



ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council Minutes

Friday, October 10, 2025

9:00-11:00 am

Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402

Mission: To improve health, save lives, and reduce the impact caused by opioids and other substances in Anoka County by managing opioid settlement funding and supporting strategic partnerships.

Vision: All Anoka County residents and partners are supported, engaged, and prepared to overcome the opioid crisis and meet the challenges related to substance use in the community.

Called to Order by Patti Constant, Senior Program Specialist – Opioids, at 9:00 am

Present: Patti Constant, Katherine Cole, Susan Ferron, Miriam Ward, Peggy McNabb, Krista Johnson, Tim Kizer, Randi Prebil, Ryan George, Angela Barkdull, Lativea Wyatt, Joe Amerman, Carrie Wood, Derek Schuldt, Joshua VanHeuveln, Lori Lachner, Christina Lefkowich, Samantha Guthman, Corey Kohan, Diana Hoffman, Nancy Norman

Absent: Molly Nee, George Borrell, Quita Curtis, Musab Adam, Nicholas Warnke, Sam Martinez, Melissa Olsen, Troy Friesen, Jess VanKuyk, Megan Schueller

1. Welcome, Introductions, Moment of Grounding, and Approvals

- Patti welcomed everyone to today's meeting of the Opioid Advisory Council.
- A moment of silence was observed to honor all the people that we have lost to deaths of despair (including suicide, drug overdose, & alcoholism), all of those currently struggling with behavioral health challenges (substance use disorders, mental illness), those who are bravely walking the recovery path, and all the families, friends, community members, and supports that are impacted. Thank you for helping us to remember why we are here.
- A reminder from Patti: Every single person in this room brings a unique piece of knowledge, information, and experience. Everyone has a unique role. Every perspective helps provide a piece of a bigger picture – no one is more important than another. Thank you each. You bring value to our group. Thank you for being here today.
- This is also a field FILLED with acronyms. We become comfortable in 'our little piece of the puzzle' and think everyone shares that knowledge. I invite and encourage each of you to question/ask when things are unclear. We do NOT, nor should we, all come with the same background information, so we need to feel comfortable questioning/asking.





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Please feel comfortable using AcroKnock... if you hear someone using an acronym or language that you are not familiar with, please knock three times – it's a gentle/friendly reminder to us all.

- Along with self-introductions, members shared their favorite things about the fall.
- New community representative Miriam Ward shared her story as a parent whose son died by overdose after a three-decade struggle with mental health issues and addiction. Miriam's son died in 2016 while in a treatment center. He struggled a lot with fentanyl and sought treatment among at least 20 different programs and facilities over the years.

Miriam spoke of her involvement and all she learned while supporting her son on his journey. Prior to his death, Miriam served (for nine years) on the board of directors for a non-profit facility for youth with mental health issues. She learned a lot in that role as well.

I want to do whatever I can with what is left of my life to help others with mental health issues and addiction. While no one talked about mental health and addiction ten to fifteen years ago, people are now thanking me for sharing my story. I know I am supposed to continue to share. I am glad to be here.

- Motion to approve the September 12, 2025, Advisory Council meeting minutes by Ryan George. Second by Carrie Wood. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve the October 10, 2025, Advisory Council meeting agenda by Josh VanHeuveln. Second by Krista Johnson. Motion carried.

2. Community and County Updates / Patti Constant

- Patti called on members to share on upcoming events, opportunities, trends or issues you are seeing, etc. What should this group be aware of? What do we need to know?
 - Carrie Wood, Anoka County Jail, reported on an inmate overdose in the jail wherein four doses of Narcan were administered and chest compressions were applied to bring her to. She is currently hospitalized. Our staff are very well trained. I am proud of them. Unfortunately, they are having to do this way too often. The drug came into the jail by way of her belly button.
 - Krista Johnson, Meraki Recovery Housing, noted tonight's event at Ham Lake Lanes that will raise money and collect donations for the North Anoka County Emergency Food Shelf & Closet (NACE). It is good to give back to NACE, as we use them regularly. Bowling, raffles, a silent auction, and more.
 - Angela Barkdull, Begin Anew Recovery, is co-hosting a Trunk-or-Treat at Compassion Coffee, Anoka, on Tuesday, October 28.





