NEWS BITES

NOVEMBER 2026

LAPPA NEWS

WEBINARS

Automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) systems, also known as automated or automatic license plate readers and commonly referred to as Flock cameras, have recently gained attention for their misuse and abuse. However, ALPRs can be effective crime fighting tools used by law enforcement to investigate criminal offenses, assist in locating missing children and vulnerable adults, and enforce parking laws. Rather than banning them, states should regulate their use. As of September 2025, fewer than half of U.S. jurisdictions had laws or rules regulating the use of ALPR systems, and only eight of those states included criminal penalties for misusing ALPR data. In February 2026, LAPPA published the Model Automatic License Plate Recognition System Act which addresses these issues and many more.

On **Tuesday, December 8, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.,** subject matter experts will discuss regulating ALPR systems, best practices to avoid their possible misuse and abuse, potential First and Fourth Amendment implications of ALPR usage, and LAPPA's Model Act. Speakers include Mike McDaniel, Houston HIDTA Director; Captain Adam Polhemus, the Statewide ALPR Coordinator for New Jersey; and LAPPA Managing Attorney Heather Gray. Click here, to register for this free webinar.

PUBLICATIONS

Fact Sheets

Spending Opioid Settlement Proceeds: Choices and Challenges for Governments (UPDATE): In 2014, several U.S. cities and counties filed lawsuits against drug manufacturers and distributors, alleging that the companies' aggressive marketing practices fueled a national opioid addiction epidemic that subsequently killed hundreds of thousands of people. Since then, more than 3,000 state and local governments filed lawsuits of their own, seeking to recoup the billions of dollars that these entities spent—and continue to spend—on the fallout from the epidemic. The result of these legal efforts is a series of ongoing monetary settlements, greater than $58 billion to date, on a scale not seen since the Big Tobacco settlements of the 1990s. Companies that are party to the settlements are gradually distributing funds to state and local governments each year, allocated according to the terms of their settlement agreements with those governments. Payment of these settlements will last 18 years, but the first tranches of funds were distributed to state and local governments starting in 2022. The decision-making authority for spending these funds differs among jurisdictions, and many have an appointed advisory board that disburses specified amounts each year for specified purposes. In some states, the funds are managed by the state

attorney general or other official or are subject to the ordinary appropriations process. Analysis of spending from 2022 to 2024, the most recent data for which a detailed, comprehensive report of spending across all states is available, provides an early picture of how these governments are making use of these settlement funds. In 2021, LAPPA released the Model Opioid Litigation Proceeds Act that provides a template for states to ensure that settlement funds are reliably allocated toward opioid remediation. LAPPA released an updated version of the model law in May 2026. In this fact sheet, LAPPA details how opioid settlement proceeds are being disbursed to state and local governments, how those governments are choosing to spend those funds, and the obstacles that can prevent these funds from helping those who have been affected by the opioid epidemic.

Microdosing: Microdosing, in practice since at least the 1950s, is the practice of taking a small amount of a psychedelic drug, usually on a set schedule, to improve the user's mood, increase creative thinking, or self-treat for a mental health disorder. Typically, microdosing involves using one-fifth to one-tenth of the recreational dose every few days. For example, an average recreational dose of LSD is 100-200mcg, so a microdose would be 10-20mcg. Most of the substances that individuals currently microdose, like fly agaric mushroom, are illegal under state and federal controlled substances acts. Despite this, an increasing number of individuals are microdosing psychedelics, and it is becoming more accepted in mainstream society to use psychedelics both recreationally and as a treatment for various mental health disorders, especially as scientists continue to research the potential pharmaceutical uses of certain psychedelics.

PRESENTATIONS

On November 12, 2026, LAPPA Senior Legislative Attorney Stephanie Noblit presented on a webinar hosted by Shatterproof. "Kratom: Treatment Considerations, Emerging Policy, and What's Next" focused on treatment considerations, including what clinicians and communities need to know about kratom-related use, risks, and treatment needs. The event also covered emerging policy and practice issues, including model kratom legislation in development at LAPPA, challenges and opportunities related to enforcement, and perspectives from law enforcement working to implement kratom policies in the field.

On September 3, 2026, LAPPA Senior Legislative Attorney Stephanie Noblit presented on a webinar hosted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's GAINS Center. "Exploring the Intersection of Housing and Civil Commitment for SUD and Mental and Illness" presented research, legal frameworks, and emerging practices related to civil commitment for both mental health and substance use disorders, paying particular attention to housing needs. A recording of the webinar is available on YouTube here.

