



Alternatives to Incarceration  
Report for the Legislature

Minnesota Department of Corrections  
1450 Energy Park Drive, Suite 200  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108-5219  
(651) 361-7200  
TTY (800) 627-3529  
January 2024

This information will be provided in alternative format upon request.

The total cost of salaries and supplies incurred in development and preparation of this report was \$800 (reported as required by M.S. 3.197).

# Introduction

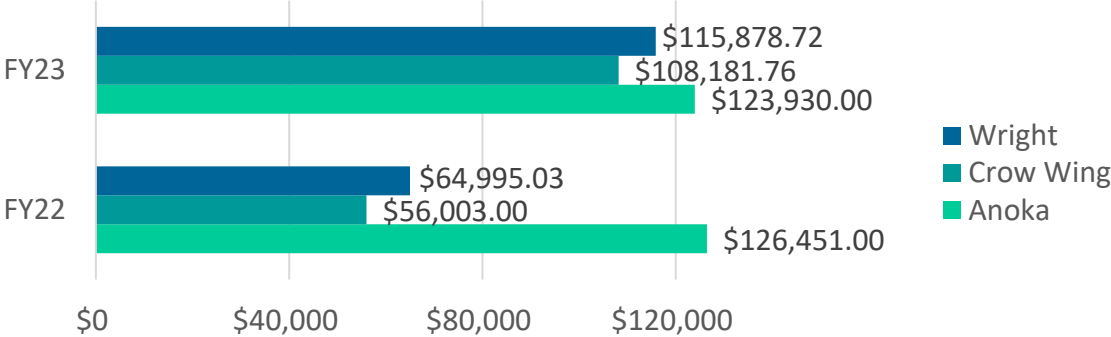
The Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) grant began in 2017 with a legislative appropriation of \$160,000. In the 2021 legislative session, the Minnesota Legislature opted to continue the pilot program under [HF63, Article 1, Section 30, Sub.225.21](#). ATI is designed to assist county recipients within 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. The Alternatives to Incarceration is anticipated to sunset after fiscal year 2025.

# Background

In 2017 through a competitive RFP process Anoka County was the first county awarded funding and continues to receive funding for its purpose. Wright and Crow Wing counties were new grantees during fiscal year FY22 but did not have executed grant agreements until November 2021 and January 2022 respectively. Available data for the past two grant cycles is included in this report.

# Program Spending

Grant funds are tracked by fiscal year beginning July 1st and ending June 30th. In fiscal year FY23, a total of \$480,000 was available to Anoka, Crow Wing and Wright counties through a legislatively mandated appropriation. Each county received \$160,000 through a grant agreement. A total of **\$347,990.48 (72%)** was spent out of \$480,000 available. Fiscal year FY23 was the first full year all three counties had an aligned timeframe to utilize funding.



# Legislative Reporting Requirements

All three counties collected a full year of data covering the period of November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 – October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, this report also includes past data when available. Crow Wing and Wright Counties were new in fiscal year FY22 beginning their grant in different months resulting in limited past data.

Per the amended Minnesota [HF63, Article 1, Section 30, Sub.225.21](#) grantees are required to report on eight (8) requirements herein this report. While each county approached their program differently qualitative and quantitative data was provide by each grantee to fulfill the reporting requirements. Reporting requirements are listed in numeric order.

## Legislative Reporting Requirement #1

Community services accessed as a result of the grant.

---

A total of nineteen (19) community services were reported. Each county strengthened relationships with community providers to implement their program and meet the needs of clients. Treatment services and housing supports were high needs and clear priorities in all counties. Access and availability of services varied greatly creating a mix of challenges and opportunities. Each county had to determine the best resources to pool together to help their clients. Below are the reported community services accessed by each county as a result of the grant.

