

KACo Opioid Solutions Learning Opportunities



Kentucky counties continue to lead the way in addressing the opioid epidemic through thoughtful, strategic use of opioid settlement dollars. To support this work, KACo is launching Opioid Solutions, a nine-part webinar series in 2026 designed to help counties better understand and implement the core strategies outlined in [Exhibit E](#) of the national opioid settlements.

Each monthly session will take a deep dive into one allowable strategy area and will include:

- A clear explanation of the strategy and how it fits within settlement requirements
- Practical guidance for local implementation
- Real-world examples of county-funded opioid abatement programs
- Tips to support impact, sustainability, and compliance



Opioid Settlement Resource Library

A white question mark is centered on a white rectangular card, which is slightly tilted and set against a dark purple background.

Frequently Asked Questions

A photograph of the Kentucky State Capitol building, showing its grand architecture and a large dome, with a paved walkway leading towards it.


Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission

A photograph of a classical statue of Lady Justice, holding a scale of justice and a sword, set against a dark purple background.


Settlement Agreements and Exhibits

A photograph of a laptop displaying a webinar recording interface, with a hand holding a smartphone in the foreground.

Archived Trainings and Recordings

A photograph of several people in a meeting, with their faces obscured by white boxes, holding up documents or tablets.

Tools, Templates and Planning

A photograph of two hands reaching towards each other, one from the top right and one from the bottom left, set against a dark purple background.

Approved Uses and Resources

Navigating Systems Together: Jail-Based Treatment and Reentry with Opioid Settlement Funds

The RITA Hub
UK College of Public Health

cph.uky.edu/rita

Brooke Hiltz
Susannah Stitzer

Panelists

Merideth Booth, Voices of Hope

Joyce Johnson, Stepworks

Jody Perry, LaRue County Jail

Disclaimer

Content included in this presentation reflects scholarly research and professional expertise of the RITA Hub and the respective panelists. It does not represent the views of the University of Kentucky.

What is the RITA Hub?

The RITA Hub provides no-cost training and technical assistance support to state and local government, criminal legal system, health, social service, and non-profit agencies across Kentucky in implementing evidence-based practices (EBPs) to prevent and treat opioid use disorder (OUD).

This support includes advising agencies seeking to appropriately utilize locally awarded opioid abatement funds and/or applying for state opioid abatement funding.



Mapping the Challenges with Reentry

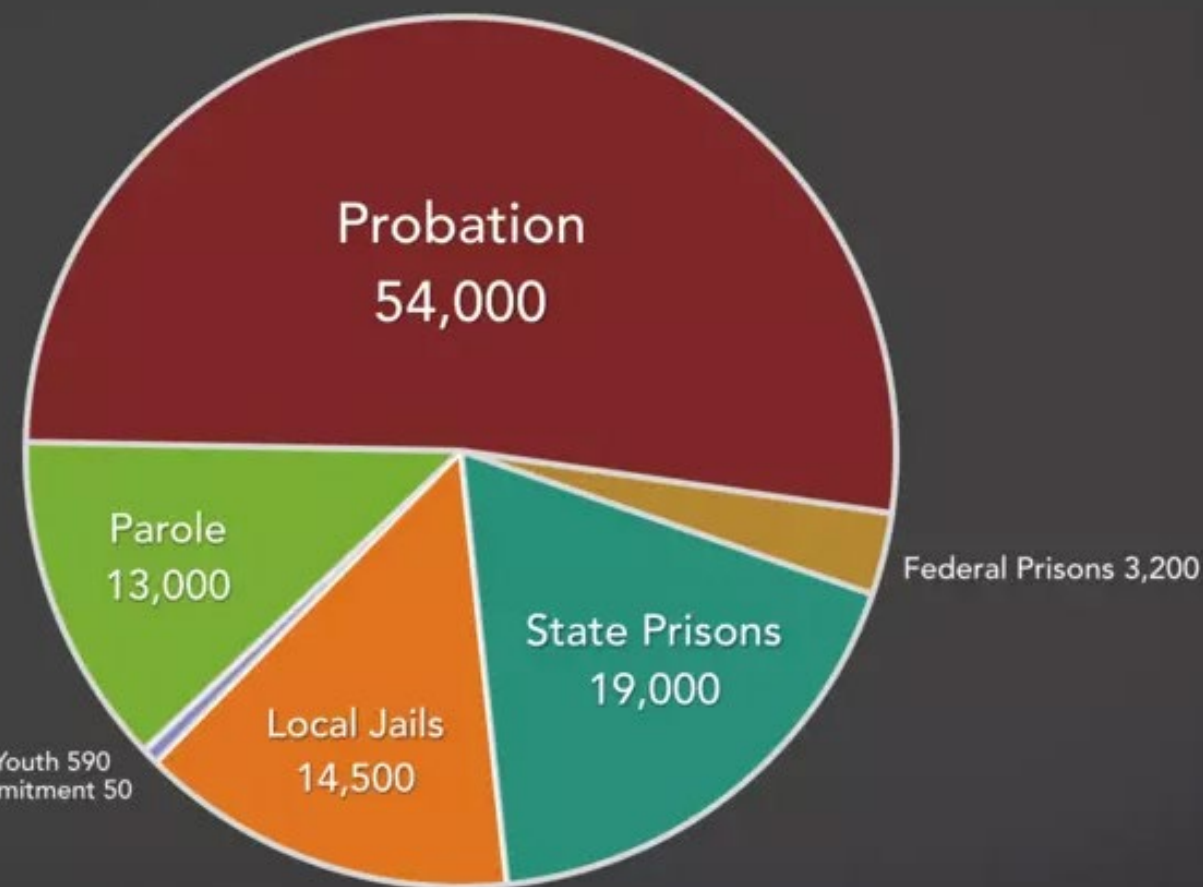
What Does the Research Say About the Reentry Process and Overdose Prevention?