FEDERAL NEWS BITS

White House Hosts Event to Celebrate National Recovery Month: Increasing the number of recovery friendly workplaces in the United States is a priority in President Trump's National Drug Control Strategy, and on September 24, 2026, LAPPA President, Susan P. Weinstein attended a White House event to celebrate National Recovery Month. The event recognized Recovery Friendly Workplaces, defined as places of work that support individuals recovering from substance use disorder. Adopting recovery friendly workplace policies is beneficial for employees because they are supported throughout their recovery journey and can continue working and supporting themselves and their families; these policies also strengthen the economy and benefit employers by increasing productivity and reducing both turnover and health care costs. The event was presided over by Sara Carter, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and featured testimonies by individuals with lived experience of recovery in the workplace, recovery friendly workplace leaders, and employers who shared their experiences implementing recovery friendly workplace policies across the nation. See LAPPA's Model Recovery-ready Workplaces Act which it will update in the coming months.

New Funding Announced for Ibogaine Research: On November 12, 2026, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced an investment of up to $4.9 million through the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) to advance the development of ibogaine as a potential treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other serious mental illnesses, including in veterans. HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. was joined by leaders from the Department of Veteran's Affairs to announce the funding, which will be used by research teams, selected by ARPA-H, who will then direct a series of clinical trials in the U.S. These will be the first government-funded trials using ibogaine to treat opioid addiction and PTSD. Click here, to read LAPPA's fact sheet on ibogaine.

NATIONAL NEWS BITS

Kratom Withdrawal Rising: Around the country, clinics that treat patients with substance use disorder are seeing a marked rise in cases related to "gas station heroin" or products made from the kratom leaf and its derivatives. Kratom has been sold in the U.S. for decades, and users promote its mood- and energy-boosting properties; however, stores have been selling more potent products, particularly those containing 7-OH a synthetic compound that acts directly on the brain's opioid receptors leading to sedation, euphoria, and a risk of dependence. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently flagged 7-OH products as an emerging opioid threat and the Drug Enforcement Administration proposed a ban on 7-OH above a certain threshold. That federal restriction has not been finalized, but many states have imposed restrictions on the sale of 7-OH-containing products. Research on kratom is scarce, leaving clinicians at treatment centers on the front lines of this emerging withdrawal crisis. These treatment providers are reporting that they are seeing two broad categories of patients seeking treatment for kratom or 7-OH dependence: those who are completely new to drug use and treatment and those who are more experienced users and have previously been in treatment. Early case reports show that traditional medications used to treat opioid use disorder, like buprenorphine and methadone, are showing potential in the treatment of kratom and 7-OH withdrawal. Click here to access LAPPA's fact sheet on kratom.

Powerful New Synthetic Opioid Spreading Across the U.S.: Experts are issuing warnings about a synthetic opioid that is thought to be 10 times more powerful that fentanyl. Cychlorphine is spreading undetected across the U.S. and has already been linked to more than 50 deaths, with cases concentrated in Texas, Ohio, and Tennessee. A very small amount of the substance can kill in just a few minutes and is undetectable on most standard drug tests, making cychlorphine extremely deadly. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, cychlorphine is entering the U.S. from China and tainting the illicit drug supply. This is of particular concern on college campuses, who have been put on alert since counterfeit prescription pills are often tainted with synthetic substances. Cychlorphine is not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use, and ingestion of even a very small amount can require multiple doses of Narcan to reverse an overdose. Click here to access LAPPA's fact sheet on orphines.

STATE NEWS BITS

Iowa: Funding in the amount of $750,000 will allow for the expansion of the "Billion Pill Pledge" initiative into eight new hospitals across Iowa over the next two years. The Billion Pill Pledge (Pledge), started in 2022 as a partnership between Iowa City-based firm Goldfinch Health and the state attorney general, is a program that focuses on surgery patients by educating providers about new clinical protocols and encouraging other pain management strategies besides opioids, including over-the-counter medications administered before procedures. The Pledge also provides patients with a kit that includes a sugary drink to help hydrate them hours before a procedure, chewing gum to help with nausea, and a disposal bag for unused opioid pills. According to a 2026 annual report, 2,700 surgery patients in Iowa participated in the program.

