

# Dakota County Community Accountability Program

## For Victims of Property Offenses

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# Introduction

In 1993 the Minnesota Legislature enacted Minnesota Statute Section 401.605, which mandates that County Attorneys in all Community Corrections Act counties develop and implement a program designed to divert adult offenders from the criminal justice system prior to entry of a conviction. Dakota County is a Community Corrections Act county. Pursuant to this mandate, the Dakota County Attorney's Office has developed a Community Accountability Program for adult criminal offenders who commit crimes which fall within the jurisdiction of the Dakota County Attorney.

## Program

# Goals

The goals of the Community Accountability Program are to:

- Create an incentive for first-time low risk property offenders to change their behavior
- Ensure full and prompt payment of restitution to crime victims
- Hold offenders accountable to society
- Reduce costs associated with the criminal justice system

## Program

# Guidelines

The Dakota County Attorney has developed the following guidelines for determining eligibility for an adult offender to enter the program.

1. Eligible offenders include first-time offenders who commit misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor and low level felony property offenses.
2. Offender(s) must pay a monthly fee and any additional costs associated with the program. If appropriate, the monthly fee may be converted to community work service at a rate set by Community Corrections.
3. Offenders will be ordered to pay restitution and participate in a community work service program.

4. When appropriate, offenders will be required to undergo chemical dependency or psychological evaluations and complete high school diploma, GED, or other vocational training programs during the term of the Community Accountability Program which shall not exceed a three year time period.
5. Offender(s) must provide a detailed statement to the investigating law enforcement agency regarding their involvement as well as the involvement of others in the offense.

## **Victims Right To Restitution**

Crime victims who have incurred out-of-pocket losses as a direct result of a crime are entitled to restitution. Examples of losses for which a restitution claim can be made by the victim include:

- losses associated with damaged property
- theft related losses
- replacement of lost wages and services
- insurance claims paid by an insurance company

Crime victims must complete the Request for Restitution form. This form is sent by the County Attorney's office to a crime victim at the time the case is charged. The form must be completed and returned promptly to ensure full consideration and payment of restitution. The request for restitution must describe the items or elements of loss, itemize the total dollar amounts of restitution claimed, and specify the reasons justifying these amounts.

To minimize any direct contact between the victim and the offender, restitution payments are sent to the Clerk of Court, Criminal Division at the Dakota County Judicial Center. The Clerk of Court then disburses payments to the victim(s).

# Program **Outcomes**

If the offender successfully completes all of the conditions of the Community Accountability Program as established in the agreement, the County Attorney's Office will dismiss the offender's case from court.

If the offender fails to truthfully complete an affidavit necessary for admission into the Community Accountability Program, fails to timely complete any condition of the agreement, or it is determined that the offender committed a new offense while participating in the program, and was convicted of the offense, the County Attorney's Office will begin prosecution of the offense and any new offense provided there are no statutory or constitutional prohibitions.



If you have questions regarding the Community Accountability Program, or concerns regarding restitution, you may contact:

Dakota County Attorney  
Program Coordinator  
1560 Highway 55  
Hastings, Minnesota 55033-2392  
(651) 438-4438

[www.dakotacounty.us/attorney](http://www.dakotacounty.us/attorney)