

# Freeborn County Probation & Pre-Trial Services 2024-2025 Comprehensive Plan



**Freeborn County Probation  
& Pre-Trial Services**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The principle goal of the Probation Department is to achieve reduction in the incidence and impact of crime and delinquency in our communities. Freeborn County Probation and Pre-Trial Services (FCPPS) works to do this by promoting the public interest and safety through control of offenders antisocial behavior and unlawful acts; by providing rehabilitation and reintegration services directed at offering offenders opportunities to become law-abiding; by utilizing restorative justice practices to re-establish the fabric of individuals and communities; and by ensuring the delivery of a diverse range of opportunities which contribute to the building of positive developmental assets that change behavior, leading to enriched, productive living for individuals, families, and the community.

The County of Freeborn operates as a County Probation Office (CPO) county, formed under Minnesota statute 244.19. FCPPS manage the supervision of adult misdemeanors, adult gross misdemeanors, and every level of juvenile offenses. We also supervise all pre-trial release adult offenders, regardless of the level of the crime for which they are charged, as well as the adult and juvenile diversion programs. The Minnesota Department of Corrections office manages the supervision of felony adult offenders in Freeborn County. Under Minnesota Statute 401.06, CPO counties are required to collaborate with the Minnesota DOC to create a comprehensive plan for correctional services.

This Comprehensive Plan for 2024-2025 will apply specifically to Freeborn County from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 and forward. It is the goal of FCPPS to continue to provide supervision services to Freeborn County at the current level. There are no expected changes to funding or service levels at this time.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The purpose and function of Freeborn County Probation and Pre-Trial Services is to protect the community from offender recidivism through the use of evidence-based programming, to rehabilitate offenders by offering them the best resources available to address their risk and their needs, and to work using a restorative justice model while keeping the offender in the community and reintegrating them in pro-social activities, moving toward a productive life and to help them thrive in the process.

### **VISION**

The reduction of recidivism within our Criminal Justice System. Our vision is to promote positive change amongst the people with whom we work through the use of community resources, stakeholders, client-led motivation and use of evidence-based practices.

### **ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**

Freeborn County has made great strides forward in providing evidence-based supervision and programming to the residents who come into the justice system. We provide not only the latest “best practices”, we also offer in-house programming as well as a treatment court for veterans.

Freeborn County is committed to continuous improvement and maintaining quality assurance regarding supervision and programming. We have multiple phases and encompass evidence-based practice disciplines. The disciplines include: Professional Alliance, Motivational Interviewing, Risk Assessments, Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions and Case Planning. FCPPS will continue to work toward full integration of evidence-based practices.

Freeborn County Probation and Pre-Trial has a director, eight juvenile and adult probation agents, a Sentencing to Service crew leader, and two support staff. We also manage a Veterans Court which employs a coordinator and two case managers. The Veteran’s Court Program is managed by Freeborn County for the 11-county Third Judicial District under a federal grant and state allotment of funding. Freeborn County has been moving steadily toward the standards the state has set for quality best-practice probation services. We have added domestic abuse programming, cognitive skills classes (Thinking for a Change and Moving On), a robust truancy program, and DUI classes for adults. There are adult and juvenile diversion programs, working in tandem with the County and City Attorney’s offices. The adult diversion programs are targeted at driving offenses and theft-related charges, while the juvenile diversion program is used in cases such as status offenses, like tobacco and alcohol charges. We are moving to a practice of using the latest best practice assessment tools, which is new to our department. This will guide us in the best placement and direction to offender needs and risk assessment and then placement where they will stand the best chances of success in the goal of reduction of recidivism. Most of our in-house programming is cognitive-behavioral in nature; working toward guiding offenders through change.

