



June 15, 2026

MDOC participates in drug arrests across state

PINE BELT, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Corrections participated in an operation across South Mississippi leading to the arrest of 40 people, along with the seizure of various drugs and firearms.

The Mississippi Attorney General's Office led Operation Liberty Strike, led by Attorney General Lynn Fitch's Fentanyl Strike Force. The operation resulted in 28 felony arrests, 12 misdemeanor arrests, the execution of six search warrants, the seizure of half a pound of fentanyl, one-and-a-half pounds of marijuana, 12 ounces of methamphetamine and eight firearms.

The operation was conducted in a four-day blitz across Lamar County, Picayune, Biloxi, and Harrison County on June 3-4 and 10-11.

Other agencies participating in the operation included:

- Alcoholic Beverage Control
- Biloxi Police Department
- Drug Enforcement Administration
- Forrest County Sheriff's Department
- Harrison County Sheriff's Office
- Homeland Security Investigations
- Lamar County Sheriff's Office
- Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics
- Picayune Police Department

"We will not tolerate predators peddling death in our communities. Operations like this bring together federal, state, and local law enforcement to take dangerous criminals off

our streets," Fitch said. "I am grateful for the opportunity to collaborate to make Mississippi safer for everyone."

Lamar County Sheriff Danny Rigel said the majority of the drugs his office seized were counterfeit pills.

The fentanyl issue is still wide spread in the county, but Rigel said they decided to focus on Sumrall and Oak Grove.

"They've got the markings of Tylenol and Aleve," said Rigel. "It's hard to identify it without sending it to the lab."

In 2024, the county had four suspected overdose deaths, with 44 emergency Narcan doses administered.

Rigel said both numbers are trending down thanks to people speaking up.

"The majority of this was through citizen information," said Rigel. "So, it does work."

After several recent traffic stops in his area, Forrest County Sheriff Charlie Sims said all of the information pointed back to Lamar County.

"Little cues that come up from talking to people and what not may move them to different locations," said Sims. "On this particular detail, all of those pretty much ended up in Lamar County."

Sims said operations like these are necessary today mainly because dealers are not sticking to just one area.

"It's wherever the drug dealers think they can make the most money off the addiction of others," said Sims.