



Arrowhead Regional Corrections

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 28, 2014

CONTACT: Wally Kostich, Chief Probation Officer
218-471-7572

Agencies work together, resulting in safer communities and safer work conditions

A growing partnership between Arrowhead Regional Corrections (ARC), area law enforcement agencies and the St. Louis County Attorney's Office has led to not only safer communities, but now also safer working conditions for probation officers. ARC recently was able to purchase four Kevlar vests for probation officers to wear when checking in on higher-risk clients, as well as two alcohol breathalyzers and two new laptops, enabling staff to work more effectively and efficiently in the field. The equipment was purchased using \$3,000 in drug forfeiture funds, which ARC was able to receive after providing information to Duluth police that led to a significant drug bust.

It's just one example of success that's resulted from an effort started earlier this year involving probation and police officers aimed at strengthening partnerships and better sharing information. Twice a month, probation officers ride along with Duluth police officers, working together while checking in on probation clients.

"This new endeavor helps to enhance our relationship with law enforcement and helps to ensure our probation officers' safety," said Wally Kostich, Chief Probation Officer for Arrowhead Regional Corrections. "At the same time, we're holding our clients accountable and improving public safety,"

Calling these partnerships critical in the delivery of services, St. Louis County Commissioner Pete Stauber, who is also a Duluth Police lieutenant, said, "With the continued increase in calls for service and busier work load, we strive to put forward 'best practices' to maximize the effectiveness of our tax dollars. Law enforcement, city and county attorneys, as well as probation officers must continue to work together. This keeps offenders accountable for their actions and provides a legitimate path for an offender to correct his or her behavior and become a productive member of our community".

Drug forfeiture funds include money that is seized during a drug offense arrest, as well as money from the sale of items used in the commission of a drug-related crime. These funds are divided between law enforcement, prosecutors and the state to use in further crime prevention efforts. St. Louis County Attorney Mark Rubin chose to distribute some of his office's forfeiture funds to help probation officers when they're checking in on clients.

"The beauty of this collaborative effort is that the money for the laptop computers and Kevlar vests comes from our forfeiture funds. This is basically "drug money," from funds that are seized from criminals. We are 'recycling' these funds to enhance the safety of our fellow citizens," said St. Louis County Attorney Mark Rubin.

Arrowhead Regional Corrections provides correctional services to Carlton, Cook, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis Counties in Northeastern Minnesota's Arrowhead region. Its Court and Field Services Division is responsible for 5,500 probation clients. ARC also operates the Northeast Regional Corrections Center and Arrowhead Juvenile Center.

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Probation officers Kim Radloff and Matt Koupus show the Kevlar vests and portable breathalyzers they and their colleagues now use on the job. The new equipment was purchased using drug forfeiture funds from the St. Louis County Attorney's Office.