New York: Beginning on December 13, 2026, New York State will require almost all private employers to stock opioid antagonists, like naloxone, in the event of an opioid overdose in the workplace. The comment period for the proposed rules, which closes on November 22, 2026, will clarify employer obligations with respect to the following: how many antagonists employers need to have, where they should be stored, and how employers should obtain them. Employers will be required to have at least one trained employee present during business hours – meaning someone who is trained to administer the medication – and are encouraged to train additional volunteer employees or all staff. Employers must also regularly inspect their antagonist supplies to ensure that medication has not expired, that it has not been tampered with, and that it has not gone missing. The cost of implementation is expected to be modest since naloxone is often available through public programs, and free training is readily available. New York is expected to be the first state to implement a law requiring most private workplaces to stock opioid antagonist medication.

Washington: Poison Control Centers are warning the public about counterfeit "Cat's Claw" herbal supplements tainted with high concentrations of chemicals related to kratom. These fake products are actually strong opioids, like morphine, heroin, and fentanyl, which are causing overdoses and severe withdrawal. Cat's Claw is a legal herbal supplement marketed to manage the symptoms of osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and cancer. Unadulterated, Cat's Claw is not a psychoactive substance and does not cause opioid overdose or withdrawal symptoms. However, recent investigations into products labeled as "Cat's Claw" yielded 7-OH, MGM-15, and MGPI, strong opioids derived from kratom, which all act on the same brain receptors as morphine, heroin, and fentanyl. Traditional urine screening cannot identify these products so healthcare professionals have been asked to consider adulterated products in patients presenting with unexplained opioid toxicity or severe withdrawal.

West Virginia: Governor Patrick Morrisey, the West Virginia First Foundation, and leaders from six universities joined together to announce new partnerships aimed at strengthening addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery through research, data-driven investment and improved accountability for the state's opioid settlement funds. The partnership joins West Virginis University, Marshall University, West Virginia Wesleyan College, the University of Charleston, Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Notre Dame to help the Foundation identify statewide needs, evaluate grant applications, measure outcomes, and direct resources towards effective solutions. West Virginia is one of the states hardest hit by the opioid crisis, and when Governor Morrisey was the state attorney general, he helped secure more than $1 billion in opioid settlement funds to help address the toll that the crisis has taken on communities across the state.

IN OTHER NEWS



PTACC Summit 2026: The Police, Treatment, and Community and Community Collaborative (PTACC) invites you to register for its 2026 International Deflection and Pre-Arrest Diversion Summit taking place at Loews Ventana Hotel in Tucson, Arizona, from Tuesday, December 1 through Friday, December 4.

With the theme, Innovation and Inspiration in Deflection: Highlighting Hope, Help, and Heroes in our Field, this year, the Summit will be recognizing and celebrating innovations in deflection with a special focus on: (1) tribal deflection; (2) rural and frontier deflection; (3) fire and EMS deflection; (4) AI and deflection; and (5) the care and well-being of first responders. Visit https://ptaccollaborative.org/2026-summit/ for more information about this event and to register.

Georgetown University School of Health: Are you passionate about making a difference in the addiction policy field? Are you eager to be a leader in crafting effective policies that transform communities? The Master of Science in Addiction Policy & Practice at Georgetown University is designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to address one of society's most pressing public health challenges. The program trains leaders in the addiction counseling and policy fields by providing students with a comprehensive understanding of addiction, including public health and criminal justice policy, basic science, and evidence-based prevention, treatment and recovery. Click here to register for the next information session on December 8, 2026.

ABOUT THE LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS AND PUBLIC POLICY ASSOCIATION

The Legislative Analysis and Public Policy Association (LAPPA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to conduct legal and legislative research and analysis and draft legislation on effective law and policy in the areas of public safety and health, substance use disorder, and the criminal justice system.

LAPPA produces up-to-the-minute comparative analyses, publications, educational brochures, and other tools ranging from podcasts to model laws and policies that can be used by national, state, and local criminal justice and substance use disorder practitioners who want the latest comprehensive information on law and policy. Examples of topics on which LAPPA has assisted stakeholders include naloxone laws, law enforcement/community engagement, alternatives to incarceration for those with substance use disorder, medication for addiction treatment in correctional settings, and the involuntary commitment of individuals with alcohol or substance use disorder.

For more information about LAPPA, please visit: https://legislativeanalysis.org/.

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