

Aitkin County Board of Commissioners Board Meeting Attendance Record

Date: April 14, 2026

Name	Please check the boxes that apply		
	Aitkin County Citizen	Aitkin County Employee	Company Representative – Please list
Bobbie Dangler		✓	HR
Mike Dangers		✓	Assessor
Veronica Lundquist			SWCD
DJ Thompson		✓	Land
MARK JEFFERS		✓	Economic Dev.

SHARED EMPLOYEE AGREEMENT
Between Aitkin County and Crow Wing County
Full-Time Social Worker Position, effective _____, 2026

This Agreement is entered into between Aitkin County and Crow Wing County for the purpose of establishing a shared full-time Social Worker position within the Health & Human Services Departments.

1. Position Structure

1.1 Aitkin County will serve as the employing and housing entity for the full-time Social Worker. The employee will be employed by Aitkin County and subject to Aitkin County personnel policies, the applicable AFSCME HHS collective bargaining agreement, applicable memoranda of agreement, and Aitkin County benefit plans.

1.2 Crow Wing County agrees to participate in this shared service arrangement under the terms outlined in this Agreement.

2. Duties and Work Allocation

2.1 The Social Worker will provide services to both Aitkin County and Crow Wing County. Work allocation is estimated at 50% Aitkin County and 50% Crow Wing County, and may be adjusted by mutual agreement of the HHS Directors based on operational needs.

2.2 The position is structured as a primarily remote role, with travel required between counties as necessary to perform assigned duties. The employee will attend in-person meetings or report on-site as directed by department leadership.

2.3 The employee will remain under the primary supervision, payroll administration, and human resources authority of Aitkin County. Work coordination between the counties shall occur as outlined below.

2.4 Day-to-day supervision and work direction shall be jointly coordinated, with Aitkin County retaining primary supervisory authority as the employing entity. Crow Wing County may assign work directly to the employee consistent with the terms of this Agreement, provided that such assignments are communicated to Aitkin County to ensure coordination of workload, scheduling, and performance expectations. The employee shall adhere to established communication protocols and keep both counties informed of assignments and progress. In the event of conflicting direction or priorities, the designated supervisors shall make good faith efforts to resolve such matters. If resolution is not achieved, the issue shall be elevated to the respective department heads or administrative leadership for final determination.

2.5 The position is not assigned to on-call duties.

3. Cost Sharing

3.1 The initial work allocation shall be 50% Aitkin County and 50% Crow Wing County. Cost sharing shall be based on either (a) a fixed allocation as stated above, or (b) actual time worked, as selected by mutual written agreement of the counties HHS Directors.

3.2 The Aitkin County HHS Department will invoice Crow Wing County for its share on a quarterly basis. Payment is due within 30 days of invoice. Each invoice shall include supporting detail sufficient to demonstrate the basis for the charges, including, as applicable, hours worked by county, the agreed-upon allocation, and the calculation of the billable rate.

3.3 Mileage reimbursement and travel-related expenses will be administered in accordance with Aitkin County policy and included in cost sharing unless otherwise agreed. The employee will use Aitkin County motor pool vehicles for Aitkin County business and Crow Wing County motor pool vehicles for Crow Wing County business. When work involves both counties on the same day, the employee may use a personal vehicle and will be reimbursed in accordance with Aitkin County policy.

3.4 Each county will be responsible for its own operational costs (office, furniture, etc.), unless otherwise mutually agreed. This may include, but is not limited to, office space, furnishings, equipment, technology, and supplies necessary for the employee to perform assigned duties within each county.

3.5 Each county shall provide the employee with its own computer and, if applicable, a phone for use when performing work on behalf of that county, in order to ensure that data is maintained separately and to reduce the risk of unauthorized access or data breaches. All data created, accessed, or maintained by the employee in the course of work for each county shall remain the property of that respective county, and each county shall retain control over its systems, devices, and data. The employee shall comply with all applicable county policies regarding technology use, data privacy, and information security, including remote access requirements. Access to state systems, including SSIS and MMIS, shall be established separately for each county, and shared credentials are not permitted. Each county is responsible for provisioning, managing, and terminating system access associated with its operations.

3.6 Training costs associated with this position shall be shared by the counties in proportion to the agreed-upon work allocation, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing. Required training, including but not limited to state-mandated, licensure, or position-specific training necessary to perform assigned duties, shall be approved by both counties and treated as a shared cost. Optional or discretionary training must receive prior approval from both counties to be eligible for cost sharing; otherwise, the requesting county shall be responsible for such costs. Training-related expenses may include registration fees, materials, travel, lodging, and meals, consistent with Aitkin County policy unless otherwise agreed. Time spent in approved training shall be considered hours

worked and allocated between the counties consistent with the work allocation, unless otherwise specified in advance.

