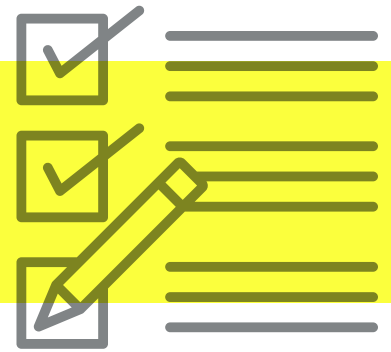


ADVOCACY ASSESSMENT TOOL: THE WAR ON DRUGS MEETS THE PUBLIC BENEFITS SYSTEM



a Drug Policy Alliance publication

Ballooning jail and prison populations are only the most visible signs of the drug war in the United States. Despite the immense harm that has been done in the name of the drug war in the criminal legal system, the actual universe of devastation extends far beyond. The drug war seeps into our daily lives – and it's easy to lose sight of how much our world is shaped by it.

Surveillance and punishment are the default reactions to drug use and activity wherever it shows up, impacting our lives in profound but largely unrecognized ways. This assessment tool is designed to help organizers, advocates, and policymakers ascertain how drug war policies and practices appear in your local public benefits system.

DRUG TESTING, ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICIES, AND PUNISHMENTS FOR DRUG-RELATED ACTIVITY

- Does my state require that a person take a drug test in order to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits? Can my state require that a person suspected of drug use submit to a drug test in order to receive SNAP benefits? Is the individual required to pay for the drug test?
- Does my state require that a person take a drug test in order to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits? Can my state require that a person suspected of drug use submit to a drug test in order to receive TANF benefits? Is the individual required to pay for the drug test?

DRUG TREATMENT PHILOSOPHIES

- Does my state require that a person diagnosed with a substance use disorder (SUD) attend drug treatment programs in order to receive SNAP benefits? Are the programs abstinence-based? Do they offer medications for addiction treatment (MAT), such as methadone or buprenorphine? Does the individual have to pay for the treatment programs?
- Does my state require that a person diagnosed with a substance use disorder (SUD) attend drug treatment programs in order to receive TANF benefits? Are the programs abstinence-based? Do they offer medications for addiction treatment (MAT), such as methadone or buprenorphine? Does the individual have to pay for the treatment programs?

PUNISHMENTS FOR DRUG CONVICTIONS

- Does my state limit or deny SNAP benefits for a person with a drug conviction?
- Does my state limit or deny TANF benefits for a person with a drug conviction?