



Experts help county ease transition after jail

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Three jail experts from the Urban Institute and the National Institute of Corrections are in La Crosse for a few days to help the county with programs to ease the transition from jail to the community.

La Crosse was one of six counties nationwide to win a grant of assistance from the two organizations.

Justice Sanctions manager Jane Klekamp said the county has been working hard to reduce the jail population - and to come up with ways to reduce recidivism.

Douglas County, Kan., and Denver became the first pilot counties in September 2008.

La Crosse; Orange County, Calif.; Kent County, Mich. (Grand Rapids), and Davidson County, Tenn. (Nashville), were selected for the program in August.

Jesse Jannetta of the Urban Institute said staff people would work with La Crosse County for the next two years to develop strategies to make sure inmates do not reoffend after they're released.

The program also aims to reduce substance abuse and homelessness, and improve health, employment and family relationships.

Jannetta said it is important that inmates receive the same services outside of jail that they received on the inside. He said the effort should be a collaborative between the jail and other criminal justice agencies, and the community.