

Grant Approval Memo



Grantee: Partners for Progress
Request Amount: \$400,000.00
Project Title: Flex Funds for Mental Health Courts
Grant Term: 7/1/2026 to 6/30/2028
Trust Staff: Heather Phelps

Staff Analysis:

- **What does this project do?**

Trust funds will provide basic necessities like transportation, housing, and hygiene supplies to Therapeutic Court participants so they can focus on their treatment and court requirements for successful completion of the programming. The funds will also pay administrative costs (10%).

The Therapeutic Court Model is an alternative justice model in which a collaborative team oversees and closely monitors participants who choose the treatment program in lieu of incarceration for some felony and misdemeanor offenses. The participants work hard over a lengthy multi-month process to meet milestones while being held accountable for any issues that arise.

- **Who is receiving the funds?**

Partners for Progress will receive the funds. Partners for Progress will disburse funds in Anchorage, Juneau, Palmer, and for the Palmer Families With Infants & Toddlers Court (PFIT) as authorized under policies and procedures developed jointly with the Alaska Court System to assist Therapeutic Court participants. Disbursement of funds will be authorized by the Court Coordinated Resources Project.

- **Why is staff recommending this project?**

This grant has undergone several iterations, initially starting in 2004 as flexible funding for therapeutic court participants and awarded to Partners for Progress for \$25,000. Over the years, the grant was awarded to specific geographic areas and accessible to therapeutic court participants in Anchorage, Mat-Su, Fairbanks, and Juneau. In FY 25, to decrease administrative burden, it was consolidated into a single authority grant serving Anchorage, Juneau, Palmer, and the Palmer Families With Infants & Toddlers Court (PFIT) for \$229,500. These funds are similar to the mini-grants in that they provide a mechanism for directly funding Trust beneficiary needs while maintaining fiscal oversight through Partners for Progress.

This grant has provided Therapeutic Court beneficiaries the ability to live in a safe, sober, structured environment while addressing their mental health and legal issues. If funding was no longer available, it would negatively impact the Trust beneficiaries who require basic necessities, transportation, and transitional housing.

Expected outcomes of Therapeutic Court participants are as follows

- Reduced incarceration of offenders with mental health disorders or disabilities
- Reduction in recidivism (see chart of Recidivism Rates from 2021-2024)
- Reduction of psychiatric hospitalization

The graduation rate for FY25 through December 2025 was 68%. Basic needs assistance is one of the factors in keeping people in the program and focused on being successful.

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- Will this be a multi-year project?

This grant is a multi-year project funded for two years, 7/1/2026 to 6/30/2028. Each year of funding will require board of trustee approval.

Trust Five Year Funding History

| <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Project Title</u> | <u>Amount</u> | <u>Status</u> | <u>Final Expended</u> |
|--------------------|---|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 2026 | Flexible Funding for Therapeutic Court Participants – FY26 | \$229,500 | Active | Grant ends 6/30/2026 |
| 2025 | Flexible Funding for Therapeutic Court Participants – FY25 | \$229,500 | Closed | \$161,254 |
| 2024 | Flexible Funding for Therapeutic Court Participants – FY24 | \$214,500 | Closed | \$210,602 |
| 2023 | Flexible Funding for Therapeutic Court Participants – FY23 | \$221,500 | Closed | \$193,593 |
| 2022 | Flexible Funding for Therapeutic Court Participants – FY22 | \$214,500 | Closed | \$154,305 |
| 2022 | Sustaining the Gain Through Peer Support | \$43,477 | Closed | \$43,477 |
| 2022 | Emergency Assistance for Therapeutic Court Graduates and Reentry Participants | \$50,000 | Closed | \$50,000 |

Comp Plan Identification

| <u>Area of Focus</u> | <u>Objective</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
|--|---|-----------------|
| Area of Focus 7: Services in the Least Restrictive Environment | 7.2 Increase access to effective and flexible, person-centered, long-term services and supports in urban and rural areas to avoid institutional placement where inappropriate | |

Trust Focus Area Connection

| <u>Budget Area</u> | <u>Strategy</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Disability Justice | DJ - Community Intervention/Diversion | |

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Project Description (from grant application)

This project is to provide financial resources to assist Therapeutic Court participants to meet basic or emergent needs in order to maintain or progress in recovery and self-sufficiency, and to comply with court ordered conditions.

Eligible participants are those who meet the definition of a Mental Health Trust Beneficiary and are charged with a Class C felony or less, reside in the Anchorage, Palmer, or Juneau area and are willing to participate in an individualized case plan in lieu of traditional bail or sentencing conditions.

Often individuals enter Therapeutic Court without the basics. This grant helps the Trust beneficiaries with the highest need with meeting basic life necessities, such as:

Housing - Housing is typically provided in a transitional housing placement. Beneficiaries are provided with housing while learning how to get and maintain employment, so they can be self sufficient before or upon graduating Therapeutic Court.