<b>Anoka County</b>	Job Training Center: Education and Certification in Welding, Forklift and OSHA Regulations	MN Recovery Connection: Peer Support	MASH MN Association of Sober Homes: Affordable Sober Housing	Housing Link - Affordable Sober Housing	Housing Support (GRH): Affordable Sober Housing
	Peoples Incorporated: Mental Health, Housing, Sober Supports	Pink Cloud Foundation: Deposit for Sober Housing	RS Eden: SUD Assessments for Clients without Huber Privileges	DVS: Assistance Reinstating Driving Privileges	Interlock: Assistance reinstating driving privileges
<b>Crow Wing County</b>	Lighthouse Beginnings: Peer Recovery Support	Kendahl Sweet: Sober & Transitional Housing	Community Corrections: Enhanced Supervision	Community Services: Moral Reconation Therapy	ATI Team: Goals Group peer facilitated and attended by team and active as well as graduated participants
	Central Minnesota Mental Health Center: Treatment groups	CORE Psychological Counseling Center: Treatment Programming	Professional Counseling Center: Dependency Treatment and Evaluation	Nystrom & Associates: Chemical Dependency and Driving with Care Programming for Repeat DWI Clients	
<b>Wright County</b>					

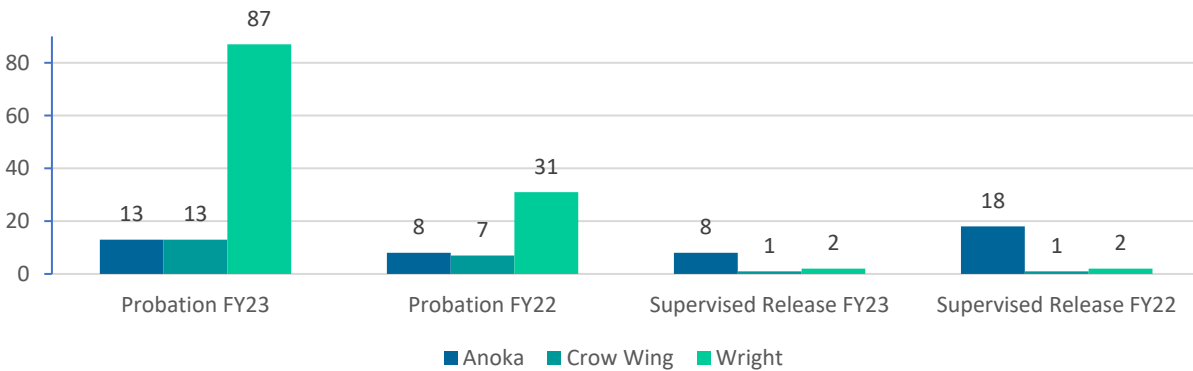
## Legislative Reporting Requirement #2

A summary of the type of supervision offenders were under when grant funding was used to help access a community option.

---

All three counties have indicated that they target high-risk high-need individuals as determined by validated assessments to be able to participate in the program. Probation numbers increased in all counties compared to FY22, especially in Wright County where probation numbers more than doubled. Supervised release numbers remained the same for two counties compared with FY22 while Anoka had a significant decrease in supervised release numbers. Examples of supervision levels include traditional felony, supervised release, traditional misdemeanor / gross misdemeanor.

### Supervision Type While Grant was Accessed



Below are the FY23 reported conviction levels of ATI participants in the categories of felony, gross misdemeanor, and misdemeanor. Felony convictions are the most prevalent however Wright County had a significant number of participants with gross misdemeanor convictions and was the only county to have participants with a misdemeanor conviction level.

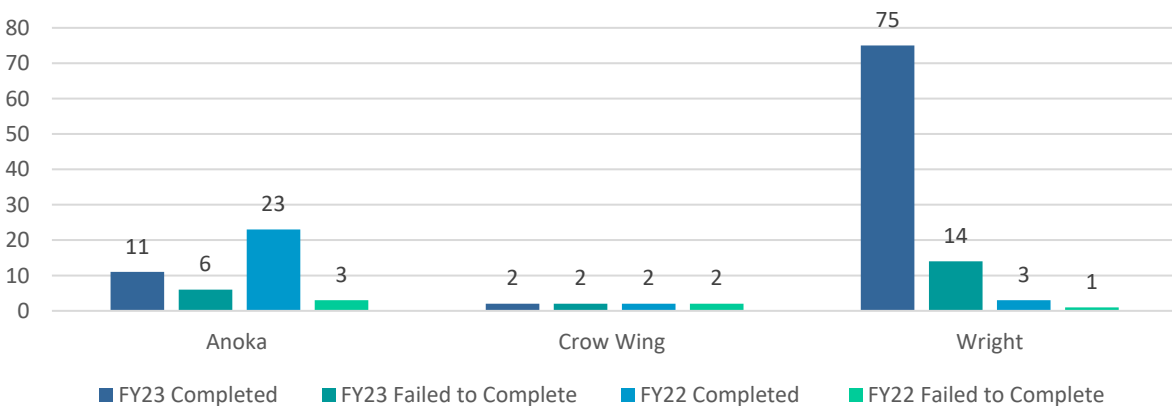
### FY23 Conviction Levels

	Felony	Gross Misdemeanor	Misdemeanor
Anoka	19	2	0
Crow Wing	14	0	0
Wright	32	45	12

### Legislative Reporting Requirement #3

The number of individuals who completed, and the number who failed to complete programs accessed as a result of this funding.

