



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

2S

Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: February 24, 2026

Title of Item: Aitkin Sobriety Court Opioid Funding Request

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| <input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY | Action Requested: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) | <input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* <small>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</small> |
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|---|---|
| Submitted by: Kelli Crowther, PHN, Opioid Coordinator | Department: Aitkin County H&HS- Public Health |
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| Presenter (Name and Title): Kelli Crowther, PHN, Opioid Coordinator or Erin Melz, PH Supervisor | Estimated Time Needed: 0 |
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Summary of Issue:

Final approval of funding application on behalf of Aitkin Sobriety Court.

This application was reviewed and approved by the Opioid Subcommittee on February 10, 2026.

Project: Aitkin Sobriety Court Recovery Support and Engagement Initiative

Overview from Application: The Aitkin Sobriety Court Treatment Court is seeking opioid settlement funding to support evidence-based recovery engagement through sober activities, pro-social events, and incentives for participants, families, and alumni. Individuals with opioid and other substance use disorders often face significant financial, social, and environmental barriers that limit their ability to engage in healthy recovery-oriented activities. Providing structured, substance-free events and meaningful incentives helps strengthen recovery capital, reduce isolation, promote family involvement, and increase long-term treatment retention. These activities directly support harm reduction, improve treatment outcomes, and reinforce ongoing recovery behaviors.

Amended Criteria for Funding: The subcommittee approved the application with an amended funding amount and have agreed to support \$3,500 for this project. They recognize the benefits that the previous funding has brought to the participants of Sobriety Court and therefore agree to fund these initiatives one last time.

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:

Recommended Action/Motion:

Approve \$3,500 one time payment funded with Opioid Settlement Funds to Aitkin Sobriety Court.

Financial Impact:

Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$

Is this budgeted? Yes No *Please Explain:*

Opioid Settlement Funds will be used to support this project.

Aitkin County Health and Human Services

2025

Opioid Settlement (OS) Funding Application

Section 1: Applicant Information

Contact:

Please direct all correspondence to the contact information provided below.

Kelli Crowther, PHN

Aitkin County Public Health
((218) 927-7267

Kelli.crowther@aitkincountymn.gov



| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Date | 12/30/2025 |
| Organization Name | Aitkin County Sobriety Court |
| Street Address | 209 2nd St NW, Rm 178 |
| Mailing Address if different | |
| City, State, Zip Code | Aitkin, MN 56401 |
| County | Aitkin |

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Primary Contact | Julia Cluff and Andy Walsh |
| Phone | 218-927-7398 |
| Email | julia.cluff@courts.state.mn.us |

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|-------------------|---|
| Financial Contact | Community Action Council of Crow Wing County. Friends of the Brainerd Lakes Area Treatment Courts. |
| Tax ID/SSN | 51-0186078 |
| Phone | 218-829-5278 |
| Email | info@brainerdcommunityaction.org |

Information provided in this application may be used for promotional materials. This includes, but is not limited to: fact sheets, Minnesota Department of Health reports, newsletters, social media posts, and media releases. Additional information may be requested by Aitkin County Public Health e.g. a release might be requested for individuals in photographs.



By checking this box, you acknowledge and accept the statement above.

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|----------------------|--|
| PROJECT NAME: | Aitkin Sobriety Court Recovery Support and Engagement Initiative |
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Brief Overview

The Aitkin Sobriety Court Treatment Court is seeking opioid settlement funding to support evidence-based recovery engagement through sober activities, pro-social events, and incentives for participants, families, and alumni. Individuals with opioid and other substance use disorders often face significant financial, social, and environmental barriers that limit their ability to engage in healthy recovery-oriented activities. Providing structured, substance-free events and meaningful incentives helps strengthen recovery capital, reduce isolation, promote family involvement, and increase long-term treatment retention. These activities directly support harm reduction, improve treatment outcomes, and reinforce ongoing recovery behaviors.