### **AGENT TRAINING**

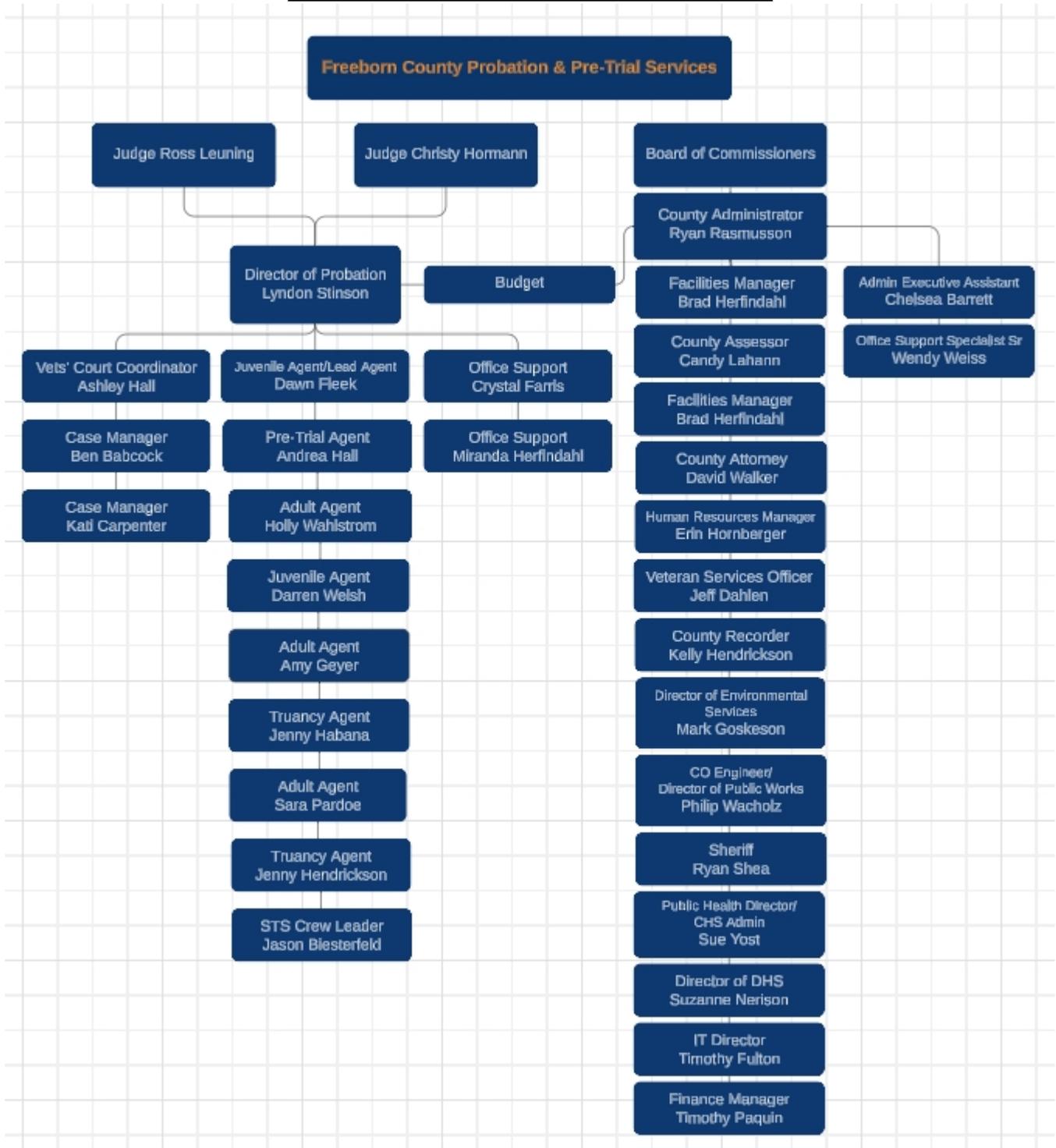
Our staff are required to attend at least 50 hours of training per year in cross-training between working with low, medium and high-risk offenders, juveniles and adult, and males and females. New agents are required to attend the “Agent Academy” which is a comprehensive program for new staff where they learn all of the most recent best practices in Corrections.

