



OFFICE OF THE STATE ATTORNEY

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New Data Shows Continued Decreases in Opioid Overdose Patients in Palm Beach County

WEST PALM BEACH, FL – State Attorney Dave Aronberg announced new data that show a 21% decrease in the number of Fire Rescue responses to opioid overdose patients in Palm Beach County in the first 6 months of 2019, compared to the same period last year. The new statistics, which came from Palm Beach County Fire Rescue, show that county firefighters and paramedics made 655 emergency calls for opioid overdoses of 667 individuals in the first 6 months of this year, compared to 821 emergency calls for opioid overdoses of 841 individuals in the first 6 months of 2018.

These numbers show continued progress in Palm Beach County's battle against the opioid epidemic. Since 2017, there has been a 61% decrease in the number of Fire Rescue responses to opioid overdose patients in Palm Beach County.

State Attorney Aronberg, who formed a Sober Homes Task Force that has made 86 arrests for fraud and abuse in the drug treatment and sober homes industries since October 2016, attributed the decrease to a combination of the Sober Homes Task Force's crackdown, tougher laws at the state level, broader access to Narcan as a heroin/fentanyl antidote, and increased follow-up care to break the cycle of addiction. Aronberg pointed to innovative programs from Palm Beach County and the City of Delray Beach to provide medically assisted treatment to those with a substance use disorder.

"We have made real progress," said Aronberg, "and know there is still more work to do."

State Attorney Dave Aronberg and Chief Assistant State Attorney Alan Johnson were recently honored with the 2019 Pillar of Excellence Award for Criminal Justice by the Addiction Policy Forum in Washington, DC, for the success of the Sober Homes Task Force. Palm Beach County experienced a 40% drop in opioid overdose deaths in 2018.

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