

Alternatives to Incarceration
2022 Report for the Legislature



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This information will be provided in alternative format upon request.

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BACKGROUND

The Alternative to Incarceration grant began in 2017 through a competitive RFP process for \$160,000. This is a pilot project that the legislature elected to continue funding in the 2021 First Special Session. It was and still is designed to assist county recipients within the State of Minnesota, who have supervised release and probation agents working with “nonviolent controlled substance justice-involved clients.” Prior to a justice-involved client’s probation or supervised release being revoked for non-compliance with conditions of supervision, these funds are used to identify community options to address and correct the violation. Currently, there is \$480,000 per year in funds made available to three counties through a legislatively mandated appropriation. Those counties are Anoka, Wright, and Crow Wing and each receive \$160,000 per year through a grant agreement. The grant funding was continued under the HF63, Article 1, Section 30, Sub.225.21. The recipients of this grant provided required data to demonstrate programming participation and outcomes, which are contained within this report.

ACTIVITIES OF THE GRANTEES (Anoka, Wright, and Crow Wing)

The Alternatives to Incarceration is a grant-funded program with Anoka County, Wright County, and Crow Wing County for the fiscal years of 2022 and 2023. The objective of the program is to divert non-violent justice-involved clients with substance use disorders from returning/entering prison on technical violations. The programs provide services to supervised release clients facing revocation due to technical violations and to probationers who fit grant characteristics and would likely receive a recommendation of commitment to the commissioner of corrections if not for the Alternatives to Incarceration program. The grants provided to each of the counties assist in funding these services and staff salaries to those who help provide the services. Outlined below is a description of the Anoka County program and their completed work over this past granting cycle. Additionally, this report will discuss two new grantees to the Alternative to Incarcerations grant and the progress made to have them start services. Thus, at the time of this report, Wright County had just begun their grant as of November 1, 2021. Therefore, the county has begun collecting data, but does not have outcomes to report, but will identify the progress with establishing the grant and the services the county will provide in the next year. Equally, Crow Wing County was in the final stages of securing vendors as a part of their work plan and did not begin their grant until January of 2022. This report will also outline their proposed services for this upcoming fiscal year. Each of these two counties, as well as Anoka, are aware of their reporting requirements as outlined in their grant agreements and legislatively required. They will be required to submit a full year’s worth of data at this same time next year.

Anoka County

Anoka County has participated in the Alternatives to Incarceration grant since 2017. The grant began as a pilot project with Anoka County being the lone recipient of a \$160,000 grant. Since that time, Anoka County has continued to provide services that best fit the needs of this target population and assisting them to remain in the community. Anoka County provides services such

as expedited assessments for substance use and mental health, housing opportunities, and treatment in order to reduce the number of justice-involved clients recommended for revocation and returned to a correctional institution.

Client Program Outcomes

Anoka County’s initial plan was to serve between 35-45 justice-involved clients per year under this grant. However, this past grant cycle Anoka County had 32 justice-involved clients in the Alternatives to Incarceration program from July 1, 2020 to November 1, 2021. Provided below is a breakdown of the 32 justice-involved clients that were served based on type of supervision, gender and services provided:

	M	F	ATI Successful Completion	ATI Unsuccessful Completion	ATI Cont. Participation	TX Referral	TX Complete	TX Cont. Participation	EHM Referral	EHM Completion
Supervised Release	22	0	8	8	6	14	7	2	6	6
Probation	2	8	6	3	1	10	8	0	3	3
Totals	24	8	14	11	7	24	15	2	9	9

*ATI stands for Alternatives to Incarceration, TX stands for Treatment, and EHM stands for Electronic Home Monitoring

Supervision Client Violation Outcomes

Additionally, Anoka County provided a table describing justice-involved clients who had a technical violation but remained on supervision, had a technical violation and were returned to an institution, and any new offense resulting in a return to an institution. Also included in the table were supervised release justice-involved clients that had no violations and remained under supervision and supervised release justice-involved clients having no violations while their supervision expired. That table is provided for you here:

	Technical Violation Cont. Supervision	Technical Violation Returned	New Offense Cont. Supervision	New Offense Returned	No Violations Cont. Supervision	No Violations Supervision Expired
Supervised Release	3	3	0	1	8	5
Totals	3	3	0	1	8	5

Probation Violation Outcomes

The final table describes information on justice-involved probation cases. Anoka County reported on justice-involved clients that were discharged, had no violations and continued

probation, and had a technical violation but remained on probation. Also reported, were no justice-involved probation clients that had no new offenses or violations resulting in an executed sentence.