Our agency will continue to support the use of validated risk assessment tools to manage our offender population. These tools include the LS/CMI and the YLS tools (or a validated substitute). We also use DUI-specific, truancy specific, and domestic violence specific tools to assess risk and needs. These risk assessments are instrumental in identifying resource needs and to appropriately manage cases in the community.

### **ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS**

The Corrections Advisory Board for Freeborn County Probation & Pre-Trial Services was approved by the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024. It will consist of members of the City and County Attorney's offices, the Public Defender's office, Probation Services, at least one local Judge, the local Police Department, the Sheriff' Office, a member of Human Services and at least one member of the public. As this project is currently in the works at the time of this comprehensive plan report, there are not specific members noted here. Every effort is being given to include members that not only reflect the current population of Freeborn County in terms of racial and ethnic population, efforts are also being made to give specific attention to placement of under-represented minority groups such as people of color and people of ethnic backgrounds that are varied. This project is expected to be finalized in early summer of 2024. A list of members will be posted to the county website and provided to the Minnesota Department of Corrections at that point in time.

**FREEBORN COUNTY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



**ORGANIZATION AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES**

The Freeborn County Board of Commissioners, through the County Administrator, designates the budget for FCPPS. As a CPO county, we are governed by Statute 244.19 which defines the structure of a CPO county. The local Judges appoint the Director and he/she oversees the Probation Department. The Director reports directly to the Judges.

An Advisory Board, appointed by the County Board, involves citizens and partners in the judicial system in the correctional planning. The Advisory Board provides input for the Judges, County Board and the Corrections Director for the purposes of the annual Comprehensive Plan. Members are encouraged to be involved in program planning,

evaluation, and development.

The Freeborn County District Court advises the County Board and the Probation Director. The Judges of the District Court are, along with our correctional clients, the key clientele the department of Probation Services strives to serve.

The Director of FCPPS has the daily responsibility for the operation of the department. The Director serves as the staff liaison to the advisory board and provides program and budget information on a regular basis.

Management is also responsible for administering the comprehensive plan under the direction of the judicial and the advisory board. Probation acts as a liaison to other agencies. Probation directs offender supervision and programming. They also perform a variety of other functions, including: personnel functions, planning, research, budget preparation and financial reporting.

The Probation and Pre-Trial Specialists (support staff) provide receptionist duties. In addition, they collect offender fees, process departmental invoices, maintain records in CSTS and the department's electronic document management system, assist in the preparation of financial and data reports, provide inventory management, and provide support services for all department staff.



**HISTORY/DEMOGRAPHICS**

Freeborn County, located on the central southern border of Minnesota, is located on 722 square miles. Freeborn County has a population of 30,895 as of the 2020 census.

Freeborn County consists of 14 cities and townships. The county seat is Albert Lea which has a population of 18,428. While Freeborn County is a rural, agricultural county, the major drivers of employment are manufacturing (21%), health care/social assistance (22%), and retail trade (12.8%).

Freeborn County has three separate school districts that provide education to students from Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. They are Albert Lea Public, Alden-Conger Public and Glenville-Emmons Public. St. Theodores Catholic Church also offers grades K-5. 2021 enrollments are as follows:

	STUDENT POPULATION	PERCENT OF COUNTY POPULATION
Albert Lea	3506	11.3%
Alden-Conger	225	.007%
Glenville-Emmons	208	.007%
St. Theodore Catholic	90	.003%

