

# Office of National Drug Control Policy Open Government Plan

## Executive Summary

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) fosters healthy individuals and safe communities by effectively leading the Nation's effort to reduce drug use and its consequences. Working with Federal agencies, State and local government officials, non-profit organizations, and the private sector, ONDCP develops a national strategy to reduce illicit drug use, manufacturing, and trafficking; drug-related crime and violence; and drug-related health consequences. Collaborating with individuals and partner organizations is vital to the success of the Agency, and ONDCP is committed to the principles of openness outlined in the Open Government Directive.

Included here are ONDCP activities that currently support the goals of Open Government, including the development and dissemination of the National Drug Control Strategy; Agency policies and practices for communication of data and results, events, and budgetary information; and a variety of methods for informing key audiences. Notwithstanding ongoing efforts, ONDCP recognizes there is significant room for enhancing these activities and is committed to revising policies and expanding activities to ensure continued and sustained improvement.

The plan outlined here provides a two-year strategy for improving transparency, participation, and collaboration at ONDCP. The Agency will enhance its activities to reach these goals, as well as launch new tools to further engage the public.

The ONDCP Flagship Initiative outlines the development and increased use of new social media tools and digital strategies to expand transparency, participation, and collaboration related to the National Drug Control Strategy and ONDCP's work.

Public input was solicited and considered in the development of this plan. Through the ONDCP blog, yearly strategy consultation with public stakeholders and other online feedback mechanisms and public engagement opportunities, ONDCP will continue to expand, enhance, and revise this plan to improve openness at the Agency.

## Current Activities that Support Open Government

Transparency, participation, and collaboration are guiding principles of the ongoing operations of ONDCP, and the Agency is continually working to improve its effectiveness through new partnerships and technologies. Below is a description of several of these ongoing activities:

## Development of the National Drug Control Strategy

ONDCP, as required by Congress, collaborates with the Federal agencies, as well as State, local, and tribal governments, to develop and publish the National Drug Control Strategy (Strategy). The Strategy sets forth a comprehensive plan each year to help reduce illicit drug use and its consequences by limiting the availability of and demand for illegal drugs, and the misuse of legal drugs. The National Drug Control Strategy is a balanced approach to reducing drug use and its consequences, and highlights effective drug control programs and policies in prevention, treatment, law enforcement, and international collaboration. The Strategy was developed through an extensive, nationwide consultative process conducted by Director Botticelli at the direction of the President. It included meetings with Federal partners, a national "Listening Tour," numerous meetings with stakeholders in the drug control community, and letters and emails soliciting official comment from hundreds of organizations. Director Botticelli traveled the country and participated in roundtable discussions and hosted town hall forums in several states to listen to people working on these issues daily, including those in the law enforcement, prevention, recovery and treatment communities. Members of Congress, community leaders, Governors, mayors and other elected officials hosted these roundtable discussions and town hall forums. Comments were also received through meetings with and letters from relevant stakeholders. These included meetings with several Native American tribes and associated organizations. The 2016 Strategy will reflect an effort to respond to issues raised by these partners and stakeholders.

## Communicating Data and Results

ONDCP annually submits to Congress a Data Supplement to the annual Strategy with up-to-date information on the availability and prevalence of illegal drugs and the criminal, health, and social consequences of their use. Such information is important for measuring the effectiveness of Federal, state, and local drug control programs. Congressional statute defines ONDCP's reporting requirement to be an assessment of: current illicit drug use (including inhalants and steroids) and availability, impact of drug use, and treatment availability; the reduction of illicit drug activity; the reduction of the consequences of illicit drug use and availability; and a determination of the status of drug treatment in the United States.

The Data Supplement selects data and information that will permit analysis of current trends against previously compiled data and information where such analysis enhances long-term assessment of the Strategy. These data and information permit a standardized and uniform assessment of the effectiveness of drug treatment programs in the United States.

## Communicating Events

The ONDCP Office of Public Affairs assists the Director in his service as the Administration's lead official on drug policy issues. The Office of Public Affairs develops and implements strategic communication plans designed to generate media exposure and public awareness for key drug programs and priorities.