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|------------------------|------------|
| Funding Request | \$6,000.00 |
|------------------------|------------|

Section 2: Project Category

Each project/request must fall within one or more of the following mitigation categories. Select one or more of the categories that best match your project.

Treatment

Support treatment of Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and any co-occurring Substance Use Disorder or Mental Health condition through evidenced based or evidence informed programs or strategies.

Examples may include:

- Treat OUD
- Support People in Recovery
- Connect People who need help connecting to the services they need (connections to care i.e. transportation)
- Address the needs of criminal justice-involved persons
- Address the needs of the perinatal population, caregivers, and families including babies with neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome
- Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) such as methadone, buprenorphine or naloxone.

Prevention

Support efforts to prevent over-prescribing and ensure appropriate prescribing and dispensing of opioids through evidenced based or evidenced informed programs. Support efforts to discourage misuse of opioids through evidence based or evidenced informed programs. Examples may include:

- Training for health care providers
- Continuing Medical Education on appropriate prescribing of opioids
- Media campaigns to prevent misuse
- Funding evidence-based prevention programs in schools
- Upstream education on the harm of other addictive and harmful substances such as alcohol, tobacco or marijuana.

Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is a set of ideas and interventions that seek to reduce the harms associated with both drug use and ineffective, racialized drug policies. Harm reduction stands in stark contrast to a punitive approach to problematic drug use—it is based on acknowledging the dignity and humanity of people who use drugs and bringing them into a community of care in order to minimize negative consequences and promote optimal health and social inclusion. Examples of Harm Reduction may include:

- Support Services for children and families affected by substance use disorders.
- Overdose Prevention including distribution of Narcan, Fentanyl test strips, safe use education materials and increased access to proven effective and promising overdose prevention practices utilized in other counties and states.
- Community education to reduce the stigma around OUD

Research and Training

Support opioid abatement research and training. Examples may include:

- Funding for staff training or networking programs and services to improve the capability of government, community, and not for profit entities to abate the opioid crisis.
- Monitoring, surveillance, data collection and evaluation of programs and strategies described in this opioid abatement strategy list.
- Research non-opioid treatment of chronic pain.
- Research on novel harm reduction and prevention efforts such as the provision of fentanyl test strips.

Section 3: Guiding Principles

Each project/request must be guided by the following five principles set forth by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. Please indicate which of these principals apply to your program. You do not have to meet all of the guiding principles.

- Spend Money to Save Lives.
 - OS dollars will be used on a specific project and not to fill budget gaps or shortfalls in other programs. OS dollars are being used to expand on an existing evidenced based program or initiative.

- Use Evidence to Guide Spending
 - There is evidence to support expansion of an existing program. This could include an initiative or program that was not successful but there are learned outcomes that could be successful.

- Invest in Youth Prevention
 - This program supports, children, youth and families in effective programs.

- Focus on Racial Equity
 - This program serves a specific demographic or underserved population in our community. Check one.
 - Socioeconomic
 - Seniors
 - Youth
 - Veterans
 - Homeless
 - Black/Indigenous/People of Color
 - Other _____
 - LGBTQ

- Develop a Fair and Transparent Process for Spending Funds
 - There is a process in place for clear and transparent use of OS dollars

Please Note:

It is the Applicant's sole responsibility to keep clear and detailed records that demonstrate the OS dollars requested were used for the amount and purpose(s) outlined in the initial application. Aitkin County Public Health and/or the Minnesota Attorney Generals Office, reserves the right to audit the Applicants records at any time without prior notice.

Section 4: Work plan and Goals

Give a detailed description of your project work plan and goal. List your goals related to the project. Include planned activities to meet these goals, intended timeline and responsible individual(s). Add rows as needed.

Spend Money to Save Lives: This funding will directly support recovery stabilization through structured sober activities and evidence-informed incentives that improve treatment retention and reduce relapse and overdose risk.

Use Evidence to Guide Spending: Research on treatment courts indicates pro-social engagement, positive reinforcement, and family-inclusive activities significantly increase program completion and reduce recidivism.