- Overdose is the leading cause of death for people recently released from incarceration.
 - In the two weeks following release, formerly incarcerated individuals are 120 times more likely to die of an opioid overdose.
 - It is estimated that substance use disorder (SUD) affects 65% and opioid use disorder (OUD) affects 25% of people who are incarcerated.
- For people seeking to recover from SUD, multiple attempts are often necessary. On average, 5 serious recovery attempts are made before success.
- For people detained who have not yet been sentenced, there is uncertainty around release timing due to unpredictable scheduling of hearings that set bail/bond and sentences/release dates.
- Re-entering citizens are often without health insurance, identification, transportation, housing, and/or employment, while jail staff and contracted providers have limited bandwidth to develop individualized community-based treatment plans across public safety and public health contexts.

Why is it Important to Consider the Criminal Legal System (CLS)?

How many people are in Kentucky's criminal legal system?

103,000 Kentucky residents are behind bars or under community supervision.



PRISON POLICY INITIATIVE Details may not add to total due to rounding.
Sources and data notes: See www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/correctionalcontrol2023.html

- In 2022, Kentucky was within the top 5 states for highest rate of OUD (more than 2.5% OUD cases per capita)
- Past estimates for the costs of the opioid crisis in the U.S. range from \$1.02 trillion in 2017 to \$1.5 trillion in 2020
 - A recent study estimated the total financial impact of OUD in 2024 to be \$4 trillion.
- **Criminal Legal System Costs = \$52 billion**
- Average Annual Total Cost per OUD case = approximately \$695k

Kentucky Burden:

- Total State Cost = \$95,471,977,174
- Cost per Case = \$709,441
- State/Local Government portion (includes CLS) = \$2,086,744,658
- >0.6% of State GDP

- Avalere Health (2025). The cost of addiction: Opioid use disorder in the United States. https://advisory.avalerehealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Avalere-Health-White-Paper_The-cost-of-opioid-addiction_OUD-in-the-United-States.pdf
- Prison Policy Initiative. (2022). Kentucky State Profile. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/KY.html>



Holding through the hard parts

Brittany Herrington

The tattooed hand is a friend of mine and she's holding the hand of a call center worker where I work. I took this picture because the most basic of needs in reentry is support. We can't make any huge life changes alone. We need support. We need someone who cares about us enough, they are willing to hold a tattooed, track marked hand and not judge as we begin reentry. The hard part for Peers in this work, is it can't just be us and unfortunately it often times is. We have to be the support and try to integrate them back into natural supports. Sometimes it's practicing tough conversations with loved ones. Sometimes it taking them to 12 step meetings and introducing them to locals. Sometimes it's a call center line.



Time is Money



Welcome Home

Savvy Shabazz

Cost of Incarceration for 5.5 Years

Years: 5.5 years

Days: 2,009 days

Hours: 48,216 hours

Minutes: 2,892,960 minutes

Seconds: 173,577,600 seconds

In Kentucky, incarceration costs are often estimated between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per person, per year.

$\$35,000/\text{year} \times 5.5 \text{ years incarcerated} = \$192,500$

\$192,500 could fund years of reentry support, recovery support, vocational training, housing assistance, and life-skills programming for multiple individuals.