In addition, the Office of Intergovernmental and Public Liaison, through the ONDCP website, e-newsletter, blog, and dissemination of the ONDCP public email address provides timely updates of ONDCP public activities. Please see the section on ONDCP's Flagship Initiative for more information about plans for expanded use of social media tools and digital technology in ONDCP outreach efforts.

## Communicating the Drug Control Budget

The head of each national drug control program agency is required to submit to the ONDCP Office of Policy, Research, and Budget a copy of its proposed drug control budget request. The drug control budget includes the request for funds for any drug-control activity undertaken. After confirming that drug control resources requested are adequate to implement the objectives of the National Drug Control Strategy, ONDCP develops a consolidated drug control budget proposal. The National Drug Control Budget informs Congress and the public about how funding requested by national drug control program agencies will be used to support treatment, prevention, domestic law enforcement, interdiction, and international activities in support of the President's National Drug Control Strategy.

## ONDCP's Grant Programs

### High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas

The mission of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTAs) is to disrupt the market for illegal drugs in the United States by assisting Federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement entities with collaboration, cooperation, and information sharing. HIDTA task forces work to dismantle and disrupt drug trafficking organizations, with particular emphasis on drug trafficking regions that have harmful effects on other parts of the United States.

The ONDCP Director designates new HIDTAs in consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Homeland Security, heads of the National Drug Control Program agencies, and relevant State governors. Funding from HIDTA helps Federal, State, local and tribal law enforcement organizations invest in infrastructure, some operational requirements, and joint initiatives to dismantle and disrupt drug trafficking organizations. Funds are also used for demand reduction or prevention efforts and some limited drug treatment initiatives.

There are currently 28 HIDTAs which include 17.2 percent of all counties in the United States and its territories and little over 60 percent of the population. HIDTA-designated counties are present in 48 States, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia.

## Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program

The Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program is a Federal grant program that provides funding to community-based coalitions that organize to prevent youth substance use. The DFC Program is administered by ONDCP and managed in partnership with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Since the passage of the DFC Act in 1997, the DFC Program has funded more than 2,000 coalitions and currently mobilizes nearly 9,000 community volunteers across the country. The philosophy behind the DFC Program is that local drug problems require local solutions.

The primary purpose of the DFC program is to:

1. Establish and strengthen collaboration among communities, public and private non-profit agencies; as well as federal, state, local, and tribal governments to support the efforts of community coalitions working to prevent and reduce substance use among youth.
2. Reduce substance use among youth and, over time, reduce substance abuse among adults by addressing the factors in a community that increase the risk of substance abuse and promoting the factors that minimize the risk of substance abuse.

DFC grantees are required to work toward these two goals as the primary focus of their Federally-funded effort. Grants awarded through the DFC Program are intended to support established community-based coalitions capable of effecting community-level change. For the purposes of the DFC Program, a coalition is defined as a community-based formal arrangement for cooperation and collaboration among groups or sectors of a community in which each group retains its identity, but all agree to work together toward a common goal of building a safe, healthy, and drug-free community. Coalitions receiving DFC funds are expected to work with leaders within their communities to identify and address local youth substance use problems and create sustainable community-level change through environmental strategies.

### Steps Taken to Increase Transparency and Collaboration:

The HIDTA and DFC Programs have taken steps to include transparency in their core functions and have created opportunities for participation and collaboration. Outlined below are the actions ONDCP's Programs are committed to achieving in order to meet the requirements of the Directive and institutionalize the spirit of the Open Government Initiative.

#### **HIDTA:**

- Provides HIDTA Program information on the ONDCP webpage, to include locations of the 28 HIDTAs.
- Provides a link to a current and updated map indicating HIDTA locations and HIDTA-designated counties.
- Explains the HIDTA designation process, as promulgated in the Federal Register, on the ONDCP webpage.
- Provides points of contact for each of the 28 HIDTAs and including the five Southwest Border Regions.
- HIDTA related activities are mentioned and explained on the ONDCP webpage.

