

# Drug Policy Alliance

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

**<https://drugpolicy.org/resource/healthcare-not-handcuffs-putting-affordable-care-act-work-criminal-justice-and-drug-policy>**

## Campaign and Advocacy

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The Affordable Care Act (ACA) represents a remarkable opportunity for criminal justice and drug policy reform advocates to advance efforts to enact policy changes that promote safe and healthy communities, without excessively relying on criminal justice solutions that have become so prevalent under the war on drugs, and which fall so disproportionately on low-income communities and communities of color. Even with its challenges, the ACA sets the stage for a new health-oriented policy framework to address problems such as substance use and mental health disorders by more appropriately and effectively casting substance use and mental health disorders as matters of public health and not of criminal justice. To assist advocates in navigating this new terrain, *Healthcare Not Handcuffs: Putting the Affordable Care Act to Work for Criminal Justice and Drug Law Reform* outlines some of the major provisions of the ACA immediately relevant to criminal justice and drug policy reform and explores specific applications of those provisions, including program and policy examples and suggested action steps.

Sign up to receive action alerts and news about drug policy reform.

Get tips for covering the war on drugs and download DPA staff photos, logos, marijuana stock photos and b-roll video.

Our new strategic plan takes bold steps to dismantle this war on drugs and our communities. Join us in seeing this vision through.

Sign up to receive our monthly newsletter to get an inside look at DPA and the world of drug policy reform.

**We are  
the Drug  
Policy  
Alliance.**