



# Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, November 8, 2022  
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## **U.S. Attorney's Office Announces Agreement to Ensure Access to Medications for Opioid Use Disorder at Fayette County Detention Center**

**LEXINGTON, Ky.** – United States Attorney Carlton S. Shier, IV, announced Tuesday that an agreement has been reached with the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's Department of Community Corrections, to ensure that people who take medication to treat opioid use disorder (OUD) can remain on their medication while in custody at Fayette County Detention Center (FCDC), as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The agreement resolves a U.S. Attorney's Office ADA compliance review of FCDC, in which it was determined that, as a matter of policy, the facility did not provide most individuals with OUD with methadone and buprenorphine, medications that treat OUD. The settlement agreement requires FCDC to revise its policies to provide access to all three forms of medications to people with OUD and ensure that decisions about treatment are based on an individualized determination by qualified medical personnel.

"Eastern Kentucky has long been on the front lines of the opioid epidemic and our office remains committed to a comprehensive approach to fighting this public health crisis, including enforcement of the ADA's requirements safeguarding treatment," said U.S. Attorney Shier. "Access to medications that treat opioid use disorder saves lives, and we commend the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's Department of Community Corrections for working collaboratively with our office to implement a policy that ensures access to this important treatment for the people in its custody."

OUD is considered a disability under the ADA, which requires that jails and prisons maintain the medications of individuals in treatment for their OUD. Methadone and buprenorphine (including brand names Subutex and Suboxone) are approved by the Food and Drug Administration to treat OUD. According to the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), methadone and buprenorphine help diminish the effects of physical dependency on opioids. When taken as prescribed, these medications are safe and effective.

This matter was handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Carrie Pond, as part of an ongoing effort by the U.S. Attorney's Office to enforce the ADA, seeking to eliminate discriminatory barriers to treatment for OUD. It is the Department of Justice's twenty-eighth agreement resolving allegations of ADA violations arising from OUD treatment and the U.S. Attorney's Office's second this year.

To find out more about the ADA or this settlement agreement, access the Department's ADA website at <http://www.ada.gov>. For more information on the Office's civil rights efforts or to report a potential violation of the ADA or other federal civil rights laws, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/usao-edky/civil-rights>.

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