## DFC:

The DFC Program updates its webpage at a minimum twice per year. Information provided on the DFC Program is divided as follows: General Information, Information for Current Grantees, Information for Applicants, and DFC Mentoring Program.

### General Information:

- Provides general information about the DFC Program and the DFC funding cycle
- Provides the latest DFC program updates (i.e., release of the DFC Funding Opportunity Announcements, New Grant Award Recipient Training, etc.)
- Provides information about each year's new and continuation grant award recipients, such as: state, grant award recipient name, city, and coalition name;
- Provides an updated map of all DFC-funded community coalitions; and
- Releases data findings from the DFC National Cross Site Evaluation (Report, Summary Report, Infographics)

### Current Grantees:

- Provides link to the DFC Grant Award Recipient Handbook
- Provides information to the DFC Terms and Conditions
- Provides information on DFC Progress Reporting deadlines
- Provides information on the DFC Progressive Grant Program Discipline and Appeal Processes

### Information for Applicants:

- Provides information on the DFC funding cycle
- Provides information on the DFC application Peer Review Process
- Provides information about the DFC Statutory Eligibility Requirements

### DFC Mentoring Program:

- Provides general information about the DFC Program and the DFC funding cycle
- Provides information about the DFC Statutory Eligibility Requirements

## Transparency

Transparency promotes accountability and provides information about how ONDCP operates. Providing information and data about the structure, policies, and processes of the Agency will provide partner organizations and the public a better understanding of how the Agency is meeting its mission. ONDCP has made the following available online for the public:

- Overview of the authorizing legislation that established and guides the scope of ONDCP activities;
- Summaries of current and previous years' budgets, as well as requests for future funding;
- The current and past years' National Drug Control Strategy, which outlines program activities and partner agencies;
- Biographies for the ONDCP Director and senior leadership.
- A "Stay Connected" page with information for members of the public about signing up for the ONDCP e-newsletter, suggesting topics for its blog and following ONDCP social media channels.

## Improving Transparency at ONDCP

To improve transparency, ONDCP makes available online

- An ONDCP blog and press releases about ongoing activities, data and research, or emerging drug control issues

- Information on ONDCP grant applications
- Updated staffing list of Agency leadership, including instructions for how to contact the Agency; and
- Congressional reports and other progress updates that provide information about ongoing ONDCP activities and programs.

## Publishing Agency Data

Publishing data online in easily accessible formats is a cornerstone of the Open Government Directive and a high priority for ONDCP. The key audiences for drug policy-related data are extremely diverse, including Federal, State, and local law enforcement; community prevention organizations; academic and public health associations; drug treatment providers; and policy makers at all levels of government. Given this diversity of stakeholders, ONDCP will actively remain engaged to ensure that public information provided by ONDCP is relevant and timely for policy makers and constituencies.

To date, ONDCP has published the following data sets:

- Federal Drug Control Budget – Budget Authority by Function, FY 2008 – FY 2016
- Drug-Free Communities: New and Continuation Awards (XML)
- In addition to these data sets, ONDCP plans to make more high-value data available. ONDCP is in the process of reviewing Agency data and developing lists of data for possible public release.

## Supporting Online Federal Programs

ONDCP supports online Federal programs and is committed to continuing to work collaboratively with its partners and key stakeholders to support transparency and openness.

The Office of Administration/Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OA/OCFO) within the Executive Office of the President supports ONDCP's efforts related to [USAspending.gov](http://USAspending.gov). This support will continue with the implementation of the DATA Act in May 2017. Transparency in Federal spending data is an important step towards the goal to focus on results. The DATA Act requires all agencies to use data definition standards for the collection and reporting of agency-level and award-level data. In addition, to ensure high quality reporting, ONDCP will continue to assign a unique Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN) for financial assistance awards. As a term and condition for award, ONDCP will continue to require that all recipients report subaward information by FAIN. OA/OCFO's support will implement the requirement that primary award ID in agency financial systems are the link between accounting transaction and award. This linkage will facilitate timely reporting of award level financial data, reduce reporting errors, and serve as the primary mechanism for associating expenditures with individual awards.

All of ONDCP's competitive grant programs are published on [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov). In addition, ONDCP's grant terms and conditions are published online.

