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INTERACT

FOR HEALTH

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

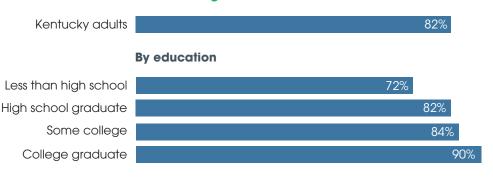
Research suggests that courtmandated treatment programs may be less effective than voluntary treatment programs at reducing recidivism.³ However, successful completion of any type of treatment program can be more effective than jail time alone in reducing the burden of addiction.⁴

¹ Kentucky Revised Statutes, Chapter 2018A: 218A.275, 218A.14151. Retrieved from <u>https://bit.</u> <u>ly/2qRoK1E</u>.

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 <u>https://bit.ly/2JZIFEL</u>. 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 courtmandated 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.

HEALTHY KENTUCKY

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.

These findings, unless otherwise noted, are from the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, funded by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and Interact for Health. The Kentucky Health Issues Poll was conducted Oct. 24-Dec. 2, 2017, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 1,692 adults from throughout Kentucky was interviewed by telephone. This included 861 landline interviews and 831 cell phone interviews with cell phone users. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to ±2.4%. There are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as nonresponse, question wording, or context effects that can introduce error or bias. For more information about the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, please visit <u>www.healthy-ky.org</u> or <u>www.interactforhealth.org/kentucky-health-issues-poll</u>.