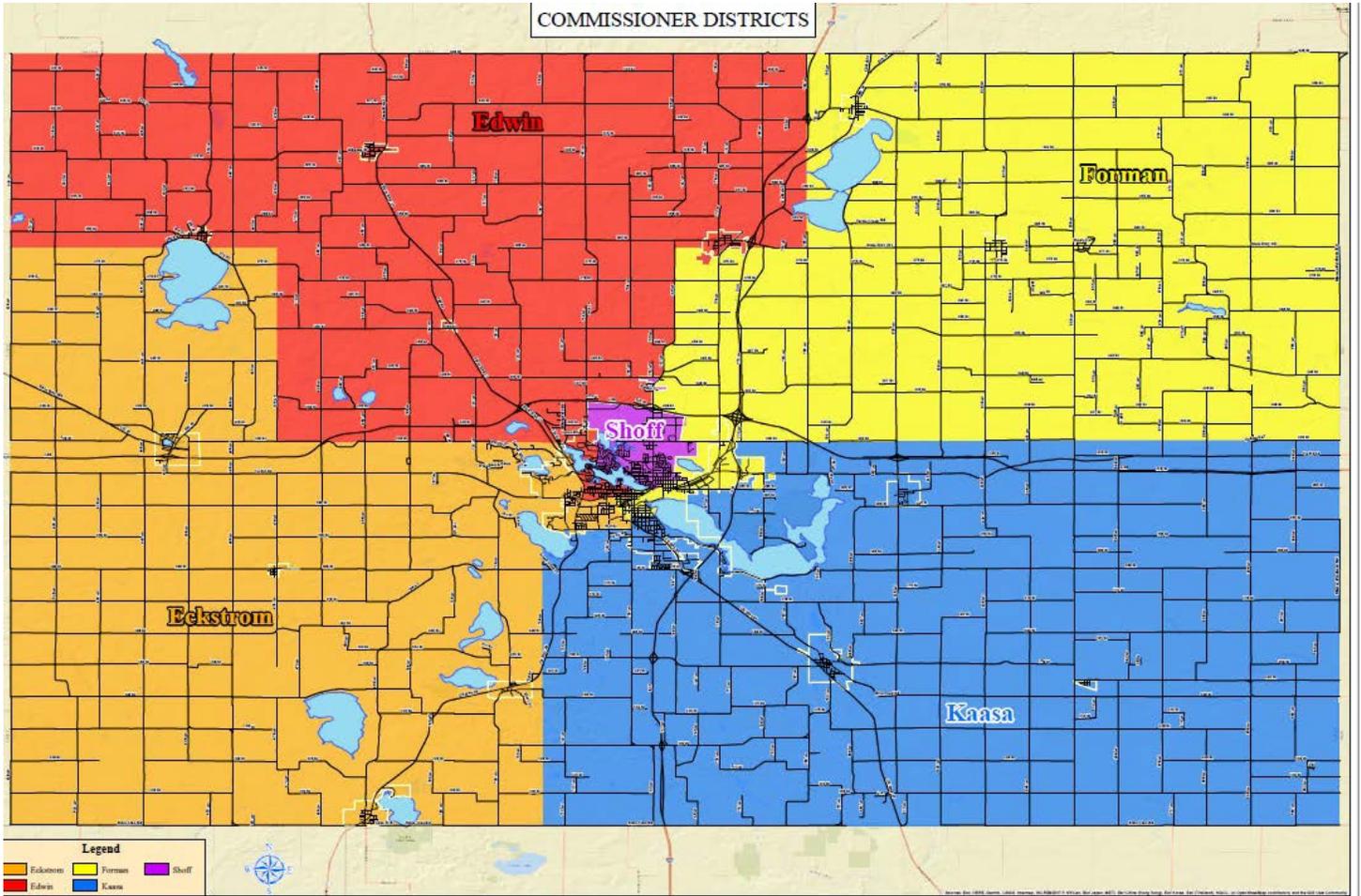
**FREEBORN COUNTY PROFILE**

County seat	Albert Lea
Land Area, square miles	722
Persons per square mile	42.8
Population	30,895

### **POLITICAL SYSTEM**

The Freeborn County Board is comprised of five elected county commissioners, one representing each district, who set policy, approve a budget and establish overall goals for Freeborn County. A commissioner's term of office is four years. Board meetings occur on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 8:30am at the Freeborn County Courthouse at 411 Broadway Ave South, Albert Lea MN 56007.

