

Alaska Mental Health Board
FY 2004-2005 Operating Budget Proposal

<p>1) Proposer's Name Consumers Consortium,</p>	<p>2) Contact Information Barry Creighton, 54932 Burdock Rd, Kasilof, Alaska 99610, (907) 262-2824, burdock@ionia.org</p>	<p>3) Program or Service Title Consumer Directed Criminal Defense Attorney</p>
<p>4) Proposal Description:</p> <p>There has been a lot of attention in the last few years to "decriminalization," but it is a strange concept as implemented because it is mainly focused on programs in the jails and after jails, but not towards keeping consumers out of jails. Anchorage's Mental Health Court is a marvelous program, but a consumer normally has to plead guilty or the equivalent (no contest) in order to participate in the program. What sense does it make for a major part of the decriminalization effort to require a person to be criminalized to participate? This is not the court's fault.</p> <p>The main things that need to be done to keep consumers from being criminalized are: (1) good legal representation to prevent the ridiculous things consumers are being convicted of (2) adequate housing; and (3) strong peer-support to help the person from keep from getting into trouble. The Legal Advocacy part of the Support Education Advocacy and Leadership (SEAL) is a terrific first step, but this is such a big problem that a full-time consumer directed attorney needs to be employed to tackle the situation. We say consumer directed for two reasons. First, the consumer run program needs to educate the attorney about what is really going on with the consumers as well as be an interface (interpreter in some cases) between the consumers and the attorney. Second, the consumers need that peer support to help them stay out of trouble with the law.</p>		
<p>5) Explain geographic area to be served. Are there similar projects/programs in geographic area where collaboration is possible?</p> <p>Statewide, although it is anticipated there will be a focus on Anchorage. It is expected that the project would collaborate with the Public Defenders Office, Office of Public Advocacy, Disability Law Center, Mental Health Court, etc.</p>		
<p>6) What AMHB priorities or goals of <i>A Shared Vision II</i> and/or the Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Plan does this proposal support?</p>		

Decriminalization

7) How will this proposal improve the quality of life of Trust beneficiaries?

By keeping people out of jail.

8) If this is a continuing project, report on status. Indicate not applicable if this is a new project.

It is not a continuing project *per se*, but could be viewed as an expansion of some existing efforts.

9) Project cost and funding sources

FY 04 \$90,000/MHTAAR

FY 05 \$90,000/MHTAAR

FY 06 \$90,000/MHTAAR

FY 07 \$90,000/MHTAAR

FY 08 \$90,000/MHTAAR

10) Is capital funding required?

No

11) Are new state employees required? No
If so, how many?

12) Signature and date