3.7 The counties agree to review the work allocation and associated cost distribution periodically, or upon request of either party, and may adjust the allocation prospectively by mutual written agreement if actual service levels materially differ from the agreed-upon allocation.

3.8 Any unemployment compensation costs or liabilities associated with this position, including but not limited to unemployment benefits charged to Aitkin County as the employing entity, shall be shared equally by the counties on a fifty percent (50%) Aitkin County and fifty percent (50%) Crow Wing County basis, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing. Aitkin County shall provide documentation of such costs, and Crow Wing County shall reimburse its share in accordance with the invoicing terms set forth in this Agreement.

3.9 For purposes of workers' compensation coverage, the employer for which the Employee is providing services at the time of injury shall bear liability for the injury and be responsible for filing the First Report of Injury.

The parties acknowledge that this Agreement does not bind any third party, including the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT), and that claim liability will be determined in accordance with applicable law and coverage.

Notwithstanding the above, the Counties agree, as an internal cost-sharing arrangement, that any workers' compensation costs incurred in connection with the Employee's work under this Agreement shall be shared equally between them. For purposes of this Section, "workers' compensation costs" means all indemnity, medical, rehabilitation, and claim-related expenses charged to the claim by the applicable coverage provider, including MCIT, but does not include internal administrative costs such as staff time, payroll processing, or other overhead expenses.

If a claim is charged to one County (e.g., the County filing the First Report of Injury), the other County shall reimburse that County for fifty percent (50%) of such costs.

The Counties further acknowledge that it may, in some circumstances, be difficult to determine which County the Employee was serving at the time of injury. Accordingly, the parties agree that a 50:50 allocation of costs shall apply in all workers' compensation cases arising under this Agreement as a fair and administratively efficient approach.

4. Funding Contingency

4.1 This position is contingent upon continued funding and mutual agreement of both counties. Nothing in this Agreement shall be interpreted as a guarantee of continued employment.

4.2 If external or dedicated funding for this position is materially reduced or eliminated, either county may request modification or discontinuation of this arrangement with sixty (60) days written notice to the other county.

For purposes of this section, funding reduction or elimination refers to the loss or significant decrease of funding sources specifically supporting this position, and not general budgetary changes or discretionary decisions.

4.3 Any employment action affecting the employee will be administered by Aitkin County in accordance with applicable personnel policies, collective bargaining agreement provisions, and any applicable memoranda of agreement.

5. Annual Review

5.1 This shared arrangement will be reviewed annually by both counties to evaluate operational effectiveness, funding availability, and continued need.

The annual review is intended for evaluation and planning purposes and does not alter the minimum initial term outlined in this Agreement.

6. Term and Termination

6.1 This Agreement is intended to remain in effect for an initial term of two (2) years from the effective date to support program stability, continuity of services, and return on training investment.

6.2 While both counties intend to maintain this arrangement for the full initial two (2) year term, either county may terminate its participation prior to the end of the term upon sixty (60) days written notice to the other county's HHS Director.

6.3 Following the initial two-year term, continuation of this Agreement shall be by mutual written agreement of both counties.

6.4 Notwithstanding the above, either county may request modification or discontinuation of this Agreement due to loss or reduction of funding, subject to sixty (60) days written notice.

7. Position Stability and Continuity

7.1 The parties acknowledge the importance of continuity in this shared position to support program stability, specialized training investment, and consistent service delivery across both counties. The incumbent shall not be eligible to apply for internal caseload reassignments in either county.

7.2 In the event the position becomes vacant or the employee is unavailable for an extended period due to leave (e.g., FMLA or other approved leave), Aitkin County, as the

employing entity, shall manage the vacancy and any related employment actions in accordance with its personnel policies and applicable collective bargaining agreement. The counties shall confer in good faith to determine appropriate interim coverage, which may include temporary reassignment of duties, contracted services, or suspension of certain services, as mutually agreed. During any period of vacancy or extended absence, cost sharing shall be limited to actual costs incurred by Aitkin County, unless otherwise agreed in writing. The counties may also mutually agree to suspend or modify this Agreement during such period.

8. Dispute Resolution

8.1 Any disputes regarding the interpretation or implementation of this Agreement shall be addressed through good faith discussion between the Counties’ administrative leadership.

9. Indemnification

9.1 Each party shall be responsible for its own acts and omissions, and those of its officers, employees, and agents, in the performance of this Agreement, to the extent permitted by law. To the extent permitted by law, each party agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the other party, its officials, employees, and agents from any claims, damages, losses, and expenses, including reasonable attorneys’ fees, arising out of or resulting from the negligent or wrongful acts or omissions of the indemnifying party in the performance of this Agreement.

