



Statewide Council on Opioid Abatement

Council Members

Attorney General James Uthmeier
Chair

Sheriff Dennis M. Lemma
Delegate Chair

Secretary Taylor Hatch
Vice Chair

Amy Ronshausen
Governor's Appointee

Major Todd M. Shear
Senate President's Appointee

Sheriff Robert A. Hardwick
Office of the Speaker's Appointee

Commissioner Chris Dougherty
Florida Association of Counties

Commissioner Lee Constantine
Florida Association of Counties

Commissioner Kathleen Peters
Florida Association of Counties

Vice Mayor Kimberly Glass-Castro
Florida League of Cities Appointee

Vice Mayor Jolien Caraballo
Florida League of Cities Appointee

Virtual Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2025

2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. EST

Welcome/Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM Delegate Chair, Sheriff M. Lemma
Roll call was taken by LaDarius Gammage

Attendance Summary

Sheriff Lemma, Delegate Chair

Attorney General James Uthmeier, Chair

Assistant Secretary Erica Floyd Thomas on behalf of Secretary Taylor Hatch, Vice Chair

Amy Ronshausen, Governor's Appointee

Major Todd Shear, President's Appointee

Tara Wildes on behalf of Sheriff Robert Hardwick, Office of the Speaker's Appointee

Commissioner Lee Constantine, Florida Association of Counties

Commissioner Kathleen Peters, Florida Association of Counties

Vice Mayor Kimberly Glas-Castro, Florida League of Cities Appointee

Vice Mayor Jolien Caraballo, Florida League of Cities Appointee

Todd Hockert, Subject Matter Expert

Laura Viafora Ray, Subject Matter Expert

Dr. Samantha Thompson, Subject Matter Expert

Opening Remarks

Sheriff Dennis Lemma opened the March 11, 2025, meeting by welcoming council members, staff, and public attendees, expressing gratitude for their continued dedication to the Council's work. Sheriff Lemma acknowledged the postponement of the originally scheduled February meeting, offering a formal apology. The reason, he explained, was his invitation to testify before the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, chaired by Senator Rick Scott where he presented a comprehensive review of Florida's opioid epidemic, and the coordinated statewide response led by the Opioid Abatement Council. Sheriff Lemma congratulated Secretary Shevaun Harris on her appointment as Secretary of the Agency for Health Care Association and welcomed Secretary Taylor Hatch to the Department of Children and Families leadership and the Council. Attendance was taken and a quorum was established.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion passed to approve minutes from the October 30, 2024, meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Kathleen Peters

Second: Major Todd Shear

Attorney General James Uthmeier, Council Chair

Direction of the Statewide Council on Opioid Abatement

Attorney General Uthmeier commended the Council's impressive progress and stated that its performance has exceeded expectations laid out when the Council was created by executive order. Attorney General Uthmeier outlined several key principles and goals that will guide his leadership of the Council:

- Access to Treatment: Develop strategies to ensure every Floridian has access to high-quality treatment.



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- Youth Protection and Prevention from Opioid Exposure: Emphasized the importance of protecting children from the dangers of opioid misuse and vowed that his administration would center youth in its prevention messaging and increase efforts to restrict youth access.
- Support for First Responders and Healthcare Providers: He committed to prioritizing the needs of front-line personnel by ensuring they have the tools and support to effectively respond to overdoses and related crises.
- Public Education and Awareness: Stressed the need to expand public education efforts, including use of PSAs and multimedia campaigns to raise awareness about the risks of opioid misuse and the availability of treatment resources.

Fiscal Year 2025 Citrus County Opioid Settlement Funds

Presenter: Todd Hockert, Department of Health Citrus & Marion; Chair, Citrus Opioid Task Force

Todd shared the FY 24-25 Citrus County Opioid Settlement Funds plan. The plan included:

- LSF Health Systems partnership to oversee fund allocation.
- Establish tracking mechanisms for program effectiveness, with an annual progress review meeting.
- Prioritize "one and done" projects to ensure sustainability as funding decreases annually.
- Highlighted projects included:
 - CORE team expansion
 - SUD treatment services via Langley Health
 - Recovery housing by Zero Hour Life Center
 - Youth prevention through school-based programs

City of Jacksonville Strategic Use of Opioid Settlement Funds

Presenter: Laura Viafora Ray, Program Coordinator, Jacksonville Fire & Rescue

Jacksonville's Opioid Settlement Funds Strategic Approach includes:

- Administered through Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department
- The grant program prioritizes prevention, treatment, and recovery support.
 - Implement mobile outreach programs to address gaps in services, particularly in high-risk zip codes.
 - After-school programs to support healthy decision-making attitudes and skills to prevent substance misuse.
 - Strong data tracking and site monitoring

The ATRAC Program

Presenter: Dr. Samantha Thompson, Jacksonville ACE Medical ATRAC Program

Jacksonville ACE Medical ATRAC Program includes:

- Mobile treatment services to underserved communities in Jacksonville.
- Expand Remote Life Health Support (RLH) program to track patients' health data in real-time.
- Conduct opioid prevention education sessions at middle and high schools, including Narcan training.
- Host community health fairs to increase outreach and engagement.

Highlighted youth training, community events, and gaps in health insurance access.

Statewide Opioid Recovery Efforts

Presenter: Erica Floyd Thomas, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health

The Assistant Secretary provided high-level overview of opioid abatement data for the state of Florida.

- Florida saw a 14% decrease in opioid-related deaths in Florida from 2021 to 2023.
- Major drivers:
 - Overdose Prevention Programs increased naloxone access.



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- CORE Network expanded to 30 counties: 96.3% population coverage by the end of Fiscal Year 2024-2025.
- Continued support for Medication-Assisted Treatment programs; over 18,000 individuals received MAT, 45% initiated in treatment settings.
- 33% increase in certified peer recovery workforce.

Open Forum

Council Member Commissioner Kathleen Peters proposed a statewide opioid education campaign, modeled after the "Truth" tobacco initiative. It was confirmed that active efforts are underway via:

- The "Fact Your Future" campaign and toolkit.
- Multiple grants awards.
- Statewide prevention messaging.

Closing Remarks

Sheriff Lemma ended the meeting by calling on the Council to remain laser-focused on saving lives, strengthening communities, and ensuring every dollar of settlement funding yields measurable results. He thanked everyone again for their participation and officially adjourned the meeting at 3:54 PM.