

RURAL ADDICTION RESOURCES

- **Community Assessment Tool:** <https://opioidmisusetool.norc.org/>
- **Rural Community Action Guide:**
<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/rural-community-action-guide.pdf>
- **RCAG promising practices supplement:**
<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/rural-community-action-guide-promising-practices.pdf>
- **Federal Rural Resources Guide:**
<https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/RuralResourceGuide.pdf>
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture:** <https://usda.gov/opioids>

* *Rural addiction/health resources email list: To be added, please send your email to Betty-Ann Bryce at betty-ann.bryce@usda.gov.*





Office of National Drug Control Policy

Rural Community Action Guide Fact Sheet

- **Drugs in rural America:** Our country is in the midst of an unprecedented drug crisis. In 2018, nearly 68,000 Americans died due to a drug overdose. While that was the first decline in the number of drug overdose deaths in 30 years, this is still almost 200 people each day.

The addiction crisis knows no economic or geographic boundary and has impacted small towns and rural places from Alaska to Maine.

- A 2017 survey conducted by the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Farmers Union found that nearly 50 percent of rural adults, and 74 percent of farmers, have been directly impacted by opioid misuse.
 - A [survey](#) published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in early January 2020 found that drugs are now equal to the economy as a concern in rural America.
- **Needs of rural communities:** Rural areas lack many of the resources needed to keep people healthy and free from addiction including critical assets like treatment centers, mental and behavioral health counselors, support groups, and transportation. The most effective solutions to filling these gaps often begin at a local level, not in Washington, D.C. To take action and create real change, however, local leaders need tools and the support of state and federal partners.
- **Rural Community Action Guide:** The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) has built a number of tools to assist community leaders in building an effective local response to the crisis of addiction. One of those tools is a Rural Community Action Guide (RCAG), found at www.usda.gov/topics/opioids.

The Guide includes background information, recommended action steps from key rural stakeholders, and promising practices for a wide range of issues related to drug addiction in rural America.

The RCAG is built on lessons learned from rural roundtable discussions held in over a dozen states, as well as the experiences of many rural stakeholder partners. No two rural communities are the same. However, what is working in one small

town can often be replicated in another to save lives and build a place of rural prosperity for the future.

Topics covered in the guide include:

- Stigma
- Using data
- Managing fiscal resources in a community impacted by addiction
- Workforce development
- Broadband
- Overcoming economic challenges
- Prevention
- Engaging the agriculture community in addiction
- Rural health care needs
- Medication-assisted treatment
- Engaging law enforcement in addiction
- Drug courts in rural communities
- Harnessing the faith community around addiction
- Recovery support
- Housing

Partners contributing to the Guide include: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Addiction Policy Forum, American Farm Bureau Federation, Appalachian Regional Commission, Center for Court Innovation, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, Faces & Voices of Recovery, Housing Assistance Council, National Alliance for Recovery Residences, National Association of Counties, National Association of Development Organizations, National Farmers Union, National Rural Health Association, National Sheriffs' Association, NORC Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis, NTCA- The Rural Broadband Association, National Rural Transit Assistance Program, and The Pew Charitable Trusts.

The Guide is intended to be used alongside the [Community Assessment Tool](https://opioidmisusetool.norc.org), (opioidmisusetool.norc.org) which provides county-level data to help a local leader better understand the scope of the problem in their community, and the [Federal Rural Resources Guide](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/RuralResourceGuide.pdf), (www.rd.usda.gov/files/RuralResourceGuide.pdf) which helps a local leader see what federal funds are available to build that local response.

- **Tool for innovation and partnership:** The RCAG is a tool to empower local leaders to take action in a new way. The magnitude of the addiction crisis and the opportunity that we have to strengthen rural communities as a result demands that we work together and do things differently than ever before. Together, we can save lives and build strong, healthy and drug-free rural communities now and for generations to come.



OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY COVID-19 FACT SHEET

President Donald J. Trump is committed to taking any and all necessary steps to protect the lives, health, and safety of the American people.

During the COVID-19 crisis, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) is leading efforts to ensure that prevention, treatment, recovery support services, and safe and effective pain management remain available nationwide. The Trump Administration is mobilizing the Federal Government to ensure the approximately 20 million Americans who struggle with the disease of addiction can access and continue to receive treatment and recovery support services, while keeping themselves and healthcare professionals safe from unnecessary exposure to COVID-19.

“The threat posed by COVID-19, along with the mitigation measures in place across the country to prevent its spread, makes accessing treatment and maintaining recovery especially challenging. We must act boldly and creatively to ensure people get the treatment they need.”