## Addressing Records Management

ONDCP follows all Federal guidelines related to the Federal Records Act to ensure the timely transfer of all permanent, valuable records to the control of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The Agency creates a great number of records in a variety of media. Managed by an appointed ONDCP staff member, these records are maintained and stored under a system of records approved by NARA, periodically moved to offsite holding areas, and eventually retired to NARA. ONDCP is currently in the process of adopting an updated records schedule within the next 6 months that will include electronic records. ONDCP already manages virtually all email records electronically, and also manages the vast majority of all permanent electronic records electronically. In addition, ONDCP keeps key documents signed by senior officials in hard copy files. However, we will be adopting electronic signatures within the next two years.

## Meeting Our Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

Currently, there is no significant backlog of FOIA requests for ONDCP. Information about ONDCP's FOIA program is available on the ONDCP FOIA website, which provides instructions for submitting a FOIA request and archives reports from FY 1997 through FY 2015, as well as the 2014 through 2016 Chief FOIA Officer's reports. ONDCP has at least two employees who dedicate part of their time to responding to and analyzing FOIA requests in a timely manner, and the website lists contact information for these individuals, including the Public Liaison, FOIA Requester Center, and Chief FOIA Officer. ONDCP regularly posts on its website data and other information that it anticipates is likely to be of public interest, and would also proactively disclose information that is requested several times through FOIA requests. Regarding privacy issues, ONDCP rarely if ever collects personally identifiable information from the general public, but if members of the general public are interested in obtaining Privacy Act records, they may use the contact information on ONDCP's FOIA webpage.

## Whistleblower Protection

ONDCP respects and follows the rights and remedies of employees under whistleblower protection laws. ONDCP will register for the Office of Special Counsel's Whistleblower Protection Act certification program within six months and complete the requirements for the certification program within one year.

## Responding to Congressional Requests

The Office of National Drug Control Policy has an Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA) dedicated to building and maintaining positive relations with Members of Congress and their staff. One of OLA's responsibilities is responding to Congressional inquiries. Calls and emails are returned as soon as practicable. For formal, written correspondence, OLA attempts to respond to Congressional inquiries within ten business days, when possible. OLA also facilitates the participation of ONDCP senior leadership at Congressional hearings, which are typically available for public viewing either in person or on the relevant Congressional Committee website, and provides information to Congressional oversight committees about the agency's operation and activities.

## Agency Declassification Programs

Historically, ONDCP has rarely declassified documents. However, ONDCP recently began declassifying documents related to drug issues that were created in the mid to late 1980s when ONDCP was created as an agency. To obtain declassified documents, please submit a request to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at <http://www.archives.gov/foia/>. ONDCP follows declassification policies and procedures established by NARA at <https://www.archives.gov/declassification/>. Furthermore, ONDCP has a policy allowing staff members to challenge classifications that can be found on ONDCP's FOIA page.

## Public Participation in ONDCP Work

Active participation from our partners helps to shape the National Drug Control Strategy and implement the activities outlined in the plan. After assuming the position, ONDCP Director Botticelli undertook a consultative effort with Congress, Federal agencies, State and local partners, and hundreds of concerned citizens to encourage participation and get input for the 2015 National Drug Control Strategy. Additionally, Director Botticelli launched an initiative to host quarterly conference calls each year with lead single state authorities, concerned parents, state and local health officials, and others to share updates on agency priorities, upcoming events, and policy.

To sustain this formal mechanism for providing input to the Agency, the Office of Intergovernmental and Public Liaison continues to build and strengthen external relationships through in-person events, online activities, and the creation of new

channels of two-way conversation. Creating and maintaining open dialogues with ONDCP staff, partners, and the public will continue to be a priority for ONDCP.

## Collaboration

Collaboration is the foundation of many ONDCP activities. Each year, the National Drug Control Strategy outlines programs that will be implemented with the leadership and expertise of the Agency's Federal partners, including:

- Department of Agriculture
- Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency
- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of the Interior
- Department of Justice
- Department of Labor
- Department of State
- Department of Transportation
- Department of the Treasury
- Department of Veterans Affairs

To further this collaboration, ONDCP established an Interagency Working Group on Demand Reduction with participation by leadership from 34 Federal departments and agencies. Key national priorities for Government action have emerged from this coordinated and collaborative process, forming the foundation for demand reduction activities within the National Drug Control Strategies.