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- Patti's Updates
 - Community Connect Event / Community Resources
October 22nd – 10 to 2, Church of St. Timothy, Blaine
Patti will have a table.
 - Our meeting room here in Blaine will not be available to us next year.
Exploring new locations, effective with our January meeting.

3. Patti reported on the Oct 4 Spotlight on Opioids and Overdose:

- Last Saturday at the Spring Lake Park High School.
Well-planned and well-orchestrated by the Anoka County SUD team.
- Around 50 guests; not including vendors, family, friends, volunteers or school folks.
Around 150 attendees total. Quite a few came by way of a Facebook post.
- 51 vendors.
- Naloxone education station. Gave out 88 nasal naloxone, 15 intramuscular naloxone,
and 16 fentanyl test strips. Other vendors gave out naloxone as well.
- Exhibitors were pleased to be able to network and make connections, with many bringing
family and friends.
- People appreciated the information and education.
- Miriam commented on the excellent panel discussion.
- Krista appreciated networking with other vendors.
- People were very committed. Thank you to Diana from Patti.
- CEUs were available to presenters, session participants, etc.
- Good location and spacious.
- Next year . . . November date.

4. Faces of Hope Trailer and Website

- Patti noted it was exciting to show the Faces of Hope documentary trailer at last Saturday's
event.
- A Faces of Hope website is being developed that will be accessible for others to utilize
however they choose. The website will house / feature:
 - This documentary along with other video segments.
 - A page for people to share their stories and share their hope / lived experiences.
 - A resource page.
 - A page dedicated medical educational training credits.

Website will be partially ready end of October or early November. Patti is looking to host
community screening / promotional events. Please provide Patti with your thoughts on
promoting and pulling people together for the community screenings.

- Patti asked for ideas as to where and how the documentary can serve its purpose:
 - Carrie and Corey: Staff training; possibly treatment and inmate conversation.

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- Nancy: County Attorney's Office staff for awareness and learning. Prevention education in schools; possibly incorporate in health class curriculum.
 - Miriam: Idea of hope -- make available to facilities, i.e., Transformation House. Library websites.
 - Krista: Treatment centers; tv screens in any medical setting environment and emergency rooms.
-
- Given the widespread love and popularity of Chance (featured in the video), Krista will work with Patti on pulling Chance's community to the screening events.
 - Given October is Substance Use Prevention Month, Josh will coordinate with Patti on getting the video trailer out to Anoka-Hennepin health teachers

Keep thinking. Send your ideas to Patti, so this documentary can be widespread.

5. Naloxone Update

- Patti reported we now have naloxone in about 100 AEDs in the county, noting that Troy has been going in-person to AED locations promoting the incorporation of naloxone with the AED. Time consuming, but very effective. Not one person has declined.
- Those with the PulsePoint App with 911 are now seeing naloxone availability.
- Naloxone availability has been well received by families visiting the three facilities on our Juvenile Detention Center Campus in Lino Lakes.
- Christina raised a discussion on packing and giving a kit to all as they leave facilities. Carrie noted the jail offers a kit with each person re-entering the community. She is hopeful they will be better received once more education is being provided to inmates.
- Krista does a lot of distribution and outreach at the Northtown bus station. Those who respond by saying they don't need it are told it is a good thing to have to potentially save someone's life should they encounter an overdose situation.
- Krista also promotes library availability and has noticed a need for increased awareness of library NAPs. Patti will email members two flyers for promotion of library NAPs.
- Patti also noted the NAPs were featured the most recent Anoka County newsletter and will again be featured in the November newsletter.
- The Tobacco+ store downtown Anoka has become a NAP. One block from the jail. Being very well utilized. Needed more stock after just first week. May look at tobacco shops in gap areas.

