

# CUT THE RED TAPE PREVENTING ADDICTION RECOVERY

## A Questionable Statutory Interpretation Has Trapped Addiction Care behind Red Tape for 50+ Years

But President Trump has opened a doorway to fix it and **safely expand access to methadone for opioid use disorder (OUD)** to save lives

### THE HISTORY

Current DEA regulation prohibits **qualified practitioners** from prescribing methadone for OUD & pharmacies from filling it. **This restricts Americans' choice in addiction care & limits the autonomy of qualified practitioners.**

### RED TAPE HURTS TREATMENT ACCESS

**5.7 million +** Americans live with OUD, but only **500,000 (<9%)** receive methadone to treat OUD. Access is largely restricted to methadone clinics, which **80%** of counties don't have.

Methadone for OUD is associated with **50% lower risk of death, reductions in crime and illicit drug use, and increased addiction treatment retention which can facilitate employment and productivity.\***

### THE DOGE DEREGULATORY INITIATIVE DOORWAY TO ADVANCE ADDICTION RECOVERY

An executive order declares regulations should be rescinded or modified if they are **not based on the best reading of the underlying statute.**

**Red tape regulation for methadone for OUD is not based on the best reading and should be fixed.**



#### DEA Regulation on Methadone for OUD

21 C.F.R. § 1306.07(a)

"A practitioner may administer or dispense directly **(but not prescribe) ...**"

#### Underlying Statute

21 U.S.C. 823(h)

Practitioners who "dispense" must annually obtain a separate registration. "Dispense" is defined as "deliver[ing] a controlled substance to an ultimate user...by...a practitioner, **including the prescribing and administering** of a controlled substance."

**PREVENTING QUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS FROM PRESCRIBING IS NOT THE BEST READING OF STATUTE\*\* AND HAS LED TO RESTRICTIONS AROUND A LIFESAVING TOOL FOR TREATING OUD**

The Trump Administration can modify this burdensome regulation to allow qualified prescribers to prescribe methadone for OUD & pharmacies to fill the prescription. **This would equip qualified practitioners with the tools they need to save lives.**



Learn more: [ASAM.org/news/detail/2025/03/31/Cut-Recovery-Red-Tape](https://www.asam.org/news/detail/2025/03/31/Cut-Recovery-Red-Tape)

\*Dydyk AM, Jain NK, Gupta M. Opioid Use Disorder. [Updated 2024 Jan 17]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2025 Jan-. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK553166/>

\*\*Dooling B, Stanley L. A Vast and Discretionary Regime Federal Regulation of Methadone as a Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder. 2022.

[https://regulatorystudies.columbian.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs4751/files/2022-08/gw-reg-studies\\_report\\_federal-methadone-regulations\\_bdooling-and-lstanley.pdf](https://regulatorystudies.columbian.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs4751/files/2022-08/gw-reg-studies_report_federal-methadone-regulations_bdooling-and-lstanley.pdf)