



Court Services
454 West 6th Street
Red Wing, MN 55066



To: Goodhue County Commissioners

Scott Arneson

From: Rhonda VanSchoonhoven

Court Services Director

RE: Request for Acceptance of Restorative Practices Initiatives Grant

Goodhue County Court Services applied for the MN Department of Public Safety 2025 Restorative Practices Initiatives Grant. The request was made for \$494,713.00. \$15,000 higher than the initial proposal brought before the board. The application was due 12/06/2024. On 5/22/25, Court Services received notification of selection for funding for \$494,713.00 contingent upon final negotiation of a budget. There is no financial match for Goodhue County. The grant is reimbursement upon services.

Project Description

This community-based restorative practices program enhances community harmony and conflict resolution skills for Goodhue County youth. Through activities such as restorative circles, peer mediation, reflective art, and community service, the program fosters empathy, accountability, and Community connection as preventative measures to reduce future court involvement. These activities will take place in youth spaces throughout the community – including Goodhue County Court Services, the Red Wing Public Library, and the RiseUp Red Wing offices – allowing programming to reach a broad swath of youth who need it. The program's activities embody restorative values of respect, empathy, and accountability.

● **Restorative Circles & Peer Mediation:** These activities provide youth with tools to process conflicts, take accountability, and develop empathy. Restorative circles create a structured, supportive setting where youth can openly discuss experiences and conflicts, allowing them to address underlying issues before they lead to legal consequences. For those already involved in the justice system, these practices serve as meaningful alternatives to traditional punitive measures, encouraging personal growth and accountability without formal charges.

● **Positive Community Norms & Chemical Health Support:** By emphasizing healthy choices made by a youth majority, Positive Community Norms campaigns correct misconceptions around substance use and reduce social pressures. For youth at risk of substance-related legal issues, the program also provides access to chemical health support, including cessation resources and counseling, in an environment that prioritizes supportive responses over punitive actions.



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● **Community & Family Engagement:** Family workshops and peer support groups involve families directly, equipping parents with restorative parenting techniques and building a support network that reinforces positive behavioral change at home. This strengthens protective factors for youth, reducing recidivism and supporting smoother reintegration for those exiting the juvenile justice system.

● **Community Service-Learning Projects:** This initiative will feature quarterly community service projects led by youth, including anti-bullying campaigns, chemical and mental health education, and repairing property that has been destroyed. Serving an estimated 100 youth across diverse demographics, the initiative addresses specific needs in Goodhue County, supporting youth facing socioeconomic challenges and interpersonal conflicts by building social skills and healthy coping mechanisms. Youth will be referred by schools, community organizations, and juvenile court services, with outreach focused on at-risk populations. Key partners include probation/court services and school counselors. Both will identify and refer eligible youth. This initiative focuses on all stages of intervention, from prevention to after-court involvement, aiming to reduce disruptive behaviors through early engagement in relationship-building and community service, as well as repairing relationships, taking accountability, and supporting reintegration. Open to youth aged 13-18, the program will provide a structured path for youth to graduate upon completing skill training or achieving milestones. Restitution money can be earned by completing programming. Staff and volunteers will undergo training in trauma-informed practices, active listening, and mediation techniques, ensuring high-quality support. The Loop Consulting Collective will provide a three-day “Train the Trainer” Restorative Justice workshop, along with co-designing a Diversion Programming and Restorative Justice training for youth and educators to support restorative justice practices in Goodhue County schools.

Court Services will contract with RiseUp Red Wing, The Loop Collective and I3 Works to develop and facilitate programming and training.



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May 22nd, 2025

Rhonda VanSchoonhoven
Goodhue County Court Services
454 W 6th Street
Red Wing, MN 55066

Dear Rhonda,

I am pleased to inform you that your proposal A-RPI-2025-GOODHUCS-050 for the Goodhue County Restorative Practices Initiative has been selected for funding by the Restorative Practices Initiatives Grant. The tentative award amount is \$494,713.00 contingent upon final negotiation of a budget.

A total of \$8,000,000.00 was available for grant awards. The process was very competitive. ORP received 55 applications requesting over \$20,000,000. From this total, 31 applications have been selected for funding.

Kari Gonzalez will be contacting you soon to finalize negotiations and start the pre-award process. Once the application is approved, we will initiate the grant contract agreement in e-grants. You will then receive a message from e-grants when the grant agreement is ready for signature.

Contact Kari at kari.gonzalez@state.mn.us if you would like to receive feedback on your application.

Congratulations on being selected for funding. We look forward to working with you to ensure success on your initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Rabb". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rebecca Rabb,
Deputy Director of External Relations
Interim Director of Office of Restorative Practices
Minnesota Office of Justice Programs