, OH

Divert Individuals  
Away from Jail and  
into Care





# Principle 5: Create a Fair and Transparent Process

*Listen, Evaluate, Disclose*

# Disclosure & Transparency

 CT Mirror

## Opinion: CT needs a defined plan for opioid settlement spending

Connecticut must have a clearly defined strategy, measurable outcomes, and a 'test and learn' approach for its opioid settlement money.



 NPR

## How opioid settlement funds were spent in 2023: 5 things to know : Shots - Health News

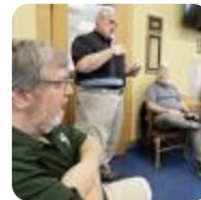
Opioid settlement payouts are now public — and we know how much local governments got. Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, a manufacturer of generic...



 The Parkersburg News and Sentinel

## Wood County officials discuss goals for opioid settlement money

PARKERSBURG — The Wood County Commission feels they need to prioritize the county's constitutional officers in how it spends over \$858000 in...



# Disclosure & Transparency



# Disclosure & Transparency

## Funding decisions and explanations

- Annual Report
- Website
- Monitoring of investments over time



**OPIOID  
SOLUTIONS  
CENTER**

## Principles for the Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation

Conducting a needs assessment

PRINCIPLE 1

**SPEND THE MONEY TO SAVE LIVES**

PRINCIPLE 2

**USE EVIDENCE TO GUIDE SPENDING**

Reviewing the effects of existing policies

PRINCIPLE 3

**INVEST IN YOUTH PREVENTION**

Identifying health disparities

PRINCIPLE 4

**FOCUS ON RACIAL EQUITY**

PRINCIPLE 5

**DEVELOP A FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESS FOR DECIDING WHERE TO SPEND THE FUNDING**

Creating a representative council



# The Principles: A Quick Guide to Conducting a Needs Assessment



The Principles for the Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation are nationally recognized guidance for states, counties, and cities receiving money from the lawsuits against entities that contributed to the opioid epidemic. These planning Principles, coordinated by faculty at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, can help jurisdictions create a foundation for effective spending of the monies to save lives from overdose.

The Principles for the Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation encourage communities to use settlement funds to supplement existing opioid abatement work (Principle 3) and invest in effective evidence-based interventions (Principle 3). Conducting a local needs assessment is an important early step in determining how to disburse these limited resources for maximum impact.

## What is a needs assessment?

A **needs assessment** is a systematic process for identifying a community's health needs and assets. **In the context of opioid settlement planning, a needs assessment is used to identify the areas in which interventions can save the most lives.**

Needs assessments rely on local data. Both quantitative data (e.g., number of overdose events, number of individuals receiving treatment, and length of waitlists for care) and qualitative data (e.g., community-identified priorities) help tell the story of a community's opioid challenges and current methods for navigating them. Needs assessments use this data to identify discrepancies between a community's needs and its system capacity that warrant further investigation and investment.

## Who conducts a needs assessment?

In many counties, needs assessments are entirely administered by the local health department, though it may also contract with other organizations to conduct all or part of the assessment (e.g., schools of public health, non-profit organizations).

## When should a needs assessment be conducted?

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration suggests conducting a needs assessment **every three years**. As we have seen during the COVID-19 pandemic and with the introduction of synthetic opioids like fentanyl into the drug supply, the substance use landscape in the United States can change quickly. Periodic needs assessments help counties tailor their opioid response strategies to their population's evolving needs.

## Why is a needs assessment important for planning opioid settlement spending?

Opioid settlement funds are arriving after years of county-led opioid response efforts. A needs assessment can help counties invest this new funding strategically to expand the reach of currently funded solutions and close gaps in services, either where needs are not being met or where new needs arise. These funds will be disbursed annually over many years depending on the settlement terms. A needs assessment is a powerful tool counties can use to ensure settlement funds create a sustainable, long-term reduction in opioid misuse and overall substance use disorder.

Many jurisdictions already possess sufficient resources and data to conduct a needs assessment. This guide will serve as a quick reference to aid counties in conducting such an assessment to assist in investing their opioid litigation funds.

# The Principles Quick Guide to Creating a Settlement Council



The Principles for Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation are nationally recognized guidance for states, counties, and cities receiving money from the lawsuits against entities that contributed to the opioid epidemic. These planning Principles can help jurisdictions create a foundation for effective spending of the monies to save lives from overdose.

The Principles for the Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation encourage communities to Spend Money to Save Lives (Principle 4) and Create a Fair and Transparent Process (Principle 5). Creating a council with expertise in issues related to substance use can help create an informed process that ensures dollars from the litigation are going toward identified areas of need. Establishing a council that represents the diverse needs, strengths, and experiences of community members can help address health disparities (Principle 4).

## What is a settlement council?

In the context of the opioid litigation, a settlement council is an entity that works with county decision-makers to decide how best to use dollars from the opioid settlements. Settlement councils may take on an advisory role and provide advice or feedback to the county on the best use of the dollars, or they may have the authority to directly allocate funding.

## Why have a settlement council?

By bringing together people from various backgrounds, the council can put forward recommendations that reflect both the scientific evidence and the needs and desires of the community.

A settlement council can engage members of the public by attending events hosted by other community-based organizations as well as holding open meetings that include time for members of the public to speak. Councils can also solicit public input by administering surveys or creating a digital platform to receive written comments. Councils can specifically solicit input from traditionally underserved communities by reaching out to community-based providers, nonprofit leaders,

or outreach workers who interact directly with people who use drugs, and encouraging their participation in the decision-making process. The inclusion of representatives from organizations with a proven track record of effectively working with underserved communities can help members of those communities engage throughout the process.