Statewide Jail Survey with KY Judicial Commission on Mental Health

- Goal: Assess the services and programs available in Kentucky jails
- Questions covered operations, capacity, staffing, programming, medical services, and reentry
- 58 jails submitted responses
- Overall: Jails lack sufficient staffing and resources to address need for care and treatment of MI/SMI, SUD, and OUD
- In open-ended questions inquiring about needs and obstacles, jailers repeatedly called for more resources to meet mental health needs

Screening Data

- All jails reported screening during intake for suicide risk, SUD, and OUD. 2 jails reported not screening for mental health.
- Of the jails that were able to provide data on the number of individuals that screened positive for the identified diagnoses:
 - MI/SMI annual averages ranged from 24.3 to 900 (by capacity) with the lower numbers as outliers
 - SUD annual averages ranged from 98.75 to 1175
 - OUD annual averages ranged from 132.5 to 1720
 - Data related to individuals receiving treatment is much more limited

Reentry Services

- 40 jails reported reentry services at their facility; 36 indicated services provided by a community partner (at least partially), 15 reported services provided by their medical provider
- 20 jails provided data on the number of individuals receiving reentry services; 10 of those had services being provided by a community partner
- 29 jails indicated access to a peer support or recovery coach; of those 20 partner with an off-site entity to provide those resources
- 37 provide transportation to medical treatment at release; 32 partner with a community organization to provide transport
- 15 jails report providing individuals with a written copy of their reentry plan at release
- “There are resources to help but the number that needs help keeps growing.”

Sharing Solutions for Building Reentry and System Navigation

Allowable Uses of Opioid Settlement Funds

Core Strategies Include:

- **Naloxone** or other opioid overdose reversal drugs
- **Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD)**
- Services for **pregnant women and parents**
- Expansion of **warm hand-off programs** and recovery services
- Treatment for **incarcerated populations**

2026 State Funded Treatment and Reentry Projects

- Boyd County Detention Center Comprehensive **Treatment, Recovery, and Reentry Continuum**
- Graves County ASAP **Next Steps Reentry Program**
- Grin Grant Inc. Comprehensive OUD Recovery Treatment Project: Dental Restoration, **PeerPath Detention Training**, and Continuing Education
- KY Pharmacists Association **LAI-Bup Hub** to provide MOUD in jails
- Kentucky River District Health Department The Hub's Women's Reentry Program: A **Peer-Led Jail-Based Treatment & Recovery Navigation Model**
- Oxford House Kentucky Expansion, **Reentry and Education Initiative**

See Exhibit E, the National Opioid Settlement Agreement

<https://www.ag.ky.gov/Press%20Release%20Attachments/Grant%20Awards-%20ALL%201.pdf>



Easy Button Options

*All options are eligible for local opioid abatement funding.

Naloxone Inside Jails

Naloxone is free to state agencies and can legally be carried by all detention center staff and/or placed in dorms, cells, and common areas.



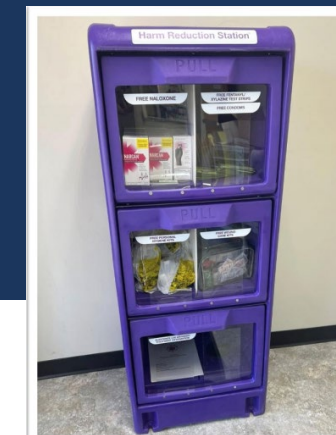
Naloxone At Release

Hand-to-hand distribution gets naloxone where it's needed most. People who use drugs are more likely than anyone to witness an overdose.



Naloxone For Friends & Family

Naloxone kiosks are inexpensive, portable, and can be placed inside the visitor waiting area or outside the facility.



Find Naloxone Now KY supports FREE secondary distribution

The screenshot shows the website's header with navigation links: "What are Opioids?", "What is Naloxone?", "How Do I Use Naloxone?", "Overdose Prevention", "FAQs", and "Resources". Below the header is a dark blue banner with the text "Reverse overdose. Save lives. Find naloxone near you." and a "You Can Reverse Overdose" button. A red circle highlights a button labeled "Ordering for an Organization?". Below the banner is a search interface with "Search for Naloxone by" options: "City or Zip" (selected), "County", and a search input field. A list of "Locations Where Naloxone is Available" includes "Free of Charge" (checked) and categories like "Community-Based Organizations", "Kiosks and Vending Machines", "Local Health Departments", "Other Agencies", "Recovery Community Centers", and "Regional Prevention Centers". A map of Kentucky is shown with numerous location pins.

Ordering for an Organization?





<https://youtu.be/mSQyigXqVm0?si=m7WFmr0Sq5BAFNNh>

PANEL DISCUSSION

Our Services

- **Curating customized training programs** on OUD, lived experience advocacy, secondary trauma, and evidence-based practice (EBP) implementation.
- **Guiding strategic planning** and needs assessments to build community-driven EBP implementation plans and strengthen connections with peer networks and agencies.
- **Designing and conducting evaluations** of EBP processes and outcomes to drive continuous quality improvement and reporting.
- **Supporting jail implementation and expansion of MOUD** in alignment with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



Q & A

Our Services cont.