6. Member Presentation

Corey Kohan, Assistant Director, Community Corrections

Corey presented a PowerPoint overview of the Anoka County Workhouse, noting the Corrections' mission is to build a safe community. We do that by reducing the risk of recidivism. Our goal at the Workhouse is to serve and work with incarcerated offenders to better their situation. Provide programming and services to change behavior. Currently reviewing our services and looking to move more toward intervention where we can do more programming and provide more services. What can we do to help that person while we have them in custody?





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The Anoka County workhouse is located on the Rum River Human Service Center Campus in Anoka:

- Licensed as minimum security by Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Managed by Anoka County Community Corrections Department
- Max capacity 240 beds – shared room / dormitory style
- Sentenced by the courts – both male and female
- Work Release / Huber Program – stability factor for inmates
- Inmate work crews
- Supervision of state work release inmates

PowerPoint slides:

- Workhouse Eligibility and Classifications
- Workhouse 2024 Annual Report – average daily population and intakes
- Work Release / Huber Eligibility
- Workhouse Rule Violations
- Facility Programming

Corey acknowledged that keeping contraband from coming into the Workhouse is always challenge due to minimum security. We do pat searches and metal detection, however, controlled substances can be hidden quite easily. Contraband is always a risk for us; hard to manage.

We are always looking at expanding and improving our work.

7. Member Presentation

Krista Johnson, Owner/Operator, Meraki Recovery Housing

Acknowledging this month as the seventh anniversary of Meraki Recovery Housing, Krista shared her story of why and how she and her husband started Meraki Recovery Housing. Meraki is a Greek word meaning to put your heart, soul, passion, and the essence of yourself into the work you do. We reflect on our work each October.

Meraki Recovery Housing was established as a way of giving back to the recovery community after thirty years of sobriety.

After reading and researching for ideas, they noted a need for sober housing in Anoka County, so they started with a property that they owned in Blaine. We have kept adding houses to meet the need. They now own and operate eleven sober living homes.

Our homes are open to all types of recovery. Whatever path you take, we will support that path. Faith-based; twelve-step; we support all forms of recovery. Fellowship is important for us. Shared rooms, house manager, accountability and requirements.

Residents become very tight with each other. Always somebody there. That is the environment we have created. That is where a lot of the miracles happen. People generally stay six months to





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two years in traditional sober housing -- as long as you need and as long as you are progressing. If you are making steps you can continue to stay. Our tracked data indicates that 75 to 80% of our residents leave sober. Many stories of folks thriving keep us motivated. We are proud of that.

Current dealing with dried up state funding; working with the Minnesota Legislature on what we can expect for 2027. Residents are now private pay. Today's environment is very hard, but we are dedicated to holding our housing stock so people can have that path to sobriety.

Thank you to Corey and Krista for presenting.

8. Closing

- Thank you to all. I appreciate your time and willingness to be here.
- Next Meeting -- Friday, November 14, 2025, 9-11:00 am, Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402.
- In the meantime, please reach out with any thoughts or ideas.
- We will soon begin tackling our next prioritization effort.

Adjourn 11 am.