	Probation Discharge	No Violations Continued Probation	Technical Violations Continued Probation	New Offense	Violation Resulting In Executed Sentence
Probation	2	3	3	0	0
Total	2	3	3	0	0

Client Barriers

Justice-involved clients participating in the Alternative to Incarceration program face multiple barriers to accessing community resources. Some of these barriers are specific to the individual clients and other barriers are systemic barriers. Individuals may have disabilities or skill deficiencies that may prevent them from effectively accessing available resources. There are a number of recurring barriers identified for those participating in the Alternatives to Incarceration program. Some of these barriers include but are not limited to; a lack of education, access to email and internet, transportation, limited employment opportunities due to criminal record or work history, substance use and mental health issues, and lack of monetary resources

The program case manager utilizes short-term and long-term stabilization assignments along with other assessment tools to identify justice-involved client needs and target barriers impacting them. The case manager collaborates with the justice-involved clients and utilizes the assessment tools to develop an individualized case plan. The case plan identifies targets, priorities, and action steps to overcome barriers. The Alternatives to Incarcerations program has helped justice-involved clients navigate some of these barriers by helping justice-involved clients complete forms, assist with GED services, gain access to the internet and setup an email account at local libraries, and assist with transportation needs. The case manager also assisted with helping justice-involved clients connect with the job-training center, referring clients for mental health services when needed, completing Rule 25 assessments to arrange substance use treatment, and helping justice-involved clients identify resources in the community.

Program Service Gaps

Finally, Anoka County has identified some gaps that remain that they will continue to work on addressing. These gaps are in areas such as programs that involve families and/or mentors, housing for persons with a felony, diagnostic mental health, and transitional follow up with clients placed on medication to ensure they are taking the medication, transportation availability outside of traditional work hours and nutritional education and assistance

Wright County

Wright County began their grant on November 1, 2021. As a result Wright County has had limited time to gather data and determine outcome measures. However, Wright County has begun to take in justice-involved clients under the grant and started providing services they outlined in their work plan. Wright County designed their work plan to meet individual needs by providing resource support to help increase their chance for success in the community. Those services include expediting substance use and mental health assessments to properly determine the risk/needs of the justice involved clients, housing services, which include contracting with local apartment complexes to offer emergency housing options, transportation services, and working with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety-Driver and Vehicle Services Division to purchase technology to administer ID cards. Wright County is also establishing a resource center for justice-involved clients to gain support in these areas. Finally, Wright County is working with vendors to establish felony friendly career/job fairs so that justice-involved clients can seek gainful employment. These services all assist justice-involved clients with following their conditions of supervision and probation, while better equipping them to have long-term success. Wright County acknowledges that ongoing case planning will further help identify the gaps in these resources so that they may utilize the funding in areas of most need.

Crow Wing County

Crow Wing County is projected to begin their grant in January of 2022. As a result, Crow Wing County does not have data for this report. However, in the midst of setting up their grant and providing a work plan, Crow Wing County is prepared to begin providing services and has set up a team to help assist these justice-involved clients under this grant. Crow Wing County identified in their work plan that they intend to serve about 40 justice-involved clients under this grant. Crow Wing County intends to serve 15-20 justice-involved clients under supervised release, and 15-20 justice-involved clients under probation. They will target their services towards non-violent, high risk, felony level, substance use justice-involved clients that have struggled with traditional forms of community supervision. The Alternatives to Incarceration Program is a four-phased program lasting a minimum of four months. The structure of this program is designed to provide enhanced supervision while providing justice-involved clients with access to essential services that will aid in helping them achieve abstinence, establish a sober support network, obtain gainful employment, secure stable and sober housing, address mental health, and remain in the community. Like Wright County, Crow Wing County is new to this grant and will required more case planning to determine the gaps in their resources and corrections they can make to the program.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on a review of the programs, this is a population of justice-involved clients that has historically exhibited a pattern of not following conditions of supervision whether it be on probation or supervised release. The services identified in each county's proposals intend to assist justice-involved clients in remaining in the community and being successful while under supervision. Each

county identified specific needs of the justice-involved clients they serve and therefore established unique services that are tailored to best fit the needs of their justice-involved clients based on best practice.

Based on the characteristics of this initial population and assessment of outcomes, there are some identified fundamental program elements necessary to increase positive outcomes. Such elements include, but are not limited to stable housing, expedited assessment and treatment intake process, and transitional planning. Once each county is receiving funding provides services for a full year, it is anticipated that these programs will have an increase in positive outcomes moving forward.