The Demand Reduction IWG met for a few years, and transitioned into issue specific IWGs. In addition, ONDCP established a Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Working Group which now includes an Opioid Group to emphasize current priorities and a reinvigorated Prevention Interagency Working Group. These groups foster collaboration, provide status updates where actions are required, and bolster priority issues.

## Flagship Initiative

The ONDCP Open Government Flagship Initiative is to incorporate significantly greater use of online and social media tools to expand transparency, participation, and collaboration related to the National Drug Control Strategy and other ONDCP activities.

ONDCP will expand the use of a range of digital media technologies to improve collaborations with the public and government agencies, including webinars, Twitter Chats, Facebook, and YouTube broadcasts. ONDCP's Office of Intergovernmental and Public Liaison recently added a dedicated staff member to coordinate these efforts. Twitter and Facebook allow ONDCP to engage directly with stakeholders and advocates in state and local communities, as well as reach out to potential supporters who are not yet involved. Twitter provides a space for two-way conversation, whereas other channels ONDCP uses such as email and blogging on our website, only allow us to send out messages. Social networks promote open discussion and allow ONDCP to join the public conversation while keeping stakeholders up-to-date. By using popular hashtags like #OpioidEpidemic, #Opioids, and #SubstanceUse, specifically on Twitter, ONDCP can easily find and connect with other people who are interested in the same cause or issue. ONDCP also has a "Stay Connected" page with information for members of the public about signing up for the ONDCP e-newsletter, suggesting topics for its blog, and following ONDCP social media channels. ONDCP's blog and press releases address ongoing activities, data and research, or emerging drug control issues. In the coming years, ONDCP hopes to grow our audiences on our social networks and expand to other platforms to reach our key stakeholders.

In addition, we plan to continue expanding our email contacts. By having a large email list, ONDCP is able to effortlessly communicate with stakeholders in real-time, sending out press releases, breaking news, and messages directly from Director Botticelli and President Obama. ONDCP breaks down email lists by interest, allowing us to directly reach people who are engaged on prevention, treatment, recovery, and more when their issues arise.

ONDCP also plans to increase outreach through videos and conference calls. We would like to increase the number of videos produced by the office, like the recent video created showing how to administer naloxone. Director Botticelli also launched an initiative to host quarterly conference calls each year with lead single state authorities, concerned parents, state and local health officials, and others to share updates on agency priorities, upcoming events, and policy updates.

## Public and Agency Involvement

This plan was developed with internal and external input, including input from all ONDCP components and dozens of ONDCP stakeholders. ONDCP seeks continued feedback to update and strengthen future versions. Comments are welcome through the ONDCP public email address at [OIPL@ondcp.eop.gov](mailto:OIPL@ondcp.eop.gov). ONDCP will post updated versions of the plan online as needed.

## Progress Report

ONDCP has made progress since its last Open Government Plan in making the agency more transparent and accountable. We have significantly increased the data and information made available on our website and expanded public outreach to include more constituency groups and collaborative processes, including expanding the number of other Federal agencies we collaborate with and the quality of those interactions. Regarding ONDCP's flagship initiative to create a large-scale collaboration and data-publishing project, ONDCP was able to expand the data offered on our website, but was not able to expand that project to work done by other Federal agencies.

## Looking Ahead

Addressing the complex issue of drug use and the negative consequences associated with it will require a large-scale, coordinated effort. Only through a continued focus on transparency, participation, and collaboration will ONDCP improve its programs, provide support and expertise to key stakeholders, and adequately respond the needs of communities across the country. ONDCP is committed to continuing to expand its work in accordance with the Administration's principles of openness. If revisions are needed or a progress update is warranted, ONDCP may revise this plan on our website: [whitehouse.gov/ondcp](http://whitehouse.gov/ondcp).