<b>COMMISSIONER</b>	<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>TERM EXPIRES</b>
*Brad Edwin- Chairperson	District 1	<a href="mailto:Brad.Edwin@co.freeborn.mn.us">Brad.Edwin@co.freeborn.mn.us</a>	507-402-1918	2025
Dawn Kaasa	District 2	dawn.kaasa@co.freeborn.mn.us	507-402-4940	2027
Jon Forman	District 3	john.forman@co.freeborn.mn.us	507-373-0498	2025
Chris Schoff	District 4	christopher.shoff@co.freeborn.mn.us	507-373-0380	2027
Nicole Eckstrom	District 5	nicole.eckstrom@co.freeborn.mn.us	507-391-4402	2025



**JUDICIARY CHAMBERS**

Judge Ross L. Leuning and Judge Christy Hormann, Third Judicial District Judges



Judge Leuning was appointed to the bench on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 by then Governor Mark Dayton. He was elected and re-elected in 2012 and 2018 respectively. His current term expires in January of 2025. Judge Leuning is part of the Third Judicial District. He serves in Freeborn County most days but also oversees the Third Judicial District Veterans Court in Olmsted County twice a month.



Judge Hormann was appointed to the bench on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 by Governor Tim Walz. Her current term expires in January of 2025. She is part of the Third Judicial District.

**CRIME RATE AND CHANGE**

According to the Department of Public Safety’s 2021 Uniform Crime Report, Freeborn County’s overall crime rate per 100,000 inhabitants is 1187. Reported offenses are broken into two categories. The Uniform Crime Report defines

Part I offenses include serious crime, such as criminal homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, arson, human trafficking, and cargo theft. Part II offenses include less serious crime, such as other assaults, forgery and counterfeiting, fraud, embezzlement, stolen property crimes, vandalism, weapons, prostitution, sex offenses, drug abuse, gambling, offenses against family and children, driving under the influence, liquor laws, drunkenness, disorderly conduct, and vagrancy. Juvenile Part II offenses are a separate category.

### **PROBATION SURVEY REPORTS**

The following graphs represents 2021-2022 Probation Survey Reports data. These only display offenders on active probation supervision and are not inclusive of duties by probation agents regarding supervised release, pre-sentence, pretrial, diversion or monitoring cases. The cases are generally supervised by crime and agent caseloads vary based on type. Our adult agents generally carry a caseload of approximately 80-100 offenders, while our DUI caseload is closer to 160 with varied levels of risk as measured by the LS/CMI risk tool. Our juvenile agents carry a caseload of approximately 40 juvenile offenders with varied risk levels. Our truancy agents have caseloads that vary significantly year by year so are not reliable for reporting here. There is some data lacking due to not tracking the race so there is a high know reported as unknown below.



\*\*Note: Case closure data for 2021 and 2022 are suspected to not be an accurate reflection due to an issue with data collection.

**COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS (CSG) – JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE**

All three MN delivery systems have partnered together and are currently receiving technical assistance from CSG and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to continue to implement the recommendations for MN made by CSG after assessing the state’s supervision procedures through the Justice Reinvestment Initiative. Legislatively, an oversight body, the Community Services Advisory Council (CSAC), was created with specific goals. That oversight group will provide both direction and approve recommendations from various statewide workgroups. Technical assistance was awarded to all 3 delivery systems to implement a statewide Risk/Needs Assessment tool. A workgroup was formed for this initiative and is actively working to implement one tool within the next year. All delivery systems have agreed to move forward with using the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) as MN’s risk and needs tool. The workgroup is currently working to create a “Request for Proposal” for outside parties to submit interest in validating this tool for the state of MN. Once validated, MN will utilize this tool to determine risk and need areas and level of supervision for justice-involved adults. Additional tools may also be utilized for offense specific cases and other responsivity areas.

There is also a Phase II workgroup that is designated to assist in the implementation of many of CSG’s original recommendations. Initially, this group is looking at creating a single standard of supervision for MN, regardless of what county/agency a client is supervised in. In addition, they are creating recommendations to implement, statewide, assessment-driven, formalized, collaborative case planning to focus case planning goals on identified criminogenic and behavioral health need areas for moderate- and high-risk individuals. Finally, implementation of a statewide behavior modification tool or incentives/sanctions grid, is being considered.