ONDCP Director Jim Carroll

PRIORITIES

HELPING AMERICANS WHO STRUGGLE WITH ADDICTION: The Trump Administration is taking action to support Americans who struggle with drug addiction.

- [SAMHSA](#) issued guidance to facilitate outpatient treatment for withdrawal from alcohol and benzodiazepines to ensure help is available in the event of a shortage of hospital beds during the pandemic.
- Numerous States and addiction treatment organizations have followed up on Federal actions to ensure that care is not disrupted by releasing guidance for substance use disorder treatment programs to keep patients and providers safe.

EXPANDING USE OF TELEMEDICINE AND ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING: The Trump Administration is expanding the use of technology to provide care related to substance use disorder during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- [DEA](#) is allowing its registrants to prescribe outside of a State where they are registered, allowing them to work with patients across state lines through telemedicine.
- [DEA](#) and [SAMHSA](#) are permitting practitioners with a DATA 2000 waiver to prescribe buprenorphine to new and existing patients with opioid use disorder through telehealth or telephone.
- [CMS](#) expanded Medicare coverage of telehealth services and released guidance to States on tools to treat substance use disorder through telehealth.
- [CMS](#) released telemedicine guidance for providers in Medicare and Medicaid that contains guidance and links to reliable sources of information on telehealth practices.
- [CMS](#) issued a new rule permitting opioid treatment programs to provide therapy and counseling using audio-only telephone calls rather than via two-way interactive audio-video during the public health emergency.

- [HHS](#) announced it will not issue penalties for non-HIPAA compliant technology used to conduct a telehealth session during the public health emergency, so long as the covered entity acts in good faith.
- [VA](#) announced it will start providing most of its care through telehealth and increasingly use mobile services to help screen veterans and provide follow-up care.

INCREASING FLEXIBILITY FOR TREATMENT WITH METHADONE AND BUPRENORPHINE: The Trump Administration is increasing flexibility for opioid use disorder treatment.

- [SAMHSA](#) announced increased flexibility for methadone treatment, including blanket exceptions for all stable patients in an Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) to receive 28 days of take-home doses, and an option for States to request 14 days of take-home doses for patients in the early stages of their recovery. SAMHSA has also clarified that certain midlevel providers may dispense and administer medication in an OTP if their supervisor becomes unavailable because of COVID-19.
- SAMHSA issued a [FAQ document](#) outlining provisions to ensure ongoing access to medications for opioid use disorder in both OTPs and among practitioners with a DATA 2000 waiver not providing care through an OTP.
- [DEA](#) issued an exception to allow methadone transport to patients who cannot make in-person visits to a clinic.

ENSURING ACCESS TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES: The Trump Administration is ensuring patients and providers have continued access to Schedule II controlled substances.

- To reduce the need for in-person visits, [DEA](#) posted guidance allowing providers to order Schedule II prescriptions by telephone to pharmacies under certain conditions.
- [DEA](#) granted an exception to the quantity of raw material a bulk manufacturer may hold to ensure Schedule II and III controlled substance manufacturers will not experience raw materials shortages during the pandemic.

SUPPORTING RURAL COMMUNITIES: The Trump Administration is supporting the needs of rural Americans and their families who are impacted by addiction.

- [SAMHSA](#) released a list of virtual support recovery resources which are critical in maintaining recovery.
- [FCC](#) announced waivers to its Rural Health Care and E-Rate programs, allowing for improved internet capacity, Wi-Fi hotspots, networking gear, and other equipment enhancement services for telemedicine during the pandemic.
- [USDA](#) is using all available program flexibilities and contingencies to feed children and help families in need, including families who are impacted by substance use disorder.
- [FTA](#) announced an expansion of assistance under its Emergency Relief Program for transit agencies, including assistance for transportation in rural areas.



OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY COVID-19 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- White House Guidance ([here](#))
- CDC COVID-19 Guidance ([here](#))
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services COVID-19 Resources ([here](#))
- DEA COVID-19 Guidance ([here](#))
- Report COVID-19 fraud to DOJ ([here](#))
- FDA's COVID-19 Resources ([here](#))
- Indian Health Service FAQs on the Federal Response in Indian Country ([here](#))
- NIH: COVID-19: Potential Implications for Individuals with Substance Use Disorders ([here](#))
- NHTSA's Office of EMS COVID-19 Resources ([here](#))
- The Notification of Enforcement Discretion on Telehealth Remote Communications ([here](#))
- SAMHSA's Resources ([here](#))
- Single State Substance Use Authorities ([here](#))
- State Opioid Treatment Authorities ([here](#))
- USDA COVID-19 Resources ([here](#))