

# Cass County/Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Wellness Court, MN - Fact Sheet

July 2014

## What are DWI courts?



The purpose of DWI courts is to guide DWI offenders identified as alcohol-addicted into treatment under intensive judicial supervision that will reduce alcohol dependence, reduce recidivism, improve public safety and improve the quality of life for them and their families.

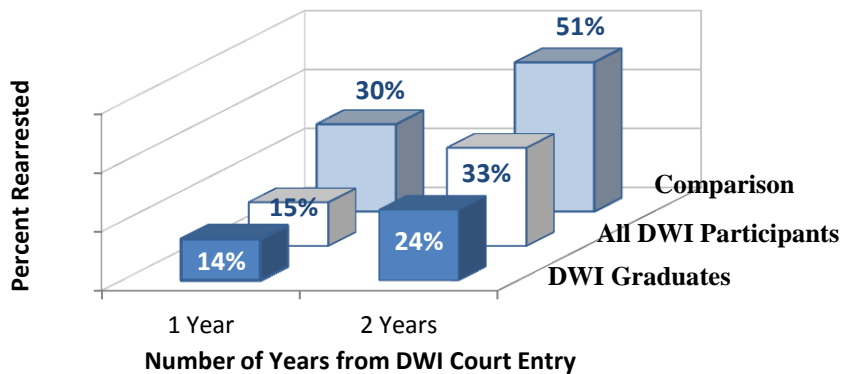
There are two key policy questions of interest to policymakers about DWI courts. The evaluation of Cass County's DWI Court (CCDWI)

provided answers to these questions. This study included participants who entered the program between 2006 and 2011, and a matched comparison group of DWI offenders who were eligible but were not referred to the program. Most participants were assessed as high-need (95%) and over half were high risk. Participants had an average of three DWI arrests in the ten years before DWI court entry.

## Does the DWI court reduce recidivism?

**YES!** CCDWI program participants were significantly less likely to be re-arrested than offenders who were eligible for the program but did not participate ( $p < .05$ ).

### Fewer DWI Court Participants Rearrested Each Year



Participants were half as likely to be rearrested (on any charge) as the comparison group in the first year after DWI court entry and 35% less likely after two years.

DWI court participants also received *no new DWIs* in the two years after DWI court entry, an indicator of reduced driving while using alcohol, and *increased public safety*.

## Does the DWI court result in savings to the taxpayer?

**YES!** There were substantial cost savings due to DWI court participants' positive outcomes.

The total cost related to recidivism 2 years post DWI court entry per participant (regardless of graduation status) was \$17,306, while the cost per comparison group member was \$26,252. This results in a total cost savings of **\$8,946** per CCDWI participant. This translates to resources (such as jail beds) that are now available for other purposes.

### Cost Savings by Agency

Agency	Savings per Participant
District Court	\$95
County Attorney	\$92
Defense Attorney	\$97
Department of Corrections	\$5,397
Probation	\$571
Law Enforcement	\$4,316
Crashes/Victimizations	(\$1,622)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8,946</b>

When the yearly per participant savings is multiplied by the capacity of the program per year (approximately 28 offenders), the total amount "saved" by the program per year due to positive outcomes for its participants (i.e., lower recidivism) is **\$125,244**, which can then be multiplied by the number of years the program remains in operation and for additional cohorts per year. After 5 years, the accumulated resource savings come to nearly **\$1.9 million**.\*

These results demonstrate that the CCDWI program is effective in reducing recidivism and drug use while using fewer criminal justice system resources. Cass County and the State of Minnesota would benefit from sustaining and expanding this program.

\*These savings do not include program investment costs.



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