Patti Constant
Senior Program Specialist

Randi Prebil
Health Promotion and Planning Manager
PHES

Peggy McNabb
Administrative Services Supervisor

Approved: 11-14-2025

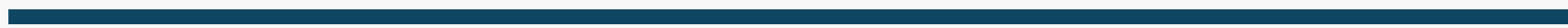




Anoka County Workhouse

Opioid Solutions Initiative Advisory Council

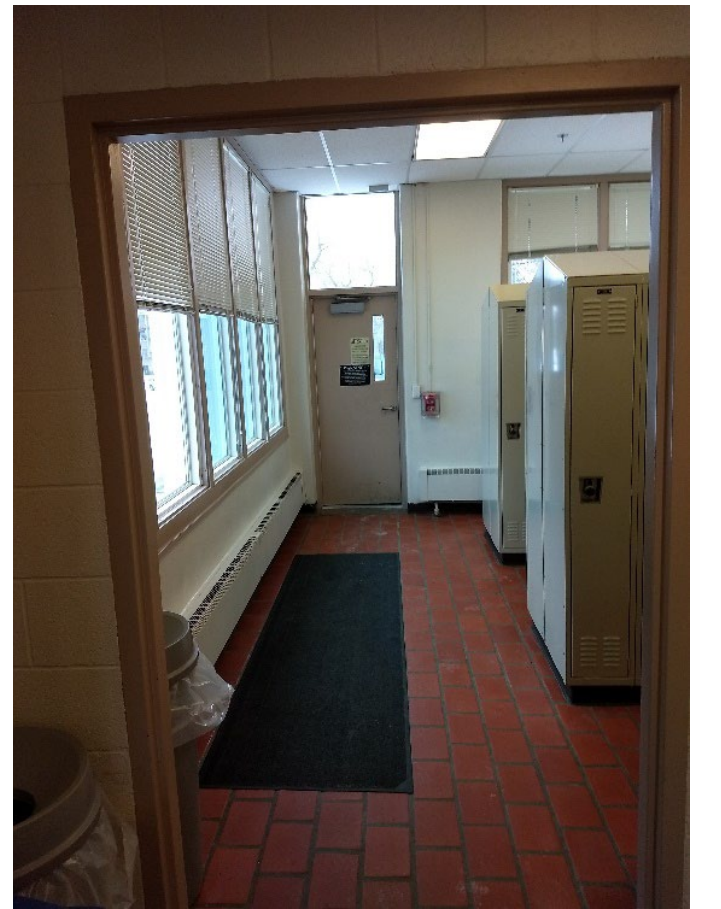
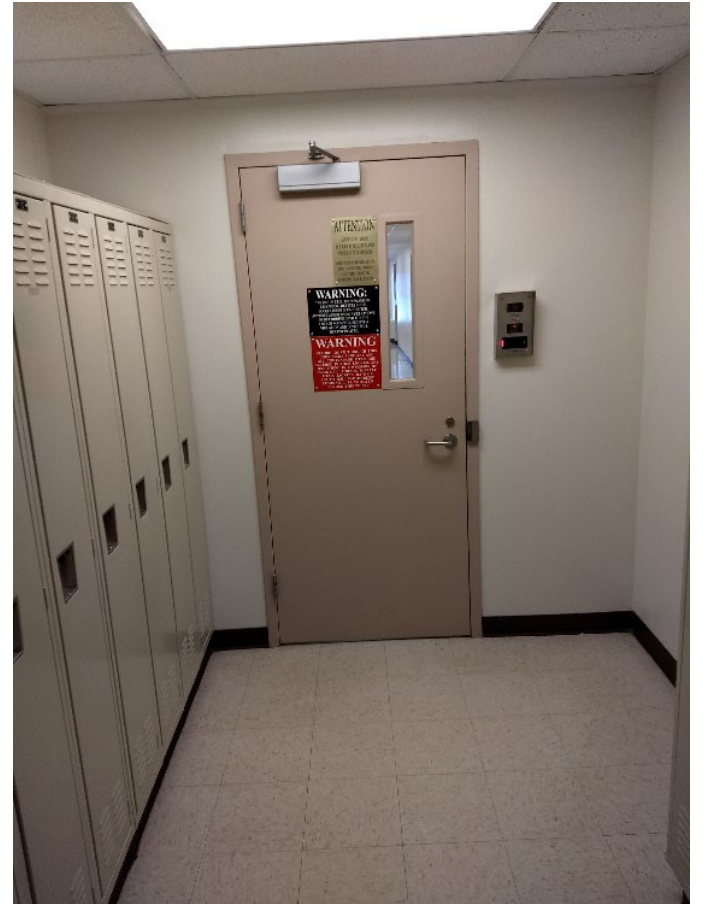
October 10, 2025



Anoka County Workhouse

- Located at Rum River Human Services Center in Anoka
- Licensed as minimum security “Jail Annex” by Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Managed by Corrections Department
- Max capacity 240 beds – dormitory style
- Male and female sentenced residents
- Work Release – “Huber” program
- Inmate work crews
- State work release program