10. No Waiver

10.1 Nothing herein shall be construed to waive or limit any immunity from, or limitation on, liability available to either party, whether set forth in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 466 or otherwise.

11. Entire Agreement

11.1 This Agreement constitutes the full understanding between Aitkin County and Crow Wing County regarding this shared position and supersedes any prior discussions or agreements related to this arrangement.

Approved by:

Aitkin County Board Chair
Date: _____

Crow Wing County Board Chair
Date: _____

Attest:

Attest:

Aitkin County Administrator
Date: _____

Crow Wing County Administrator
Date: _____

How AMC Works for Aitkin County



Association of
Minnesota
Counties

How Aitkin County Shaped AMC in 2025

- **AMC Board:** Commissioner Michael Kearney
- **Environment & Natural Resources Policy Committee:** Environmental Services Director Andrew Carlstrom
- **General Government Policy Committee:** Commissioner Travis Leiviska
- **Public Health & Human Services Policy Committee:** Health & Human Services Director Sarah Pratt
- **Public Safety Policy Committee:** Commissioner Laurie Westerlund
- **Transportation & Infrastructure Policy Committee:** Commissioner Michael Kearney

2025 Legislative Successes

The 2025 session will go down in history as one of the most unique and eventful years at the Minnesota Capitol. To counties' misfortune, a significant deficit meant significant and historic cost shifts in the health and human services realm were seriously considered in both the House and Senate to differing levels, each chamber putting some portion of the governor's proposal into place and resulting in AMC dialing up pressure. In addition, counties successfully unified over no cuts to County Program Aid (CPA) and the dire need to invest in child protection IT systems that have been so neglected they have resulted in staffing crises and universal, bipartisan discontent. Highlights of AMC's successes in areas that are high priorities for members include:

- No cuts to CPA despite a proposal to reduce the appropriation by \$20 million per year. Aitkin County receives \$1,070,280 annually, an increase of \$335,260 over the last five years.
- Despite the deficit environment, counties secured \$35 million in investments for modernization of SSIS, a human services data system.
- AMC successfully lobbied to avoid over \$400 million in human services cost shifts. By way of example, a single proposed cost share for Disability Waiver Residential Services would have cost Aitkin County \$177,456.
- In the areas of EMS funding, the legislature included \$16 million for an Ambulance Operating Deficit Grant Program, \$2 million for an Ambulance Service Training and Staffing Grant Program, and \$8 million for a Rural Uncompensated Care Pool.
- In the area of transportation and bonding, key county programs were funded. This includes: \$8 million for Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Program, \$47 million for the Local Road Improvement Program, \$20 million for the Local Bridge Replacement Program, and \$11 million for the Major Local Bridge Replacement Program.

Internal Operations & Communications

AMC strengthened its support for member counties through strategic partnerships and continued investment in modern, efficient internal operations.

- Through AMC's **Preferred Business Partners**, including Foundational Partners and **NACo Solutions (NACo Edge)**, counties gain access to trusted expertise, education, risk management resources, and nationally vetted, cost-saving programs that leverage the collective purchasing power of counties nationwide.
- AMC has also modernized its internal systems to improve service delivery and transparency. The transition to **Engagifii** streamlines member services such as event registration, communications, legislative tracking, training, and online engagement into a single, user-friendly platform. AMC also upgraded its financial operations to **Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central**, a secure, cloud-based system that strengthens financial transparency, reporting accuracy, and long-term reliability.
- AMC keeps member counties informed and equipped with timely publications, updates, and resources, including **AMC UPDATE**, **Minnesota Counties Quarterly**, guides, toolkits, and webinars on key topics like property taxes, elections, and cybersecurity. Members also have access to data, research, grant support, and specialized tools

through the County Library & Information Center (CLIC). These communications help counties make informed decisions, stay current on emerging issues, and efficiently serve their communities.

- Together, these partnerships, system upgrades, and robust communications ensure AMC members have the tools, information, and support they need to operate efficiently and effectively. From streamlined member services and transparent financial management to timely updates, publications, guides, and webinars on critical county topics, AMC helps counties make informed decisions, reduce administrative burdens, and better serve their residents.

Learning & Member Programs

Recognizing the strong connection between conference planning, education, and research, AMC restructured in 2025, creating Learning & Member Programs. The team supports the mission of AMC by equipping members and affiliates with research, education, and resources to achieve public service excellence. 2025 was a successful year for AMC with member participation and active engagement.