Invest in Youth Prevention: Many sober, family-friendly events include children and adolescents, promoting protective factors and reducing intergenerational impact of substance use.

Focus on Racial/Socioeconomic Equity: A majority of participants experience socioeconomic hardship. Funding ensures equal access to safe, therapeutic, sober activities regardless of ability to pay.

Develop a Fair and Transparent Process for Spending Funds: All activities, events, and incentives will be pre-approved by the multidisciplinary team. Detailed records, receipts, and documentation will be maintained. If received, funding will go into separate 501.C.3. account, specifically used to support the Aitkin Sobriety Court.

| ACTIVITIES TO ACCOMPLISH GOAL(S) | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL(S) |
|--|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Plan and host quarterly sober community events (e.g., family nights, outdoor recreation, educational workshops) | Quarterly | Sobriety Court Coordinator & Team |
| Provide recovery-supportive incentives for milestones, engagement, and pro-social behaviors (gas cards, grocery cards, recovery materials) | Ongoing | Sobriety Court Coordinator |
| Develop partnerships with local community organizations to offer low-cost or free activities (gyms, arts, recreation) | Ongoing | Coordinator & Public Health liaison |
| Facilitate alumni engagement and mentoring opportunities to promote sustained recovery. Semi-annually. | Semi-annually. | Sobriety Court Team |
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Section 5:Evaluation:

If your request is \$25,000 or more please complete this section. If it is under \$25,000 you do not need to complete this section. What would indicate to you that this project was successful? How will you measure progress or change? Describe your anticipated impact(s). Add rows as needed.

| Project Outcomes | How will you measure these changes? | What will you do with these results? |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | |

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY: Identify how you will work to sustain the project beyond the initial funding.

Section 6: Budget and Funding Request

Please complete the total project funding table below. **If line A is an overall cost please include an itemized list totaling the cost. You can also attach your own detailed budget.**

Total Project Funding Table

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|--|-------------------|
| A) How much funding are you requesting from the Aitkin County Opioid Settlement Funds? | \$6,000.00 |
| B) Do you anticipate any additional funding for this project? <i>Include other grants, donations, fundraised amounts, budgeted dollars, etc.</i> | \$ |
| C) How much do you or a partner anticipate contributing in-kind to the project? <i>Include staff/volunteer time, etc.</i> | \$2,800.00 |
| Total Project Cost <i>(should equal the sum of the 3 lines above)</i> | \$8,800.00 |

Submit your completed application via email to kelli.crowther@aitkincountymn.gov
Please put **OS Application** in the subject line.

Aitkin County Sobriety Courts Opioid Funding Budget Request

Total Requested: \$6,000.00

| Category | Item Description | Cost |
|---|--|-------------------|
| Incentives & Emergency Gift Cards (*2 programs) | 30 gas gift cards @ \$25 = \$750.00 30 food gift cards @ \$25 = \$750.00 60 theater tickets @ \$11 = \$660.00 Total = \$2,160.00 | \$2,160.00 |
| Holiday Food Baskets (*2 programs) | 30 baskets @ \$30 per participant (holiday meal + greeting card) Total = \$900.00 | \$900.00 |
| Candy for Court | | \$450.00 |
| Quarterly Sober Events | Item Description | Cost |
| Fishing Event: | - Boat launch = \$475.00 - Tip = \$60.00 - Subway catering = \$283.00 Total = \$818.00 | \$818.00 |
| Bowling Event: | - Bowling = \$246.00 - Pizza = \$247.00 - Salad = \$55.00 - Pop = \$71.00 - Gratuity/tax = \$126.00 Total = \$745.00 | \$747.00 |
| Arts & Crafts Event: | - Art supplies = \$250.00 | \$250.00 |
| BBQ Picnic at Park: | - 45 meals @ \$15.00 = Total \$675.00 | \$675.00 |
| | TOTAL PROJECT COST | \$6,000.00 |