



News Release

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CONTACTS: [Vivian D. Laxton](#)
Frederick County Director of Communications, 301-600-1315
[Patti B. Mullins](#)
The City of Frederick Public Information Coordinator, 301-600-1385

Frederick County and The City of Frederick to File Lawsuits Against Drug Manufacturers & Distributors for Role in Opioid Epidemic

FREDERICK, MD – Frederick County Government and The City of Frederick will join many other state and municipal jurisdictions in filing lawsuits against drug manufacturers and distributors for their role in the opioid crisis nationwide.

“We need to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for heavily promoting the very prescription drugs that are a key factor in opioid addiction,” said County Executive Jan Gardner. “Frederick County has already devoted a tremendous amount of resources to the opioid crisis. Through this lawsuit we will be better able to help our residents with educational and addiction recovery assistance.”

“I’m proud to work with Frederick County, and others, to take on this difficult task,” Frederick Mayor Michael O’Connor said. “We don’t do this lightly, and we are determined. We are committed to taking action to address the addiction crisis, both locally and nationally. This approach is one tool, but not the solution. We need to be creative and comprehensive to ultimately succeed. This problem is damaging every community in the country. Every one of us knows someone affected by, or lost to, the opioid addiction epidemic.”

This year there have been 154 opioid-related overdoses handled by law enforcement agencies in Frederick County as of May 31, including 25 fatal overdoses.

Frederick County and The City of Frederick retained the law firm Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd, which will file the lawsuits in the Federal District Court in Baltimore. The firm was also hired by several counties and cities across the United States, including Montgomery and Baltimore Counties. Outside counsel for Anne Arundel, Cecil and Harford have filed similar suits on behalf of their residents, claiming that the pharmaceutical manufacturers intensified the opioid epidemic by minimizing or concealing the risks to doctors and patients about the highly probable addiction associated with its drugs.

The lawsuits will seek restitution for the harm incurred as a result of deceptive and fraudulent marketing practices of several pharmaceutical manufacturers and the failure to report suspicious purchases by certain wholesalers. As a result, these manufacturers and wholesalers have violated federal and state laws.

Officials from Frederick County and The City of Frederick want to be part of the solution in halting the illegal distribution of drugs and help residents achieve recovery from the opioid epidemic.

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