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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **AG Schimel Announces TAD Grant Recipients**

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MADISON, WI – Wisconsin is facing an unprecedented prescription narcotic painkiller and heroin epidemic and state leaders have responded with new prevention, harm reduction, and treatment tactics. The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) has awarded Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) program grants to nearly 50 counties and tribes through additional funding made possible by Representative John Nygren and the Wisconsin State Legislature's [Heroin, Opioid Prevention, and Education \(HOPE\) Agenda](#). This funding, Attorney General Brad Schimel's [Dose of Reality](#) campaign to prevent prescription painkiller abuse, and 16 other HOPE bills related to the heroin and prescription drug abuse crisis are all part of a coordinated effort by the state to fight this unprecedented epidemic.

TAD programs provide local jurisdictions with options to offer offenders the opportunity to enter diversion programs or treatment court programs, which typically involve drug and/or alcohol abuse treatment, case management, and other risk reduction services as a safe alternative to jail or prison confinement. Diverting non-violent offenders into substance abuse treatment keeps them out of jail and correctional facilities – thereby saving bed space and taxpayer dollars – as well as treating the underlying addiction that may have influenced the commission of a crime or may contribute to future criminal behavior. To successfully graduate from a TAD program, an offender must abstain from using drugs or alcohol.

“During more than 25 years of law enforcement work, I have witnessed the profound effects TAD can have on somebody struggling with addiction,” said Attorney General Brad Schimel. “TAD is one of the smartest things we have done in law enforcement in decades and I’m excited to see these programs implemented in more counties and tribal communities across our state.”

[2013 Wisconsin Act 197](#) expanded the TAD programs by \$1.5 million annually. [2015 Wisconsin Act 388](#) expanded TAD program funding by \$2 million, bringing the total TAD expenditure to more than \$6 million for calendar year 2017. This year’s competitive grant process awarded five years of funding to 14 new counties, bringing the total number of funded programs statewide to 46 counties and two tribes.

“More often than not, those who struggle with addiction are thrown into the criminal system without access to the appropriate treatment needs,” added Representative John Nygren. “While people addicted to opioids may detox while inside the prison system, they frequently haven’t gotten the mental health treatment needed to fight their addiction. TAD programs help to bridge that gap by offering helpful treatment opportunities in lieu of incarceration. These programs not only keep more nonviolent, drug-related offenders out of jail or prison, but they’re proven to work to increase their chances at recovery and to also reduce recidivism.”

DOJ, led by Attorney General Schimel, is responsible for administering the TAD grants. DOJ, in collaboration with partner agencies including the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC), the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), the Office of the Director of State Courts, and the Wisconsin State Public Defender’s Office, developed the competitive grant process, reviewed the grant applications, and also offered a series of trainings to counties and tribes on project planning, grant writing, and the application process, prior to the application deadline.

Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, who championed both TAD initiatives in the Wisconsin State Senate, praised the statewide expansion of the program. “Whether combating Wisconsin’s pervasive opiate epidemic or working to get drunk drivers off our roads, we need to tackle the problem of substance abuse at its roots by focusing on treatment,” said Fitzgerald. “This approach helps make our streets and communities safer and our investment today will help to reduce long term corrections costs for Wisconsin’s taxpayers. I was proud to sponsor this legislation and look forward to seeing the continued results of this common sense program.”

For more information on the application process, please visit the [Criminal Justice Coordinating Council website](#).

A list and map of the TAD program recipients are attached.

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