



Meeting Minutes: Dakota County Opioid Response Advisory Committee

Date: Tuesday, September 30, 2025
Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth Unten
Location: Dakota County Northern Service Center

Attendance

Voting Members

- Hanna Kazempour
- Cara Schulz
- Jacqueline Young

Dakota County staff in attendance:

- James Johnson Jr.
- Jake Phillips
- Alicia Ward
- Elizabeth Unten

Absent: Maria Anderson, Michael Beltowsky, Marcus Blue, Nate Burkett, Erin Carder, Jennifer Denmark, Terry Johnson, Jess Luce, Dr. Seema Maddali, Tiffany Neuharth, Bridgette Norring, and Bryan Schowalter

Action Items

- Contact Alicia if interested in tabling at the Jail Resource Fair on October 30.
- Consider volunteering to speak on behalf of ORAC at the 2026 Annual Cities Meeting.
- Submit event information for inclusion in the new ORAC calendar.
- Join HOPE Summit planning meetings beginning mid-October.

Agenda

- Call to Order
- Approval of the Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Department Updates
- Substance Use Resource Guide
- Open Forum
- New Business

- Public Comment
- Member Announcements
- Adjourn

Next Meeting

Date: Tuesday, November 4, 2025

Time: 3:00 pm

Location: Northern Service Center, Room 520

Meeting Notes

Per Diem Requests

Eligible committee members who opted to receive a per diem received request to sign.

Quorum Not Met

It was noted that quorum was not met for this meeting. As a result, official business could not be conducted.

Department Updates

Jake Phillips was introduced to the committee. He will be working with Public Health for the next 10 months, supporting the Opioid and Substance Use departments through RecoveryCorp/AmeriCorps.

Alicia Ward reported that Dakota County Crisis and Recovery (Guild) has served 75 individuals since the spring. She also shared that A Place to Go is operating Monday–Friday from 2–10 p.m., is staffed and ready for intakes, and accepts walk-ins with advance notice encouraged.

A new partnership with ISD 200 and ISD 199 will launch this school year to provide an evidence-based approach for students caught using substances on school grounds, keeping them in school and offering alternatives to suspension. Interviews are currently underway for the vacant Chemical Health Social Worker role.

Construction continues at the Dakota County Jail with remodeling of the intake area. The Jail Resource Fair is scheduled for Thursday, October 30, and members interested in tabling should contact Alicia to be connected with the sponsor.

James Johnson Jr. (JJ) thanked committee members for their service over the past 24 months and announced that public recognition of committee members will take place at the 3rd Annual Cities Meeting later this fall, and a volunteer is invited to speak on behalf of ORAC. November and December ORAC meetings will continue at the usual time and location, with a virtual option available. In November, the committee will receive first reports from contracted vendors Gateway, Lionheart, Thrive, Minnesota Recovery Connection (MRC), and Wayside. There are now 12 NAP sites managed by Public Health across Dakota County, with 11 currently active until the Wentworth remodel is complete. Libraries have been strong partners, supporting naloxone training, awareness events, and outreach opportunities.

Naloxone and fentanyl awareness trainings will begin in January 2026 at each of the nine libraries and the Northern Service Center, running monthly through October 2026. Additional trainings will also be offered in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish.

The MASH proposal will move forward through the RFP process due to financial thresholds. Public Health requested committee affirmation to proceed.

SBIRT trainings continue with strong participation, and an advanced training is scheduled for December 4, 2025. These trainings will continue into 2026.

The 2025 HOPE Summit has been rescheduled to March 21, 2026, to align with National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week and will feature exhibitors, vendors, food, and activities. An additional HOPE Summit is planned for Fall 2026 in conjunction with the Annual Cities Meeting.

Fifteen proposals were received for the multimedia campaign and narrowed to three finalists. Final interviews are being conducted this week, with a decision expected soon, and details will be shared once a contract is finalized.

Finally, a new ORAC calendar has been created to track substance use–related events and awareness days. Members and partners are encouraged to share event information for inclusion and future planning.

Substance Use Resource Guide

A calendar of initial Substance Use Resource Guide (SURG) Focus Group meetings has been scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the nine libraries and at the Northern Service Center between 3–5 p.m. These sessions will bring together community members, committee members, community partners, and Public Health to help shape the guide. ORAC encouraged Champions and district representatives to nominate trusted Dakota County community members to fill seats. A template/worksheet outlining a draft table of contents was shared, and members were asked to treat it as a working document to confirm, refine, or suggest additions and deletions.

Open Forum

Jackie shared that she attended the Walk for Lives event at the State Capitol, noting it was a good and well-attended event. She also provided an update that the Rosemount High School presentation/training will now be held in February due to timing requirements with Community Education; the event will feature parents and youth in separate sessions, with Pam Lanhart presenting to adults and Hanna from Change the Outcome leading the youth portion.

JJ shared excitement about the new partnership with Tri Districts CAPS, an educational program focused on developing high school students' career pathways.

New Business

No motions were made.

Public Comment

No members of the public were in attendance. No comments were submitted.

Member Announcements

No announcements were made.