Transportation - Transportation may be provided in the form of bus passes, so beneficiaries can travel to work, appointments, court hearings, and housing or taxi cabs for beneficiaries who are in immediate need of transportation to appointments, court hearings, etcetera. Taxis are sometimes provided for beneficiaries who are outside the bus routes until they can provide their own transportation.

Partners for Progress will disburse funds in Anchorage, Juneau, Palmer, and for the Palmer Families With Infants & Toddlers Court (PFIT) as authorized under policies and procedures developed jointly with the Alaska Court System to assist Therapeutic Court participants. Disbursement of funds will be authorized by the Court Coordinated Resources Project Coordinator in accordance with attached procedures.

About the Therapeutic Court Model

The therapeutic model is an alternative justice model in which a collaborative team oversees and closely monitors participants who choose the treatment program in lieu of incarceration for some felony and misdemeanor offenses. The participants work hard over a lengthy multi-month process to meet milestones while being held accountable for any issues that arise.

1. The team may include:

- Judge
- Prosecuting attorney
- Defense attorney
- Substance abuse and/or mental health treatment provider
- Law enforcement officer
- Community supervision/case manager/case coordinator
- Project coordinator or manager

2. Eligible participants:

May be admitted to a therapeutic court if they meet the eligibility standards of each court and the substance abuse or mental health treatment criteria of the provider

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Can voluntarily “opt in” to a therapeutic court
Enter a plea of “no contest” or “guilty”
Participate in a structured program and plan
For the duration of their participation in the program, have their sentencing deferred
When individuals are accepted into a therapeutic court, participants are required to attend court status hearings weekly, bi-monthly or monthly depending on their stage in the program. The Court Team meets weekly to review their progress, and to suggest incentives or sanctions that may best encourage the participants’ success. Although the details may vary within each of the therapeutic courts, the basic structure is the same:

A team approach to supervise and encourage a participant’s progress
A system of sanctions and incentives for performance in the program
Upon successful completion of the program, participants’ sentences are imposed according to the initially negotiated agreements
Participants who are unable or unwilling to complete the program are dismissed, and their sentence is immediately imposed
Participants who are unable or unwilling to complete the program are dismissed and the sentence that was negotiated at the time of admission to the court is immediately imposed

Expected outcomes are;
Reduced incarceration of offenders with mental health disorders or disabilities
Relief on the Department of Corrections presented by inmates with mental health disorders or disabilities
Reduction in repeat criminal activity
Reduction of psychiatric hospitalization
Included in supporting documents is a chart of Recidivism Rates from 2021-2024

Here are links to the Anchorage, Palmer, Juneau CRP (Coordinated Resource Program or "Mental Health") Courts as well as the PFIT (Palmer Families with Infants & Toddlers) Court:
<https://public.courts.alaska.gov/web/forms/docs/pub-100.pdf>
<https://public.courts.alaska.gov/web/forms/docs/pub-102.pdf>
<https://public.courts.alaska.gov/web/forms/docs/pub-101.pdf>
<https://public.courts.alaska.gov/web/forms/docs/pub-123.pdf>

Grantee Proposed Evaluation Measures (from grant application)

On a quarterly basis, Partners for Progress will provide the Trust with the following:

A financial statement showing the balance of funds expended to date for each of the Flexible Funding Programs.

For the final report, due August 31, 2028, Partners for Progress will provide the Trust with the following:

a. An executive summary that describes the activities, successes, challenges, and any lessons learned during the reporting period.

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b. Total number (#) and percentage (%) of unduplicated Trust beneficiaries who have received funding during the reporting period in the following categories:

- I. Shelter (i.e., room in a motel/hotel, assistance with apartment deposit)
- II. Emergent Needs (basic housing needs, i.e., pillow, blanket, towels, kitchenware, personal hygiene products, food, and clothing)
- III. Transportation (i.e., bus tokens/passes, cab vouchers, bicycles)
- IV. Other - Incentives , medical

d. Total dollar amount (\$) and percentage (%) of Flexible Funds that have been distributed to unduplicated Trust beneficiaries during the reporting period in the following categories:

- I. Shelter (i.e., room in a motel/hotel, assistance with apartment deposit)
- II. Emergent Needs (basic housing needs, i.e., pillow, blanket, towels, kitchenware, personal hygiene products, food, and clothing)
- III. Transportation (i.e., bus tokens/passes, cab vouchers, bicycles)
- IV. Other - Incentives , medical

Proposed Project Performance Measures (developed by the Trust)

How much did you do?

- a. Total number (#) of unduplicated Trust beneficiaries who received funding during the reporting period, broken down by primary Trust beneficiary category.
- b. Number (#) and percentage (%) of unduplicated Trust beneficiaries who have received funding during the reporting period in the following categories:
 - i. shelter (e.g., room in a motel/hotel, assistance with apartment deposit)
 - ii. emergent needs (i.e., basic housing needs (e.g., pillow, blanket, towels, kitchenware, personal hygiene products, food, clothing)
 - iii. transportation (e.g., bus tokens/passes, cab vouchers, bicycles)
 - iv. other (e.g., incentives, medical costs, medication)

How well did you do it?