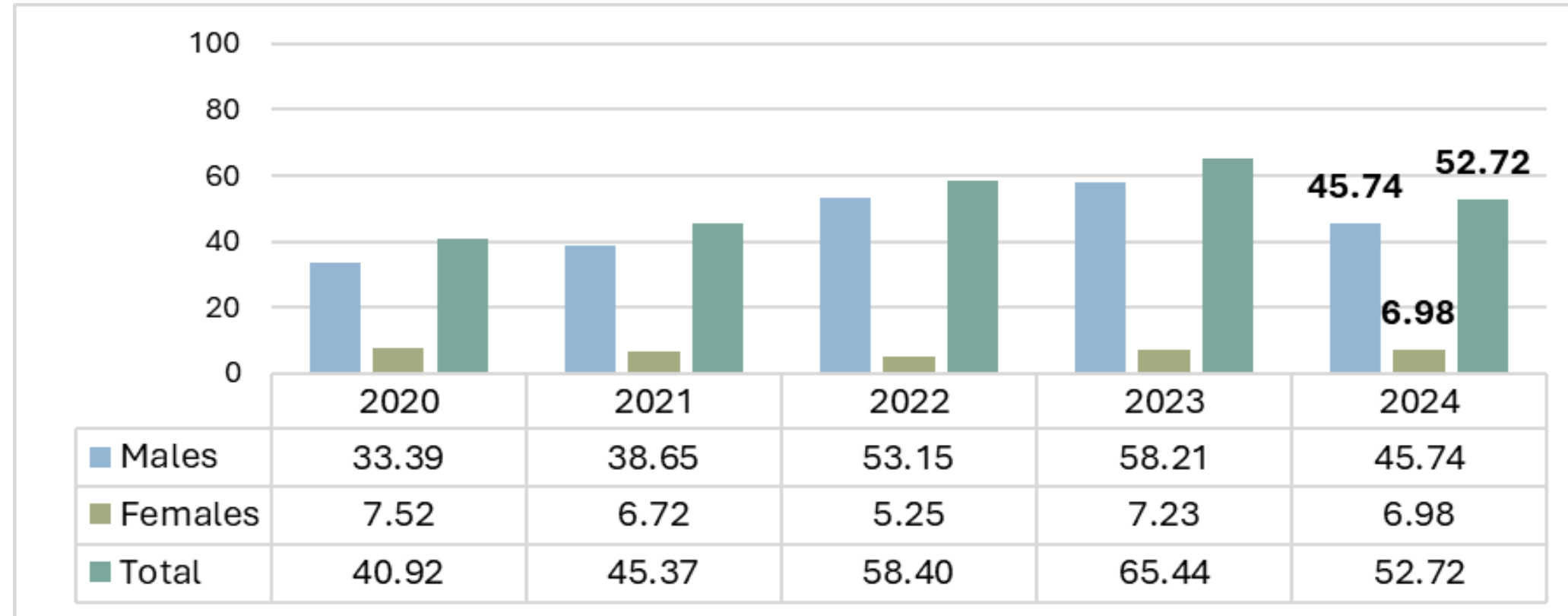


Workhouse Eligibility and Classification

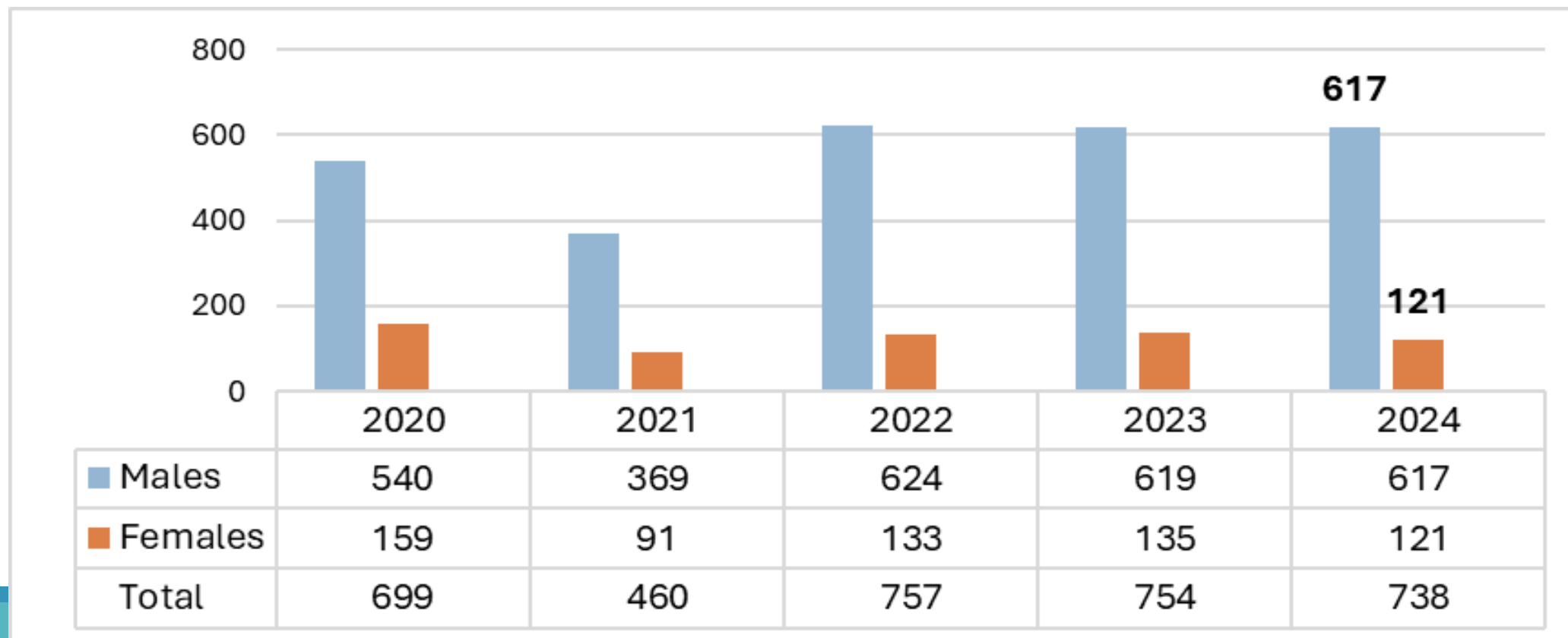
- Residents meet minimum security classification requirements.
- Medium or maximum classification housed at Anoka or Sherburne County Jail.
- Classification assesses risk of harm to self and others, potential vulnerabilities, and individual needs – medical, mental health, disability, safety, etc.
- Screening tools used during the classification process include:
 - A classification questionnaire
 - A medical and mental health screening
 - PREA sexual abuse risk questionnaire
 - Review of previous and current behavior at the Jail and Workhouse
- Classification may be modified over time and with behavior changes.

Workhouse 2024 Annual Report

Average Daily Population



Intakes



Work Release / “Huber” Eligibility

- Inmate employment authorized by Minnesota Statutes 631.425 and 241.26.
- Court-ordered sentence must include Work Release eligibility.
- Employment must be legitimate, verifiable, and meet eligibility criteria.
- Employment documentation required:
 - Paycheck stubs
 - Letter from the employer including position, duties, and work schedule
 - Additional documentation for self-employment
- Work Release participants required to provide pay stubs and work hours verification.
- Accountable to approved schedule in the community and comply with facility rules.
- Chemical use testing and search upon return to the facility.
- Job check officers may verify employment through phone calls and onsite visits.

Workhouse Rule Violations

- Violations of facility rules may result in administrative sanctions including:
 - Warnings
 - Loss of good time
 - Work or activity restrictions
 - Loss of Work Release privileges
 - Transfer to the Anoka Jail
- Administrative hearing appeals process
- May request Court review for loss of Work Release privileges

Facility Programming

- Medical and Mental Health Care
- SUD Treatment (currently men only)
- AA/NA groups (volunteer led)
- Adult Basic Education/GED
- Re-entry and Transitional Planning
- Decision Points Cognitive-behavioral Program
- Spiritual Services
- Vocational Training – IROCC Program