- **County Government 101** for newly elected county officials is valuable training for newly elected leaders to kick-off their new careers in county government. Experts and veteran county leaders provided insight into subjects like managing board meetings, a county commissioner's role with HR, and more.
- A new **Leadership Essentials** program was launched to help Board chairs, vice-chairs and administrators. The sessions focused on strong working relationships between board leadership and county staff, with virtual topics covering effective meeting management, collaboration between administrators and board chairs, and strategies for reframing conflict to promote understanding and teamwork.
- AMC held its third annual **Drainage Conference** for counties, joint counties, watershed districts, and other water management organizations. As drainage authorities, they are charged with the responsibility to manage and preserve the drainage infrastructure our agricultural economy depends upon to support modern advances in efficient farming practices.
- AMC's **Legislative Conference and County Day at the Capitol** brought hundreds of county officials to St. Paul. Attendees participated in policy committee meetings and met with their legislators to discuss issues affecting counties statewide.
- AMC **District Meetings** in the spring and the fall. Member counties gather with their district colleagues to collaborate and share knowledge on the most important issues facing their region. AMC delivers legislative session results in the spring and works with members to develop legislative priorities in the fall.
- The **Leadership Summit**, attended by county officials and key staff, focuses on leadership skills training to help them become better leaders by preparing them to meet the increasing demands and challenges facing counties today. The leadership examples set by county officials and staff is critical to creating a culture that attracts, retains, and motivates today's workforce.
- The **Fall Policy Conference** is where the legislative policy platform is created to guide the work of AMC's government relations team during the legislative session. General sessions addressed key issues facing counties, including strengthening partnerships with state legislators, solid waste management, and modernization of human services systems.
- AMC's **Annual Conference** hosted 591 attendees, 15 exhibitors, and 30+ educational workshops, which made 2025's AMC Annual Conference a huge success.
- In 2025, AMC delivered a broad range of leadership, communication, and technical training opportunities that reflected the diverse and evolving needs of county leaders. In response to member feedback, AMC offered many training. This included **Practical Leadership 1.0**, **Leading on Purpose**, **Managing Effective Communication** and many other topics.
- After being awarded a McKnight Foundation grant in 2024 to build capacity to assist Minnesota counties in successfully applying for state and federal funding, two **Grant Coordinators** met with counties from across the state in an effort to better understand the needs of counties and the barriers they face in applying for grants. Staff created resources to assist counties including a Capital Improvement Guide, Grant Resources Hub, Grant Writers Database, and a template Request For Proposal for grant writers.

How AMC Works for *Aitkin County*



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AMC's Support for County Budgets

Over the last five years, AMC has worked at the state and federal level to maximize the financial resources available to counties. These resources range from very flexible base support like County Program Aid, to specific funding streams that support county services like community supervision funding, to one-time funds to support a specific need like the federal COVID Recovery funds. Your dues, proposed to be \$14,234 for 2025, make up the largest part of the AMC budget that pays the staff to do this work. Below you will find some information on how this work has benefitted Aitkin County. The funding amounts below reflect either new funding streams or increases to existing sources since 2019, totaling \$8,876,197 for your county.

Legislative Funding Successes

- County Program Aid increased by \$81,175 in 2020 and \$254,085 in 2023 for a total of \$335,260. These are ongoing increases.
- The legislature provided relief from the refund of \$91,781 owed for state assessed Enbridge property.
- Counties distributed state aid to businesses in response to the pandemic, \$313,203 in Aitkin County.
- Funding for community supervision will increase in all counties regardless of probation delivery system. For Aitkin County the increase will be \$553,250.
- Across all categories of transportation funding, the increase for Aitkin County will be \$645,927.
- Public health funding was increased by \$129,215 for your county in 2021 with additional statewide investments of \$19.2 million in 2023.
- The legislature created a new public safety aid fund and Aitkin County's allocation is \$518,898.
- In statewide housing aid, the allocation is \$97,222.
- Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) payments increased for Aitkin County by \$777,827.
- SCORE grants for solid waste management increased by \$13,546.
- The allocation for Local Homelessness Prevention Aid is \$23,365.
- The new cannabis aid was recently certified for 2024 at \$2,114 for Aitkin County, but significant growth is expected as retail sales begin in 2025.
- One-time aid for Medical Assistance costs brought \$115,246 to Aitkin County.
- Funds were allocated to reimburse counties for the county share of DHS errors related to substance use disorder services within institutions of mental disease (IMDs). This relieves Aitkin County of the burden of repaying \$20,916.
- Reimbursement for costs related to the MNLARS roll out was \$45,250.
- Between 2019 and 2023, the legislature allocated \$420 million to broadband infrastructure programs, primarily the Border-to-Border program, but also mapping projects, the low-density grant program, and others.
- The legislature has also created a \$5 million per year fund to help cover local costs of election administration.

Federal Funding Successes

- The CARES Act brought \$2,007,508 into Aitkin County.
- An additional \$3,085,669 came from American Rescue Plan (ARPA).
- The Local Aid and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) allocated \$100,000 to help cover costs related to federal lands in your county.