



OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL
JOSH SHAPIRO

Elk County Joins AG Shapiro's Treatment Initiative

Announcement Marks 16th County to Join OAG's Program with Local Law Enforcement to Connect Individuals Suffering from Addiction with Treatment

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—Wednesday, May 11, 2022

RIDGWAY—Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced that Elk County has joined the Law Enforcement Treatment Initiative (LETI), a program launched by Attorney General Shapiro in collaboration with law enforcement that provides assistance to Pennsylvanians suffering from substance use disorders in enrolling in a treatment program. Fifteen counties across the Commonwealth have previously joined the LETI program.

PA LETI allows Pennsylvanians seeking treatment for addiction to use their local law enforcement, including sheriffs, police officers, probation officers, and parole officers, as a resource to contact participating treatment partners without the threat of arrest.

"We lose 14 Pennsylvanians a day to the opioid epidemic," said Attorney General Josh Shapiro. "Connecting individuals to the treatment they need will save lives, make our communities stronger, and help minimize the stigma associated with substance use disorder. I commend District Attorney Tom Coppolo and our law enforcement partners across Elk County for implementing this program in their communities."

Shapiro said partnering Elk County law enforcement agencies under PA LETI will:

- Open their doors to those suffering from addiction.
- Help identify treatment for those who seek it.
- Assist with ensuring that people have transportation to the facilities.
- Maintain relationships with local treatment providers to understand the availability and collect data to study outcomes.

In Elk County, individuals can contact a member of law enforcement at any time to ask for a referral or to be connected to treatment with no threat of arrest or prosecution. This policy also includes the ability for law enforcement to connect individuals to treatment at their discretion.

The LETI program is not going to be a cure-all that will eliminate the local drug problem.

However, it is a new mechanism that may allow someone with a substance abuse disorder to avoid the criminal justice system and instead get the treatment that they desperately need.

“The LETI program will provide law enforcement officers with the opportunity to make one call and get someone help. The goal of the program is to facilitate treatment more quickly and seamlessly than ever before, and it will take many critical partners to accomplish this. However, with the assistance of Janene Holter from the Office of the Attorney General, Elk County is now poised to take this step into the future. Drug addiction is not going away, but hopefully by trying treatment before prosecution in appropriate cases we will be able to help people overcome their need for drugs, and avoid their interaction with the courts. This is only the first step in a long journey, but there can be no journey without a first step,” said Elk County District Attorney Thomas Coppolo.

Agent Janene Holter, Ph.D., is the Office of Attorney General’s dedicated full-time agent who coordinates PA LETI. Her work includes training, writing policies for each participating county, providing sample policies and documents, and convening key community stakeholders.

LETI currently operates in Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Chester, Clearfield, Columbia, Dauphin, Delaware, Fayette, Mifflin, Montgomery, Northumberland, Schuylkill, Snyder, and Somerset counties. District Attorneys in Pennsylvania interested in starting a PA LETI program should contact the Office of Attorney General at 570-826-2483.

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