

Bureau of Justice Assistance

Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP)

Training and Technical Assistance

Background: About COSSUP

America's substance misuse crisis is a public safety and public health emergency that threatens the well-being of individuals who misuse drugs as well as their families, communities, and—ultimately—the nation. It impacts first responders, the criminal justice system, child welfare and foster care, behavioral health systems, and victim service providers. Supporting the field in addressing this epidemic is one of the U.S. Department of Justice's top priorities and, at the center of this response, is the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP).

Originally developed as the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Program (COAP) as part of the 2016 Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, the program's inaugural purpose was to provide financial and technical assistance to states, units of local government, and American Indian tribal governments to plan, develop, and implement comprehensive efforts to identify, respond to, treat, and support those impacted by the opioid epidemic. In 2020, responding to upward trends in the misuse of other drugs and to advance efforts by the field in addressing the range of illicit substances (as well as opioids), BJA expanded and evolved COAP to COSSAP. This

increased scope assisted jurisdictions across the nation battling the persistence or reemergence of stimulants and other substances while keeping the cornerstone of the initiative the same: an emphasis on the force-multiplying power of partnership and collaboration across the public health, behavioral health, and public safety sectors.

In 2023, COSSAP transitioned to the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP). This change in title for the program was indicative of efforts to reduce the stigma related to substance use and to support impacted people in their recovery journey.

Since 2017, through its leadership of the Program, BJA has supported innovative work—from coast to coast, in large cities and rural America, in tribal lands and United States territories—by over 660 site-based projects and demonstration sites.

COSSUP reflects the tenets that a cross-system problem requires a cross-system strategy and that these solutions are more likely to succeed when they are guided by communities themselves. A key resource for those communities—grantees and non-grantees alike—is the COSSUP Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Program.

COSSUP TTA Program

The COSSUP TTA Program supports jurisdictions in need—including BJA and partner grantees, states, tribes, and local communities—in building and sustaining multidisciplinary public safety and public health responses to the use and misuse of illicit substances. Expertise is available to meet the specific needs and goals of respective projects by supporting a wide range of strategies, including law enforcement and first responder diversion; overdose prevention; pretrial, prosecution, defense counsel, and courts; reentry and community corrections; peer recovery support services (PRSS); cross-site coordination; rural and tribal planning and capacity building; services for children and families victimized by the crisis; prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs); treatment, including technology-assisted and medication-assisted treatment (MAT); technical solutions such as the Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP) data/evaluation support; and data-driven projects such as overdose fatality reviews (OFRs). TTA is provided in a variety of formats, including expert consultations, virtual and in-person training events, workshop and meeting presentations, and online resources.

The COSSUP TTA Program can support your community by:

- **Identifying materials** such as policies and procedures, guidelines, and data sharing agreements that support program activities.
- **Providing speakers for conferences** and workshops or skilled subject-matter experts for training events to educate stakeholders and build capacity.
- **Facilitating strategic and cross-system planning** to identify community resources, establish priorities, and develop a road map to achieving goals.
- **Advancing replication of best practices and innovative strategies** in priority focus areas and jurisdictions through the sharing of practical knowledge (success stories and lessons learned) by the COSSUP Demonstration Projects.
- **Increasing PDMP efficiencies and facilitating coordination between PDMPs and state and national stakeholders.**
- **Facilitating peer-to-peer learning opportunities** through virtual consultations and on-site visits. These opportunities include structured programs that accept applicants on a rolling basis, including the Peer Recovery Support Services Mentoring Initiative (advancing the inclusion of PRSS into jurisdictions' portfolios of substance misuse intervention and treatment strategies); the First Responder Deflection Mentoring Initiative (providing communities interested in starting pre-arrest diversion and/or first responder deflection programs the opportunity to learn from established or innovative programs); the Overdose Fatality Review (OFR) Peer Mentor Site Initiative (elevating, communicating, and leveraging OFR promising practices while building bridges between nascent teams and those with demonstrated success); and the Evidence-based Treatment in Custody, Jail-based Mentor Site Initiative (offering jails across the country interested in providing or enhancing their MAT services a unique opportunity to observe and learn from innovative programs that have demonstrated success in meeting the treatment needs of individuals with substance use disorders).

