

Due to the lapse in appropriations, Department of Justice websites will not be regularly updated. The Department's essential law enforcement and national security functions will continue. Please refer to the Department of Justice's contingency plan for more information.

LUZERNE COUNTY WAS LEFT OUT.

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice
Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, July 12, 2018

Attorney General Jeff Sessions Announces the Formation of Operation Synthetic Opioid Surge (S.O.S.)

Attorney General Jeff Sessions today announced Operation Synthetic Opioid Surge (S.O.S.), a new program that seeks to reduce the supply of deadly synthetic opioids in high impact areas and to identify wholesale distribution networks and international and domestic suppliers.

As part of Operation S.O.S., the Department will launch an enforcement surge in ten districts with some of the highest drug overdose death rates. Each participating United States Attorney's Office (USAO) will choose a specific county and prosecute every readily provable case involving the distribution of fentanyl, fentanyl analogues, and other synthetic opioids, regardless of drug quantity. The surge will involve a coordinated DEA Special Operations Division operation to insure that leads from street-level cases are used to identify larger scale distributors. Operation S.O.S. was inspired by a promising initiative of the United States Attorney's Office in the Middle District of Florida involving Manatee County, Florida.

"We at the Department of Justice are going to dismantle these deadly fentanyl distribution networks. Simply put, we will be tireless until we reduce the number of overdose deaths in this country. We are going to focus on some of the worst counties for opioid overdose deaths in the United States, working all cases until we have disrupted the supply of these deadly drugs," Attorney General Sessions said. "In 2016, synthetic opioids killed more Americans than any other kind of drug. Three milligrams of fentanyl can be fatal—that's not even enough to cover up Lincoln's face on a penny. Our prosecutors in Manatee County, Florida have shown that prosecuting seemingly small synthetic opioids cases can have a big impact and save lives, and we want to replicate their success in the districts that need it most. Operation S.O.S.—and the new prosecutors who will help carry it out—will help us put more traffickers behind bars and keep the American people safe from the threat of these deadly drugs."

In addition, the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) Executive Office will send an additional two-year term Assistant United States Attorney to each participating district to assist with drug-related prosecutions.

The ten participating districts are:

- Eastern District of California
- Eastern District of Kentucky
- District of Maine
- District of New Hampshire
- Northern District of Ohio
- Southern District of Ohio

THE DEA BYPASSED LUZERNE COUNTY EVEN THOUGH OUR OPIOID DEATH RATE IS HIGHER THAN SEVERAL OF CHOSEN COUNTIES IN THE USA.

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WASHING COUNTY PENNA, IS ONLY COUNTY IN PENNA INCLUDED.