## Who should be on a settlement council?

When composing a settlement council, counties should seek representatives from the communities that are most affected by the opioid epidemic and organizations that specialize in opioid abatement. These groups may include:

- People with lived/living experience of opioid use disorder, including those receiving medications for opioid use disorder.
- Public health practitioners who specialize in substance use and overdose prevention, from organizations such as local health departments or schools of public health.
- Primary prevention specialists, such as primary care providers or school-based clinicians.
- Treatment providers, particularly those that engage with traditionally underserved populations.
- Recovery and other social service organizations; for example, a local Housing First program.

In addition to representing a variety of subject matter expertise, the council as a whole should represent the **diversity** of the county in the personal characteristics (such as gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation), professional backgrounds, and life experiences of its members.

# The Principles Quick Guide to Removing Policy Barriers



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The Principles for the Use of Funds From the Opioid Litigation encourage governments to consider both empirical evidence (Principle 4) and public testimony (Principle 5) when allocating funds from the opioid settlements. After decades of research into effective interventions for opioid use disorder, there are now many evidence-based solutions to the prevention, treatment, recovery, and reduction of harms associated with opioid use. For an evidence-based program to produce the intended results, it may first be necessary to remove laws and regulations that interfere with proper implementation of the program. By conducting a policy review, county leaders can proactively identify and amend policies that may otherwise limit the impact of opioid settlement investments.

## What is a policy barrier?

A policy barrier is a law or regulation that impedes the implementation of evidence-based interventions. By conducting a policy review, counties can ensure they are aware of any policies that may go against the scientific evidence or have an adverse effect on certain demographic groups. For example, a policy passed decades ago may need to be amended to reflect new findings or lessons learned that have emerged since then.

## What is a policy review?

A policy review examines policies concerning substance use and determines whether these policies are blocking the implementation of evidence-based interventions. These reviews should be done periodically and are often completed by participatory boards or committees (e.g., a citizens advisory board or departments (e.g., health department) within the county).

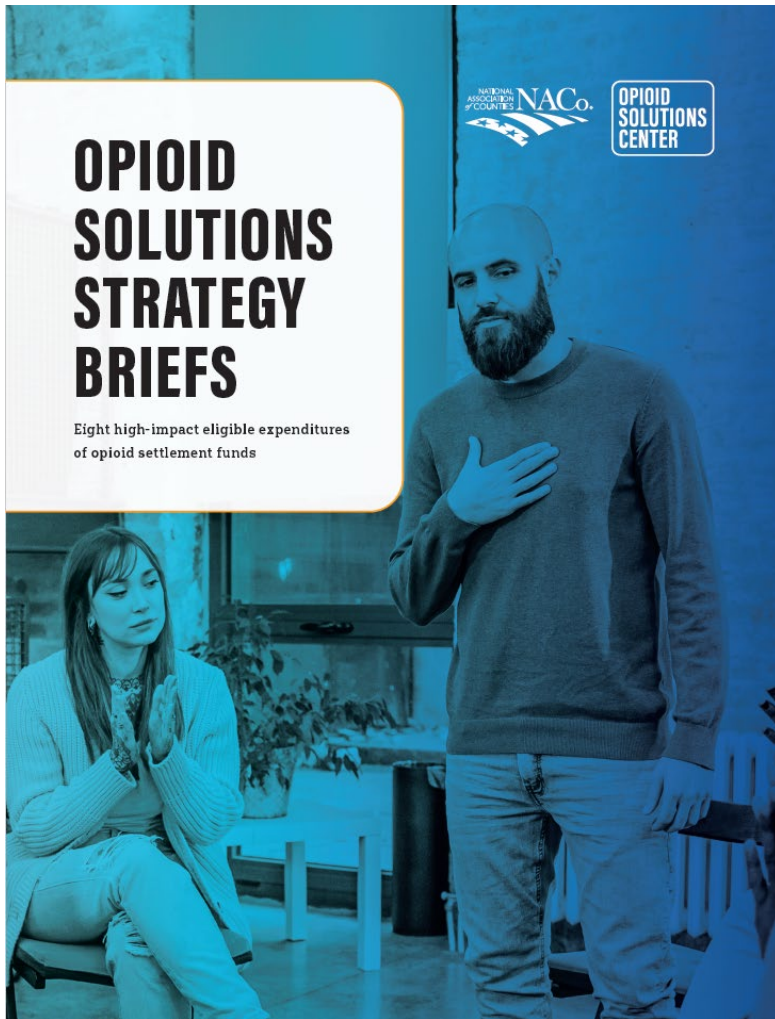
A policy review can assess either state and/or county policies, as both can play a role in promoting or obstructing the use of evidence-based programs. A policy review can also be done in collaboration with a needs assessment. Findings from the review will identify any instances of inaccurate or counterproductive policy language and equip county officials to resolve these issues through the amendment process.



Access the Principles Quick Guide to Creating a Settlement Council







## Topics:

- Medication-Assisted Treatment (“MAT”) for Opioid Use Disorder
- Increasing Access to Evidence-Based Treatment
- Treatment and Recovery for Pregnant and Parenting People
- Treatment for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
- Effective Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder for Incarcerated Populations
- Naloxone to Prevent Overdose
- Syringe Services Programs
- Post-Overdose Response Teams



# Visit NACo's Opioid Solutions Center

[www.naco.org/opioid](http://www.naco.org/opioid)



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