

Community Corrections Overview

Houghton County Jail Committee

Houghton County has recently joined the Marquette Regional Community Corrections (MRCC) program, a program funded by the State of Michigan and focused on promoting public safety by addressing the behavior and needs of individuals who enter facilities such as our county jail.

What has happened?

At the June 9, 2026, regular meeting of the Houghton County Board of Commissioners, the Board voted to join the Marquette Regional Community Corrections Advisory Board (CCAB) and appoint Commissioner Roy Britz to the CCAB.

What does Community Corrections do?

Beginning in FY2027, this new partnership will allow our County to access State Community Corrections Funds and implement evidence-based programs and services that will:

1. Enhance our justice system operations,
2. Expand substance-use disorder treatment options in our County, and
3. Assist with jail population management in the Houghton County Jail.

Who pays for this?

The Community Corrections program is fully funded by the State at no cost to Houghton County.

What exactly does Community Corrections do?

As a member of the Marquette Regional Community Corrections program, we will be able to conduct **pretrial risk assessments for every individual booked into the jail**. These assessments are used to inform judicial bail decisions and release conditions by estimating a defendant's likelihood of reoffending or failing to appear in court. This evidence-based practice promotes public safety and ensures the most efficient use of limited resources, reserving jail space for either:

- those serving sentences or
- pretrial defendants assessed to be a public safety and/or flight risk.

Thus, Community Corrections programs help reduce the need to house some individuals in the jail. Through Community Corrections, individuals on pretrial release will be held accountable through the addition of pretrial supervision services that monitor compliance with bond conditions and submit reports to the court. These monitoring systems come to the County at no cost.

The pretrial risk assessment also helps screen defendants for mental health or substance use disorders and provides an opportunity to connect individuals with appropriate treatment services during their pretrial status. As a MCCC member, Houghton County will be able to refer

pretrial defendants and felony probationers to residential treatment programs at TRICAP at no cost to our County (TRICAP = Tri-County Community Adjudication Program, www.tricap.net). TRICAP is a Michigan Department of Corrections treatment facility in Saginaw that offers a variety of treatment programs including an Opiate/Methamphetamine Specific Program.

How will all this affect the Houghton County Jail?

Houghton County has not previously been able to utilize programs and services as outlined above in a systematic way. Through the MCCC efforts, we will likely see changes in how we utilize jail space. A significant fraction of individuals interacting with law enforcement and the courts in our County have alcohol- or drug-related offenses and/or unaddressed mental health needs (Sheriff Saaranen's estimate is 90% of detainees). Earlier identification of these needs, timely referrals to appropriate services, and supervision to ensure compliance with bond conditions should result in fewer repeat offenders cycling through the criminal justice system, thereby improving the health and safety of our community and reducing costs.

More Information:

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