The number of completed programs and failed to complete programs varies greatly among the pilot counties. The results are reflective of not only individual efforts but the evolution of each program. Reported number of participants still in the program include four (4) in Anoka and ten (10) in Crow Wing.



#### Legislative Report Requirement #4

The number of individuals who violated the terms of release following participation in a program accessed as a result of this funding, separating technical violations and new criminal offenses.

---

Technical violations increased in Crow Wing and Wright Counties and Wright County was the only county to see an increase in new criminal offenses.

Anoka indicated that two (2) participants have technical violations that have not been resolved, four out of five participants with or pending technical violations were unsuccessfully discharged from the ATI program. Anoka also indicated that two (2) participants have pending charges that have not yet been convicted of a new offense however both were unsuccessfully discharged from ATI.

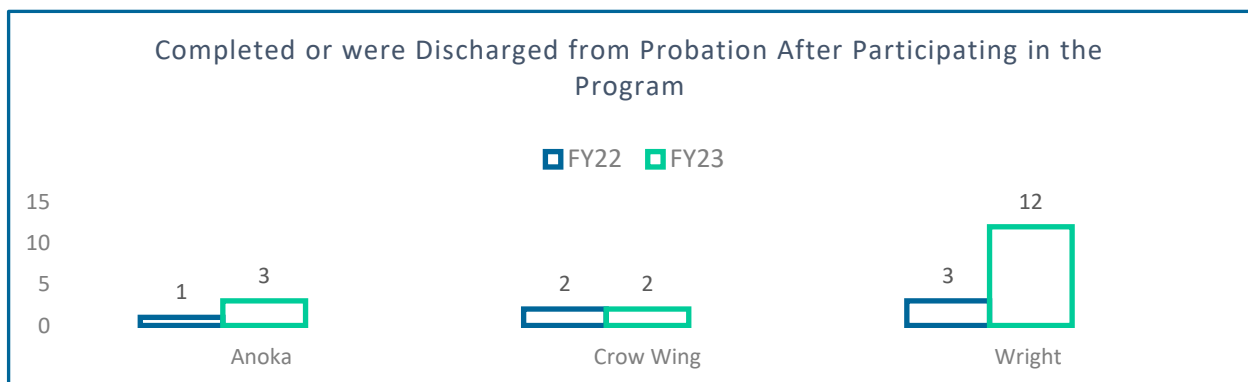
	Technical Violations		New Criminal Offenses	
	FY23	FY22	FY23	FY22
Anoka	3	3	0	2
Crow Wing	6	2	1	1
Wright	7	0	9	0

#### Legislative Reporting Requirement #5

The number of individuals who completed or were discharged from probation after participating the program.

---

Each county maintained or increased the number of individuals who completed or were discharged from probation after participating in the program.



## Legislative Reporting Requirement #6

The number of individuals identified in clause (5) who committed a new offense after discharge from the program.

In FY23 all counties reported zero (0) participants committing a new offense after discharge compared to FY22 where Wright County reported one client committing a new offense after discharge from the program.

## Legislative Reporting Requirement #7

Identification of barriers nonviolent controlled substance offenders face in accessing community services and a description of how the program navigates those barriers.

Each county has created their own framework for implementing their ATI program. At the core of each program counties work to address participants most basic needs while providing a plan to move forward with intensive support to keep all the pieces aligned. Opportunities are created for participants to learn how to meet their basic needs so that they can elevate their focus and attention to the matters of next importance like treatment, job skills, long-term employment, and sustainability. The following barriers and navigation strategies were provided by each of the counties and are listed in no particular order.

