



Opinions about court-mandated drug treatment programs in Kentucky

Adults in Kentucky who are charged with a drug possession crime may be eligible for deferred prosecution, diversion or probation instead of immediate incarceration.¹ Each alternative to incarceration requires the drug offender to abide by certain rules and conditions set by the court. These conditions typically include a court-mandated drug treatment program. If requirements are completed, the offender can avoid incarceration and may be eligible to have the charges dismissed or expunged.²

Research suggests that court-mandated treatment programs may be less effective than voluntary treatment programs at reducing recidivism.³ However, successful completion of any type of treatment program can be more effective than jail time alone in reducing the burden of addiction.⁴

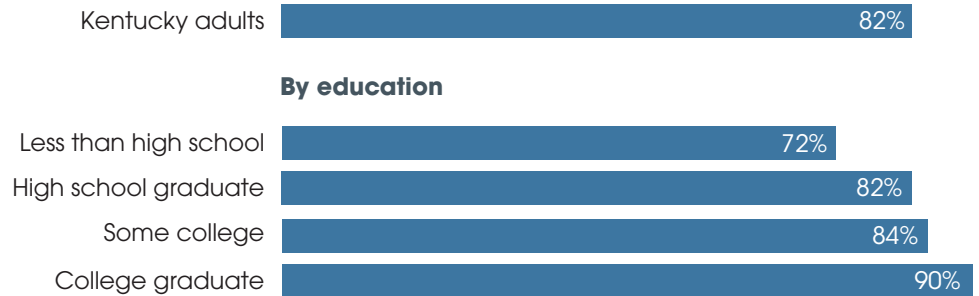
¹ Kentucky Revised Statutes, Chapter 2018A: 218A.275, 218A.14151. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2qRok1E>.

² When criminal charges are expunged in Kentucky, it means all records related to that charge are sealed and not visible in a records check. (www.kyjustice.org/expungement_faq)

³ Parhar, K.K. et al. (2008). Offender Coercion in Treatment: A Meta-Analysis of Effectiveness. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 35(9). Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2pZkoFt>.

⁴ Warner, T.D. & Kramer, J.H. (2008). Closing the Revolving Door? Substance Abuse Treatment as an Alternative to Traditional Sentencing for Drug-Dependent Offenders. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 36(1). Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2JZIFEL>.

Percentage of Kentucky adults who favor court-mandated treatment programs for those with a first or second drug offense



SOURCE: 2017 Kentucky Health Issues Poll (released May 2018)



The **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)** asked a question⁵ about Kentucky adults' opinions about court-mandated drug treatment programs. This is the first time KHIP has asked this question. KHIP is sponsored by Interact for Health and the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky.

8 IN 10 FAVOR MANDATORY TREATMENT PROGRAMS

Overall, about 8 in 10 Kentucky adults (82%) favored court-mandated treatment programs for first- and second-time offenders.

⁵ KHIP asked, "Under Kentucky's criminal justice system, people charged with first- or second-time drug offenses may apply to enter and complete a court-mandated treatment program. If they complete the program to the satisfaction of the court, charges against them are dismissed. Would you favor or oppose court-mandated treatment for those charged with a first or second drug offense?"

That compares with fewer than 2 in 10 adults (15%) who opposed these programs. Adults with more education were more likely to favor mandatory treatment programs.

MAJORITIES OF ALL POLITICAL PARTIES FAVOR MANDATORY TREATMENT PROGRAMS

Majorities of Kentucky Democrats (85%), Independents (84%) and Republicans (80%) reported favorable opinions about mandatory treatment programs.

Favorability was higher among Kentucky adults who believe that addiction is a disease (86%) than among those who do not (74%). Having a family member or friend who has had problems due to drug use did not affect opinions about mandatory treatment programs.