

DCT 2026 Legislative Fast Facts

Extend Pilot to Help County Jails with Mentally Ill Patients

Issue Summary

In 2024, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$2.387 million to Direct Care and Treatment (DCT) to develop a two-year pilot program to help county jails administer psychotropic medications to incarcerated individuals with serious mental illness. This one-time appropriation expires June 30, 2026, before the pilot program can reach its operational goals. The pilot team has completed baseline data collection, begun building partnerships with county correctional facilities, and held several training sessions for participants and those interested in learning more about the program. However, the team needs more time to refine services, scale operations to reach more jails, and demonstrate measurable outcomes.

Proposal

The proposal extends the County Correctional Facility Support Pilot through June 30, 2027, using existing carryover funds from the 2024 appropriation. The extension allows DCT to continue providing education and support on protocols for involuntary medications, technical assistance to expand access to injectable psychotropic medications, and surveys on capacity and barriers. The proposal maintains current service levels with no new budget request.

Why It's Important

The pilot has achieved several early successes, including training county staff on civil commitment procedures, developing safety protocols for medication administration, coordinating technical skills demonstrations, and establishing partnerships for reduced-cost medications. Ending the program prematurely would interrupt this progress before counties can fully implement new practices and before DCT can collect sufficient data to evaluate effectiveness. The extension provides more time to expand from nine contracted counties to an estimated 30 participants, complete additional training, and measure treatment outcomes, and understand the program's impact on admission to DCT treatment facilities from jails.