

# Dept. of Justice: AG Schimel launches recidivism reduction pilot program in 4 counties

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MADISON, Wis. – Today, Attorney General Brad Schimel announced, as part of Wisconsin’s Evidence-Based Decision Making (EBDM) Initiative, that the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) will award \$320,000 to Bayfield, Dunn, Eau Claire, and Milwaukee counties, to develop programs designed to assist jail inmates to successfully reenter society.

“This funding will help four counties in Wisconsin develop an evidence-based program to reduce recidivism that we hope to share with other Wisconsin communities after demonstrating success with the pilot program,” said Attorney General Schimel. “We want to make sure those serving time have a plan for re-entering society.. Getting a job, staying healthy, and seeking help for substance abuse issues are all necessary if we don’t want people coming back to jail time and again.”

Each county will receive approximately \$80,000 to develop a program designed to reduce recidivism; ensure individuals have a plan for housing, health care, employment, and training, and benefits and/or other services as needed so they can successfully reintegrate and become part of the community upon release.

If testing and evaluation of these four pilot programs determine the model is successful, the program may be expanded to other counties.

The grants are being awarded through the federal Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program, and will be awarded over multiple years.

Since 2014, the Wisconsin Criminal Justice Coordinating Council has been engaged in a planning and implementation project through the National Institute of Corrections' (NIC) Evidence-Based Decision Making (EBDM) Initiative. NIC's EBDM Initiative aims to apply "empirical knowledge and research-supported principles to justice system decisions made at the case, agency and system level and seeks to equip local and state criminal justice policymakers with the information, processes, and tools that will result in measurable reductions of pretrial misconduct, post-conviction reoffending, and other forms of community harm resulting from crime."

The state's implementation plans are centered on three overarching goals for the criminal justice system: 1) increase public safety, reduce harm, and improve the quality of life; 2) promote fairness and equal treatment; and 3) use resources effectively. To advance these goals, Wisconsin's interdisciplinary team has developed a multi-faceted plan that will implement a variety of approaches at different decision points across the criminal justice system. These approaches and decision points include such things as creating or expanding pretrial or diversion programs, increasing the use of risk and needs assessments at different points in the system, piloting evidence-based strategies in local jurisdictions, and developing model policies and training programs for use across the state. Through this approach, the state team seeks to implement criminal justice improvements that have a true system-wide impact.

For more information about Wisconsin's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, go to [cjcc.doj.wi.gov](http://cjcc.doj.wi.gov).