

# **AG Kaul: Announces 3 counties and 1 tribe to establish treatment courts; 7 counties to expand current treatment alternatives and diversion programs**

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MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul, alongside Governor Tony Evers and members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, today announced that more counties and one tribe will be offering more treatment court and diversion (TAD) programs in Wisconsin. These new and expanded programs are funded by an additional \$1.5 million over the biennium, made available through the 2019-2021 State Budget.

“Expanding access to treatment for Wisconsinites with substance-use disorder is a critical part of our effort to reduce substance abuse,” said Attorney General Kaul. “I’m proud to announce grants that will support treatment and diversion options for people who become involved in the criminal justice system due to an addiction.”

“Treatment and diversion programs are a critical and compassionate part of our criminal justice system, which is why The People’s Budget added additional funding to our Treatment Alternatives and Diversion program to take it to the highest funding level ever,” said Gov. Evers. “For every dollar we spend on treatment and diversion, we save nearly two dollars in our criminal justice system, so our budget investment was critically important, and I’m proud that we’re using these funds to expand treatment alternatives so we can reach more folks across our state.”

The TAD program provides local jurisdictions with options to give non-violent offenders an opportunity to enter diversion programs or treatment court programs

as a safe alternative to jail or prison confinement. These options typically involve drug and/or alcohol abuse treatment, case management, and other risk reduction services. Diverting non-violent offenders into substance abuse treatment improves outcomes for individuals with a substance use disorder, and keeps them out of jail and correctional facilities – thereby saving bed space and taxpayer dollars – as well as treating the underlying addiction that may have influenced them to commit a crime or may contribute to future criminal behavior.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) is responsible for administering the program, in partnership with Department of Corrections, Department of Health Services, Director of State Courts Office, and State Public Defender's Office.

The new TAD-funded programs include:

- Door County is awarded more than \$140,000 to create an adult drug court.
- Ho-Chunk Nation is awarded more than \$70,000 to support an established Healing to Wellness Court.
- Lafayette County is awarded more than \$118,000 to create an OWI court.
- Shawano County is awarded more than \$107,000 to support a newly established adult drug court.

The 2019-2021 State Budget also provided funding to expand existing TAD programs. Programs that are being expanded include:

- Adams County is awarded more than \$21,000 to support funding a peer support specialist and a volunteer transportation service for their program participants.
- Buffalo-Pepin Counties is awarded more than \$13,000 to support a newly established Driver Program in their counties which will provide needed transportation services for their diversion program participants.
- Marinette County is awarded more than \$78,000 to support a case manager position to help increase program capacity and address the waitlist for their adult drug court program.
- Monroe County is awarded more than \$57,000 to hire a Mental Health provider, a needed service for their adult drug court program as well as their TAD-funded OWI treatment court program.
- Portage County is awarded more than \$76,000 to support a case manager position to increase capacity of their established diversion program. The diversion program will receive TAD funding starting in 2020, in addition to their

existing TAD-funded adult drug court program.

- Polk County is awarded more than \$83,000 to support a case manager position and implement a new diversion program to complement an existing TAD-funded adult drug court program.

These expansion funds are in addition to ongoing annual funding for TAD. In total, TAD funding over the biennium now totals almost \$14.4 million, which includes county drug court programs, and supports treatment courts and diversion programs in three tribes and 53 counties in Wisconsin. See the attached map for more detail.

<https://www.doj.state.wi.us/news-releases/ag-kaul-announces-3-counties-and-1-tribe-establish-treatment-courts-7-counties-expand>