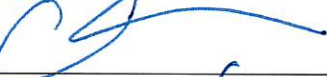




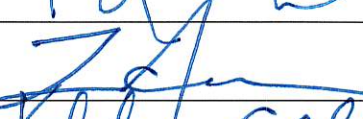
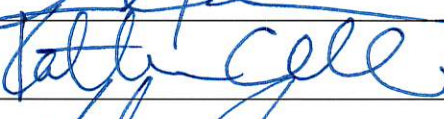
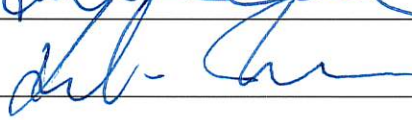
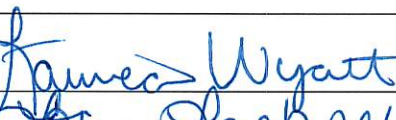
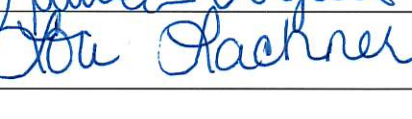

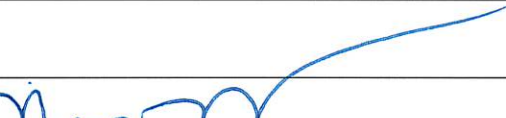

Working to Build a Safer Community

Anoka County Community Corrections

Mission Statement



Anoka County Opioid Advisory Council Meeting Sign-In / October 10, 2025

Name	Signature	Representing
Amanda Amundson		Recovery Navigator, Begin Anew Recovery
Carrie Wood		Operations Lieutenant, Anoka County Jail / Sheriff's Office
Christina Lefkowich		Director of Treatment Service, Riverplace Counseling Center
Corey Kohan		Senior Manager, Rum River Campus Anoka County Community Corrections
Derek Schuldt		Narcotics and Violent Crime Lieutenant, Anoka County Sheriff's Office
Diana Hoffman		Senior Social Worker, Anoka County Social Services and Behavioral Health
George Borrell		Director, Anoka County Social Services and Behavioral Health
Jess VanKuyk		Senior Manager, Anoka County Children and Family Services
Joshua VanHeuveln		Chemical Health Professional, Anoka-Hennepin Schools
Joe Amerman		Cannabis Planner / Anoka County Public Health
Katherine Cole		Supervisor, Anoka County Public Health Budget and Technology
Krista Johnson		Owner/Operator, Meraki Recovery Housing
Lacey Towe		Forensic Technician, Midwest Medical Examiner's Office
Lativea Wyatt		Harm Reduction LPN, Neighborhood Health Source
Lori Lachner		Community Member
Megan Schueller		Supervisor, Anoka County Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder
Melissa Olsen		Treatment Director Specialized Treatment Services, Inc.
Miriam Ward		Community Member
Molly Nee		Senior Communications Specialist, Anoka County
Musab Adam		Director of Community Relations, Access Healing Center
Nancy Norman		Anoka County Attorney's Office
Nicholas Warnke		Community Member
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Opioid Advisory Council

Agenda

Friday, October 10, 2025

9:00-11:00 am

Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402

***Mission:** To improve health, save lives, and reduce the impact caused by opioids and other substances in Anoka County by managing opioid settlement funding and supporting strategic partnerships.*

***Vision:** All Anoka County residents and partners are supported, engaged, and prepared to overcome the opioid crisis and meet the challenges related to substance use in the community.*

Call to Order

1. **Welcome, Moment of Grounding, Introductions, and Approvals**
 - 9-12-2025 Meeting Minutes
 - 10-10-2025 Meeting Agenda
2. **Community and County Updates**
3. **Discussion on Oct 4 Spotlight on Opioids and Overdose:
Feedback, successes, improvements**
4. **Faces of Hope Trailer and website**
5. **Naloxone updates/efforts**
6. **Member Presentation
Corey Kohan, Assistant Director, Community Corrections**
7. **Member Presentation
Krista Johnson, Owner/Operator, Meraki Recovery Housing**