- **Embedding peer support specialists**, recovery coaches, and care navigators into agency workflows for stronger client engagement.
- **Creating reentry procedures** for county jails to streamline Medicaid reactivation, ID access, housing connections, and other supports during community reintegration.
- **Integrating overdose education and naloxone distribution** into agency practice, including installation of kiosks and peer-to-peer distribution models.



Resources at cph.uky.edu/rita

- [Medication for Opioid Use Disorder \(MOUD\) in Jails](#) Explainer Video
- [Request for Proposals \(RFP\) Template](#)
- [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) Template](#)
- [Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission \(KYOAAC\)](#)
- [Kentucky Association of Counties \(KACo\)](#)
- [Rapid Actionable Data for Opioid Response in Kentucky \(RADOR-KY\)](#)
- Statewide resources:
 - [FindNaloxoneNow](#)
 - [FindHelpNow](#)

Questions?



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VOICES of HOPE



VOICES of HOPE

VOICESOFHOPELEX.ORG

Voices of Hope

“Voices of Hope is a nonprofit organization that offers a variety of recovery support services throughout Kentucky.”

- Recovery Community Center (644 N. Broadway, Lexington KY)
- Harm Reduction Supplies (condoms, Narcan, Plan B, testing strips)
- Mobile Unit
- Recovery Coaching (hospitals, jails, prisons, MOUD clinics, and more)
- Mutual Aid Meetings (SMART, 12 step, MARA, etc)
- Scholarships for people in recovery
- Telephone Recovery Support calls



Department of Correction Program Locations

5 Recovery Coaches in 5 prisons across the state:

- Northpoint Training Center
- Blackburn Correctional Complex
- Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women
- Southeast State Correctional Complex
- Little Sandy Correctional Complex.

Recovery Coaches are supervised onsite by the SAP Program Administrator and Branch Manager.



Department of Corrections Recovery Coach Duties

Facilitating mutual aid meetings: SMART, process groups, townhall, MARA, MOUD education, 12 step, Celebrate Recovery, music therapy, and more.

Meeting 1on1 with participants: discussing the various aspect of recovery capital during incarceration and preparing for release.

Providing resources: sober living, educational opportunities, RCC/Recovery Coaching connections, financial support,



Recovery Coach Duties

Meeting 1on1 with participants and discussing the various aspect of recovery capital during incarceration and preparing for release, including:

- family reunification and social supports
- transportation/housing/employment planning
- advocating for mental and physical health
- discovering purpose, finding belonging, and meaning in life
- naming values, setting goals, and more

Recovery Coach Duties

Providing resources:

- contacts for sober living and transitional housing
- educational opportunities (APSS, higher education, GED, trade school)
- RCC/Recovery Coaching locations
- financial support and grants
- linkage to MOUD
- anything that can add to their recovery capital scale (personal/social/community/cultural needs)

DOC End of the Year Report 2025

Presented by: DOC Program Coordinator, Merideth Booth



As we wrap up another year working alongside the department of corrections, Voices of Hope would like to extend sincere thanks to all of the Addictions Services Staff, Wardens, and all who play a part in supporting the work we have done in 2025. It is because of your encouragement and compassion that we have been able to use our lived experience to create a lasting impact on our participants within the SAP and SOAR communities in these institutions across the state of Kentucky. We look forward to continuing this partnership and generating more positive outcomes.

The Voices of Hope Recovery Coaches were able to accomplish the implementation of MOUD education groups, music therapy meetings, and family seminars which led to the first ever family day at the Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women. This was transformative for our participants, and it was incredibly influential for these women to have such a special day with their loved ones.



In 2025, we were able to meet with a total of **2,205** participants individually to discuss re-entry resources and help them grow their recovery capital including physical and mental health, community and family support, and access to housing and transportation.

The Recovery Coaches also facilitated a variety of mutual aid meetings across the state for individuals who are currently incarcerated and may not have access to these meetings otherwise. There was a total of **4,468** participants in these meetings varying from SMART, 12-step, MARA, townhall, relapse prevention, process groups, and more!

At the end of 2025, we eagerly decided to expand and began working with Little Sandy Correctional Complex and Southeast State Correctional Complex, while continuing to work with Blackburn Correctional Complex, Northpoint Training Center, and Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women.

This program has allowed us to increase access to recovery support services in an unprecedented manner, and we are excited to continue this work in 2026!

Questions?



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DOC Program Coordinator

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Opioid Settlement Advisor



- **Guidance on opioid settlement use**
- **Review of allowable expenses**
- **Support for long-term and strategic planning**
- **Access to templates and standardized forms**
- **Assistance with mandatory reporting requirements**
- **Review of best practices and peer examples**
- **Training and education opportunities**
- **Referrals to qualified practitioners and subject-matter experts**

Lauren Carr

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