CSG is also aiding Minnesota in development of statewide supervision outcome data. A statewide data committee has been established to create statewide outcomes that are able to measure supervision success and return on investment. The committee has worked with CSG staff to identify outcomes that impact success, such as housing or mental health rates, the percent of persons under supervision that are successfully completing cognitive behavior or other treatment services to address their pathways to criminality, and data on recidivism, violation rates, and percent of those who successfully completed required conditions of supervision. The committee is currently working on where the data is located, the ability to gather data statewide and standards on data input for each agency to follow.

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

As we put together our Advisory Board, there will be strategic planning done that will include our plans for future structure and future programming. As this is the first year that CPO counties are posting this report and putting together advisory boards, we do not have data to report in this area. Until 2024, all strategic planning has been done between the Judges and the Probation Director in Freeborn County. Our future structure will include the full advisory board making recommendations and decisions on short, interim and longer-term planning. The Probation Director will then carry out and implement any and all decisions with regard to programming. This will be happening before the end of 2024.

### **NARRATIVE OF CORE INTERVENTIONS AND EVIDENCE-BASED (EBP) PROGRAMMING**

Freeborn County Probation Services believes strongly in following the latest best-practices, or evidence-based programming. We follow the risk/needs responsivity model in all that we do with our clients. Research has clearly shown that we must do a good job of measuring risk areas and areas of need to reduce recidivism, one of our main goals in probation supervision. The way we do this is with good assessment at the first contact with our clients, good case planning and good motivational interviewing. This is all followed by matching the offender with the correct resources.

FCPPS uses assessment for juveniles including; Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) and the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI). These tools help in identifying the risk factors in youths that enter into the criminal justice system and help us identify the needs that can be addressed to reduce risks and address the needs of the child.

FCCPS uses the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) for property and drug offenses, the Impaired Driving Assessment (IDA) risk assessment for impaired driving offenses, and the Domestic Violence Inventory (DVI) for domestic assault offenders. All three of these tools help us to create a plan moving forward with the client to reduce risk and match the offender with resources.

In-house, we offer cognitive skills programming, domestic abuse classes, a DUI program for low-level offenders and an in-house support group in and out of the jail. We have a robust truancy program with two fulltime truancy agents. Freeborn County boasts a veterans treatment court. We also refer to outside programs for chemical dependency treatment and psychological help. We have a well-balanced program and are always looking at new evidence, as well as trying to move toward a uniform approach in use of techniques that aligns with the rest of the counties in Minnesota.

### **VICTIM CONCERNS**

Freeborn County Crime Victims Crisis Center (CVCC) serves all victims of crime. In 2022, the last year numbers are available, victims of domestic assaults were the most significant. Domestic assault victims served numbered 480, general crimes were 436 victims, and 45 sexual assault victims. The department has a staff of three trained victim advocates and one director, with various levels of education. Victims of crime are often put in contact with CVCC advocates by a first responder to a crime, usually a law enforcement officer. Victims are offered emotional support, along with information on resources, support with filing protection orders, and assistance seeking restitution. Victim advocates attend court hearings with victims and help them get their voices heard by the Court by assisting them in

preparation of Victim Impact Statements. There is also a Victim/Witness Coordinator employed by the County Attorney's office. Victims are further represented by the probation agent in our office that handles most of the person-related crimes. That agent receives victim impact statements and provides them to the court. He/she may also inform victims when an offender is being released from custody for the victim's safety.

**CONTRACTED SERVICES**

Freeborn County does not have any exclusive contracts with outside entities for services. We do use services of outside vendors for things such as electronic home monitoring, but it is left up to the client as to which company they choose to use.