- a. Provide a narrative describing the timeline, activities, successes, challenges, and any lessons learned during the reporting period.
- b. Total dollar (\$) amount and percentage (%) of Flexible Funds that have been distributed to unduplicated Trust beneficiaries during the reporting period in the following categories:
 - i. shelter (e.g., room in a motel/hotel, assistance with apartment deposit)
 - ii. emergent needs (i.e., basic housing needs (e.g., pillow, blanket, towels, kitchenware, personal hygiene products, food, clothing)
 - iii. transportation (e.g., bus tokens/passes, cab vouchers, bicycles)
 - iv. other (e.g., incentives, medical costs, medication)

Is anyone better off?

Provide two examples of participants who received flexible funding and how the funds impacted their lives.

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Sustainability (from grant application)

This grant has been an authority grant for the last 17 years and if this funding was no longer available it would negatively impact the Trust beneficiaries. This grant has provided participants in the Therapeutic Court the ability to live in a safe, sober, structured environment while working on their personal and legal issues. It also provides transportation when needed and basic necessities like, hygiene products, warm clothes and food for those with the greatest needs. At this time we have no other funding sources available to fill this need.

Who We Serve (from grant application)

Eligible participants are those who meet the definition of a Mental Health Trust Beneficiary and are charged with a Class C felony or less, reside in the Anchorage, Palmer, or Juneau area and are willing to participate in an individualized case plan in lieu of traditional bail or sentencing conditions.

Partners for Progress works with the therapeutic courts to provide assistance with justice involved individuals who experience mental illness, intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, alzheimer's disease and related dementia and traumatic brain injuries. Secondary beneficiaries include 14 families in the PFIT Court.

Partners for Progress will disburse funds in Anchorage, Juneau, Palmer, and for the Palmer Families With Infants & Toddlers Court (PFIT) as authorized under policies and procedures developed jointly with the Alaska Court System to assist Therapeutic Court participants. Disbursement of funds will be authorized by the Court Coordinated Resources Project Coordinator.

The graduation rate for FY25 through December 2025 was 68%. This can be interpreted many ways but with more than two-thirds of admissions graduating from the program, basic needs assistance is one of the factors in keeping people in the program and focused on being successful.

Estimated Numbers of Beneficiaries Served Experiencing (from grant application)

| | |
|--|-----|
| Mental Illness: | 336 |
| Developmental Disabilities: | 132 |
| Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementias: | 2 |
| Substance Abuse | 336 |
| Traumatic Brain Injuries: | 10 |

Not all of the participants in these courts will require assistance but it will be made available to them so that number is the amount of participants expected to be in the program over a 2 year period, based on 2025 numbers.

Project Budget (from grant application)

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Travel Costs | \$86,900.00 |
| Travel Costs (Other Sources) | \$0.00 |

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|---|---|
| Travel Costs Narrative | Transportation costs are bus passes, cab rides in Anchorage, and cab rides in Palmer. Transportation costs in the Mat-Su Valley are very expensive as there is no reliable bus system for participants to use. We may provide a bicycle in the summer if a participant would rather ride a bike, if able. Providing transportation enables beneficiaries to make necessary appointments that are required as a stipulation of the therapeutic court. |
| Space or Facilities Costs | \$200,000.00 |
| Space or Facilities Costs (Other Sources) | \$0.00 |
| Space or Facilities Narrative | <p>Many Trust beneficiaries have difficulties accessing housing due to their criminal record, (Even when the charge is minor, old, or related to the disability, it can still be grounds for denial. Many landlords prefer to avoid any perceived risk rather than assess individual circumstances), stigma (contributes to fear of property damage, violence, rule compliance), difficulties accessing funds due to relying on public assistance or low wage/intermittent work, and lacking a history of verifiable landlords, positive references, and consistent rental history.</p> <p>The Therapeutic Court works with many community partners to house beneficiaries in safe, sober, and structured housing.</p> <p>Housing provide for beneficiaries over 2 months requires a plan describing the beneficiaries employment status or progress towards obtaining employment, budget, benefit status, and why and what actions are being taken to help the beneficiary become self-sufficient.</p> |
| Supplies Costs | \$73,100.00 |
| Supplies Costs (Other Sources) | 0.00 |
| Supplies Narrative | Emergent needs include clothing such as socks, hats, gloves, jackets, footwear and ice cleats. Other items include backpacks, water bottles, alarm clocks, bike locks, helmets, and lockboxes. Hygiene supplies include feminine hygiene products, soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs and laundry detergent. |
| Other Costs | \$40,000.00 |
| Other Costs (Other Sources) | \$0.00 |
| Other Costs Narrative | Administrative costs to manage grant. |

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Other Funding Sources (from grant application)

| | |
|----|--------|
| NA | \$0.00 |
|----|--------|