How to Request TTA

The COSSUP TTA Program offers a centralized online system for requesting all forms of TTA through the completion of a brief online application form (<https://www.cossup.org/Program/TTA/Request>). BJA reviews each submission to match the request with the COSSUP TTA provider (or team of providers) with the appropriate expertise. The process is provided to requestors free of charge.

COSSUP TTA Providers

As COSSUP TTA providers, the following agencies look forward to supporting communities in their fight against substance misuse:

Institute for Intergovernmental Research

The Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR) serves as the connecting point for COSSUP TTA efforts and collaborates with BJA leadership and fellow TTA providers to work directly with COSSUP site-based grantees. IIR's role includes publication production and design; planning, coordination, and delivery of national-level trainings and working group meetings; COSSUP Resource Center website development and maintenance; coordination of distance learning opportunities and resource dissemination; review, distribution, and tracking of TTA requests; coordination of and provision of TTA to demonstration projects; provision of TTA to rural communities with a focus in the areas of overdose fatality review, harm reduction, and stigma reduction; and coordination of other complementary activities.

Altarum

Increasingly, PRSSs are an important—and sometimes central—part of efforts to effectively address the misuse of illicit substances. Altarum believes that peer-

based services are vital to the continuum of care for individuals impacted by drug misuse. Altarum works with organizations and systems as they implement best practices and promising approaches related to PRSS. Altarum supports federal, state, and local governments, as well as national and community-based organizations, to build a system of care that focuses on recovery, active involvement of consumers and their families, and multiple services to best meet individual needs and to strengthen and improve the health of communities.

Center for Health and Justice at Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities

Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities' (TASC) Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) helps COSSUP grantees implement evidence-based, systemic solutions at the front end of the justice system to respond to the substance use that often underlies criminal justice involvement. CHJ helps build integrated criminal justice, behavioral health, and community systems by assisting first responders in developing pathways to treatment for individuals at risk for drug misuse and overdose. CHJ offers online resources and in-person TTA engagements customized to the needs of specific jurisdictions with the goals of connecting and maximizing the treatment resources of the community to improve public health and safety.

National Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College

The National Criminal Justice Training Center (NCJTC) is proud to support urban, rural, and under-resourced communities, as well as culturally sensitive areas such as tribal communities. NCJTC provides solutions that address specific public safety concerns through on-site training, conferences, online learning opportunities,

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and customized TTA. Areas of focus include tribal justice systems planning and capacity building, tribal corrections capacity building, alcohol- and substance use-related crime, comprehensive tribal victim service program development, and comprehensive strategic planning.

Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Training and Technical Assistance Center

The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Training and Technical Assistance Center (PDMP TTAC) serves as a resource to PDMPs, BJA grant recipients, federal partners, and other stakeholders to optimize PDMPs as a part of overall efforts to address prescription drug misuse, fraud, and diversion. The PDMP TTAC provides a comprehensive array of services, including expert consultations; meeting facilitation; and issue briefs on topics such as PDMP best practices, innovations, evaluation, and performance measurements. The PDMP TTAC is a collaborative effort with IIR.

RTI International

RTI International serves a dual role in COSSUP. The RTI team provide direct support to state agencies and subrecipients, making communities safer by promoting evidence-based practices to respond to drug misuse across all government levels. Through its substantive,

methodological, and technical expertise, RTI and its partners foster peer-to-peer learning and cross-site coordination to enable discussions of lessons learned, facilitate program improvements, and promote evidence-based program proliferation—providing tailored TTA for the unique needs of jurisdictions that can also be applied nationally.

The RTI team also provides individualized TTA to grantees to effectively address needs of pretrial, prosecution, defense counsel, and courts actors in serving individuals with substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders during the pretrial and court adjudication processes. RTI creates thorough, user-friendly, practitioner-focused toolkits and resources to support best and equitable practices in the implementation of diversion programs.

Rulo Strategies

Rulo Strategies acts as a resource for sites who seek to improve their response to substance use and behavioral issues in jails, prisons, and community supervision settings. The Rulo Strategies team provides site education on the implementation of evidence-based and promising practices, including universal substance use screening, withdrawal management, medication assisted treatment, and recovery support.

Visit the COSSUP Resource Center at www.cossup.org.

About BJA

BJA provides leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support local, state, and tribal law enforcement in achieving safer communities. To learn more about BJA, visit www.bja.gov and follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DOJBJA) and Twitter (@DOJBJA). BJA is part of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.