

State of Minnesota

H. F. No. **4363**

1.1 A bill for an act

1.2 relating to public safety; expanding treatment courts throughout the state to ensure

1.3 statewide access; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota

1.4 Statutes, chapter 484.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. [484.99] TREATMENT COURTS.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Legislative findings and purpose. The Minnesota Judicial Branch has

1.8 described treatment courts as "the single most successful intervention in our nation's history

1.9 for leading people living with substance use and mental health disorders out of the justice

1.10 system and into lives of recovery and stability. They improve education, employment,

1.11 housing, and financial stability; and promote family reunification. Instead of viewing

1.12 addiction as a moral failing, they view it as a disease. Instead of punishment, they offer

1.13 treatment." Furthermore, the courts have said, "when these strategies are implemented

1.14 correctly, treatment courts improve public safety and save taxpayer dollars." As an important

1.15 public safety improvement, it is time to expand treatment courts to every part of Minnesota.

1.16 Although treatment courts save money to taxpayers through reduced crime and public safety

1.17 costs, they cost the court system more, and the judicial branch cannot establish and operate

1.18 these courts without sufficient funding, so significant additional funds are needed to

1.19 accomplish this goal.

1.20 Subd. 2. Definition. As used in this section, "treatment court" means a court designed

1.21 for criminal defendants who have specific mental health challenges, addictions, or other

1.22 health challenges and who need treatment in order to stop the cycle of relapse and recidivism

1.23 by treating substance use and mental health disorders that led to behaviors that brought the

criminal defendants to court. Treatment courts promote recovery through a coordinated team approach, including judges, prosecutors, defense counsel, probation authorities, coordinators, treatment providers, law enforcement, evaluators, and other ancillary service providers. Treatment courts include but are not limited to drug courts, DWI courts, family dependency treatment courts, juvenile drug courts, mental health courts, and veterans courts.

Subd. 3. **Statewide requirement for sufficient treatment courts.** (a) By January 15, 2026, the Judicial Council shall ensure that at least one-half of the judicial districts have sufficient treatment courts operating within the district to fill the public safety needs of the community and the health challenges facing many defendants.

(b) By January 15, 2030, the Judicial Council shall ensure that every judicial district has sufficient treatment courts operating within the district to fill the public safety needs of the community and the health challenges facing many defendants.

Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

\$..... for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, is appropriated from the general fund to the supreme court to implement section 1.