### Treatment

Participant Barrier	County Strategy	Anoka	Crow Wing	Wright
Mental Health	Completed MA application and make referrals	X		
SUD Relapse	Increase intensity of treatment and/or increase numbers of services to include cognitive programming, assignments, increased check-ins, coordinate updated assessments	X		
Learning Healthy Coping Mechanisms	Holding Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) Group weekly for all ATI clients		X	
Accountability	All ATI participants have an electronic Bluetooth breathalyzer blown into up to 5 times per day to ensure they are not driving. Participants are also tested for other substances a minimum of 1-2 times per week using a 12 panel UA or saliva testing. Testing increases if a participant is struggling with sobriety.		X	

Participant Barrier	County Strategy	Anoka	Crow Wing	Wright
Peer Support	Both with the establishments of GOALS group and PRSS services, participants are finding support, accountability, and engagement from their peers.		X	
Timely Comprehensive Assessments	LADC/care manager on the ATI team.		X	
Treatment costs are too high for many individuals	Worked with treatment providers to provide finance assistance for individuals to continue receiving services whereas they would discharge unsuccessfully for not paying bill.			X
Lower income individuals struggling to stay consistent with bills while attending treatment full-time	Helped with housing, gas cards to get to treatment, assistance with ignition interlock/ transportation issues			X

## Housing

Participant Barrier	County Strategy	Anoka	Crow Wing	Wright
Sober Housing	Attend treatment with sober housing, navigate Housing Link resource	X		
Maintaining Sober Housing	Designated sober living quarters for ATI participants with rent assistance for those who need it		X	
Housing costs upon release from incarceration AND	Worked with rental landlords to assist with initial costs to help individuals get housing so they could continue treatment and gain employment.			X
Inpatient chemical dependency treatments				X

## Transportation

Participant Barrier	County Strategy	Anoka	Crow Wing	Wright
Transportation	Identify steps to earn driver's license back	X		
Transportation	Identify employment along transit lines	X		
Rides to Treatment / Probation Meetings	Assigning a Peer Recovery Support Specialist to all ATI Clients. They provided extra sober support and drive them to probation meetings/ treatment		X	

## Technology

Participant Barrier	County Strategy	Anoka	Crow Wing	Wright
No Internet Access	Provide county issued iPad to use for job search, interviews, and virtual treatment	X		
Telecommunication Devices	ATI participants who come out of jail or prison without a cell phone are provided a temporary phone with monitoring software installed. This allows them to complete virtual check-ins at any time and submit to breath tests via a Bluetooth breath monitor.		X	

## Education / Employment

Participant Barrier	County Strategy	Anoka	Crow Wing	Wright
Education	GED services and Accuplacer for employments	X		
Lack of work history/ job skills	Workforce Center, IROC program, temporary employment services, complete applications, practice interview questions, resume writing	X		
Problem solving social skills/ thinking errors	Provide assignments targeted to the clients' highest risks/needs - Carey Guides	X		

## Legislative Reporting Requirement #8

Identification of gaps in existing community services for nonviolent controlled substance offenders.

Barriers identified in #7 are directly impacted by the gaps in community services listed below.

## Treatment Gaps

	Anoka	Crow Wing	Wright
Treatment providers being close to certain communities			X
Expanded access to non-religious based residential treatment programs in our community		X	
Access to community resources for mental health		X	
Long waiting time for mental health diagnostic assessments in the area.		X	
Everything is telehealth			
Programs that involve families and assistance to families who have an offender living with them	X		



## Housing Gaps

Lack of affordable housing			X
Felony friendly housing	X		
Lack of female-specific sober housing		X	
Lack of housing in the area in general		X	
Housing for graduated ATI participants/those who are ready to move on from the ATI specific housing		X	

## Transportation Gaps

Transportation to and from employment		X	
Transportation availability outside of traditional work hours	X		
Lack of regular transportation in non-metro communities			X
Driver license reinstatement fees and interlock costs being excessive			X

## Employment Gaps

Limited employment opportunities for individuals with criminal history			X
--	--	--	---

## Conclusion

Overarching gaps and barriers in all counties included availability and affordability of treatment services, housing options, access to transportation and technology and limited employment opportunities. Each of these gaps and barriers are becoming more challenging as state and national trends suggest decreased attainability in part due to overall lack of providers/operators and rising economic costs.

The ATI program meets participants where they are helping them address their most immediate needs while creating a path to establish stability and realize their potential success.