



Fact Sheet

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2023 COPS Office Anti-Heroin Task Force Program

The FY 2023 COPS Office Anti-Heroin Task Force Program (AHTF) is designed to advance public safety by providing funds to investigate illicit activities related to the distribution of heroin, fentanyl, or carfentanil; the unlawful distribution of prescription opioids; or unlawful heroin and prescription opioid traffickers through statewide collaboration. For FY 2023, the COPS Office awarded more than \$32.8 million in AHTF award funds to 13 state law enforcement agencies. Each award is three years (36 months) in duration with no local match. In addition, each award was limited to no more than \$4 million.

Background

The abuse of opioids, a group of drugs that includes heroin and prescription painkillers, has a devastating impact on public health and safety in this country. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 143 Americans on average died from drug poisoning every day in 2015. Prescription drugs were involved in nearly half of the 52,400 drug poisoning deaths that year, and opioid pain relievers were involved in approximately 24,000 of those deaths. About 12,900 drug poisoning deaths involved heroin. Drug poisoning deaths outnumbered deaths from gunshot wounds or motor vehicle crashes.¹

The rate of drug overdose deaths involving heroin increased from 0.7 per 100,000 in 2005 to 4.9 per 100,000 in 2017; and the rate of overdose deaths involving synthetic opioids such as fentanyl increased from 1 per 100,000 in 2013 to 11.4 per 100,000 in 2019.²

1. CDC Wonder, "About Multiple Cause of Death 1999–2005," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed December 8, 2016, <https://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-icd10.html>.

2. National Center for Health Statistics, "NHCS Data on Drug Overdose Deaths: NCHS Fact Sheet June 2021," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed October 4, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/factsheets/factsheet-drug-overdose.htm>.

Funding Provisions

In FY 2023, the COPS Office awarded more than \$32.8 million in AHTF award funds to 13 state law enforcement agencies.

Provisions include the following:

- AHTF competitively provides funds directly to state law enforcement agencies with high rates of primary treatment admissions for heroin, fentanyl, carfentanil, or other opioids.
- AHTF funding must be used for investigative purposes to locate or investigate illicit activities, including activities related to the distribution of heroin, fentanyl, carfentanil, or other opioids; the unlawful distribution of prescription opioids; or unlawful diversion and distribution of prescription opioids.
- AHTF provides funds to state law enforcement agencies with multijurisdictional reach and an interdisciplinary team (e.g., task force) structures. These state law enforcement agencies must have primary law enforcement authority over heroin and other opioids seizures and investigations.
- AHTF funding is not intended for treatment programs or prosecution of heroin and other opioid-related activities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources discuss various efforts to address the problem of heroin and other opioids:

Crime Prevention Research Review No.1: Disrupting Street-Level Drug Markets

This report summarizes the findings from all rigorous academic studies evaluating a range of street-level drug law enforcement interventions. It finds that strategic crime control partnerships with a range of third parties are more effective at disrupting drug problems than law enforcement-only approaches.

<https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter?item=COPS-P128>

Drug Market Intervention: An Implementation Guide

This guide provides practical information intended to help law enforcement, community, and social services partners—the strategy’s key stakeholders—prepare and successfully execute DMI to close overt drug markets. It discusses the ways overt drug markets damage neighborhoods, contribute to disorder, and negatively affect communities. This publication guides the reader through the processes of partnership formation, police-community reconciliation, dealer notifications, staging call-ins, maintaining closure of drug markets, and delivering services to dealers.

<https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter?item=COPS-P303>

Drug Dealing in Privately Owned Apartment Complexes

This problem-oriented guide for police focuses on drug dealing in privately owned apartment complexes. It clearly distinguishes between open and closed drug markets, provides information on what is known about each market type, and offers questions to ask when analyzing each market.

<https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter?item=COPS-P013>

The High Point Drug Market Intervention Strategy

The High Point Drug Market Intervention Strategy tells the compelling story of designing and implementing the original intervention in High Point, North Carolina, and describes a subsequent successful replication in Providence, Rhode Island. This publication is part of an ongoing series by the National Network for Safe Communities about its two core crime reduction strategies.

<https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter?item=COPS-P166>

Contact the COPS Office

For more information about COPS Office programs, please contact the COPS Office Response Center at AskCOPSRC@usdoj.gov or 800-421-6770 or visit the COPS Office website at <https://cops.usdoj.gov>.