**PRE-TRIAL PROGRAM**

Freeborn County Probation and Pre-Trial Services has a robust pre-trial program. FCPPS has approximately 150-200 people on the program at any given time. In the past, the Court would order a presumed offender to check in with Pre-Trial Services multiple times per week, ordering them to various conditions that included drug testing, GPS monitoring and other intensive services. There has been a change in what types and levels of services we provide in this area due to evidence showing this does not always lead to the best outcomes. The purpose of pre-trial supervision is two-fold 1) reduce the likelihood someone will reoffend, keeping the community safer 2) increase the likelihood an accused person will return for court. Evidence has shown these goals can be achieved with less supervision than was previously assumed. While drug testing and GPS monitoring may still be a condition of release, the intensity of monitoring lower-level offenses has been significantly reduced. An assessment tool called the Minnesota Pre-Trial Assessment Tool (MNPAT) is used to help the Court and Pre-Trial Services determine the best way to meet the goals of lowering recidivism in this population and get people to return to their court hearings. The tool uses evidence-based criteria to help determine the level of supervision the presumed offender will receive until he/she is sentenced.

**CORRECTIONAL SUPERVISION FEES**

Offenders are charged a one-time fee of \$200 to offset the costs of supervision. Pre-Trial program participants are charged a one-time fee of \$150. A weekly fee of \$20 is charged to participants of the Domestic Abuse Program which runs for 28 weeks. A total of fees imposed was \$35,440. Fees may be waived by the Director for hardship reasons. The department collected a total of \$22,165 in probation supervision fees in 2022 and \$11,078 in fees for the domestic program. Probation supervision fees are scheduled to sunset in 2027 because of a new law passed in 2023 that increased state funding to all probation service delivery systems. Freeborn County Probation Services has scheduled the end of 2026 to end the collection of supervision fees.

**PROBATION SERVICES BUDGET**

Freeborn County Probation and Pre-Trial Services had a budget in 2023 of approximately \$1,915,489. The budget pays for one director, eight probation agents, two support staff, one work crew leader and three veterans' court staff. The breakdown of the most significant costs and revenues is listed below. The department uses a combination of local tax-based revenue, state allocations and federal pass-through grants to cover the costs. There is also a small amount of offender fees collected for programs. The Albert Lea School District contributes money toward the cost of a truancy agent. The Veterans Court is completely funded by a combination of federal grants and a state allocation. There is no cost to the local levy for this program. After outside revenues, there was a local levy cost of approximately \$1,348,400.

The primary yearly costs are the following:

Probation Salaries	\$852,520
Veterans Court Salaries	\$181,476
Juvenile Detention Cost	\$506,130

The primary revenues are from:

State Probation Allocation	\$349,829
Veterans Court Fed Grants	\$281,843
Veterans Court State Allocation	\$153,976

Offender Supervision Fees	\$22,165
School District Truancy Officer	\$25,625
Balance Local Tax Base	

The budget for the state subsidy is as follows:

Agent Salaries	\$337,238
Director Salary	\$12,591
Agent Salary Range	\$63,778-\$94,002
Director Salary Range	\$84,543-\$125,384

\*Note these numbers are from the calendar year 2023.

### **HIGHLIGHTS/SUMMARY**

Freeborn County Probation and Pre-Trial Services has made great strides in moving from traditional supervision models to an evidence-based approach toward supervision, matching offenders with the programming and services they need to facilitate change, while at the same time continuing to protect the community from crime by holding criminals accountable for their actions. We have made these changes by integrating the latest best-practices into our program. Starting when a person enters our pre-trial program, through assessment and matching of services while a person is being supervised on probation, we are able to work toward bringing recidivism down by using the latest techniques being used at a statewide level. While Freeborn County is a smaller county which can make it difficult to do accurate tracking, we know from larger scale program analysis that what we are doing is working in other areas, leading us to follow practices that are tried and true. The field of Corrections is a fluid practice where new things are being discovered that bring better outcomes all the time. We strive to follow the latest best practices to keep our community safe while leading the population we serve to be healthy, thriving participants in our communities, making them less likely to reoffend and more likely to be positive contributors to our community. All of this is accomplished with a fine staff of professionals who are dedicated to helping the population we serve.