



**FOND DU LAC COUNTY
LAW ENFORCEMENT EXECUTIVE
ASSOCIATION**

Dear County Board Supervisors and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Fond du Lac County Law Enforcement Executive Association, we respectfully offer our perspective regarding the potential closure of the Fond du Lac County Acute Unit.

We recognize the significant financial and staffing challenges facing the County and understand the complexity involved in maintaining specialized inpatient mental health services. We also want to acknowledge the dedication and effort of DHS staff, who have worked diligently to provide meaningful, efficient care to individuals in crisis. We further recognize that not all counties operate a similar resource.

At the same time, we believe it is critical to fully consider what the Acute Unit represents not only as a line item in a budget, but as a frontline component of our community's mental health safety net.

The availability of a local inpatient mental health resource directly impacts the quality, timeliness, and dignity of care provided to individuals experiencing crisis. When care is local:

- Individuals are more likely to accept voluntary treatment, avoiding unnecessary escalation.
- Families and support systems can remain engaged in the recovery process.
- Continuity of care is preserved through coordination with local providers.

Without a local option, individuals in crisis may face:

- Extended wait times in emergency departments or law enforcement custody.
- Placement far from home, separating them from family and local support networks.
- Increased trauma during an already vulnerable moment.

When individuals are transported hours away, these support systems are disrupted, often leading to poorer outcomes and higher likelihood of repeat crises.

The closure of the Acute Unit will not eliminate the need for services; it may shift the burden elsewhere:

- Emergency rooms may experience increased boarding of mental health patients.
- Law enforcement may spend more time managing individuals in crisis rather than responding to community needs.
- Jails risk becoming default holding environments for individuals who need treatment, not incarceration.

This is not simply a law enforcement issue, it is a healthcare system, public safety, and community well-being issue.

From a law enforcement perspective, the loss of a local placement option may result in:

- Transport times of three to six hours or more, removing officers/deputies from service.
- Increased overtime and staffing strain.
- Reduced emergency response capacity within our communities.

While the Acute Unit represents a cost, its absence will create hidden and redistributed costs across multiple systems:

- Increased law enforcement over time.
- Greater strain on emergency medical services and hospitals.
- Potential increases in incarceration and recidivism.

Public safety and community health are shared responsibilities. Services like the Acute Unit are not isolated expenditures, they are investments in stability, prevention, and long-term cost avoidance. We understand that difficult decisions must be made. However, we encourage consideration of:

- The full system impact, not just immediate budget savings.
- The value of maintaining local access to care.
- Opportunities for state partnership, regional collaboration, or alternative funding models.

Our intent is not opposition, but partnership. We want to ensure that decisions are made with a complete understanding of how deeply interconnected this resource is with patient care, public safety, and overall community well-being.

We remain committed to working collaboratively with County leadership and community partners to identify sustainable solutions that support both fiscal responsibility and the needs of those we serve.

We appreciate your time, thoughtful consideration, and continued service to the residents of Fond du Lac County.

Respectfully,

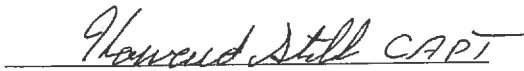
Fond du Lac County Law Enforcement Executive Association



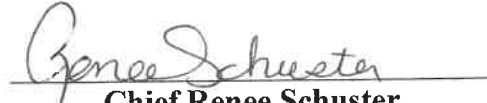
Chief Jeremy Rasch
Waupun Police Department



Chief William Wallner
Ripon Police Department



Captain Howard Stibb
Town of Ripon Police Department



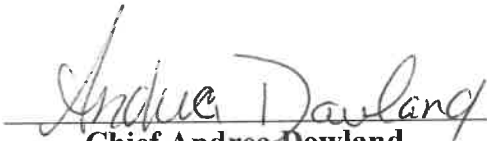
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Oakfield Police Department



Chief Aaron Goldstein
Fond du Lac Police Department



Chief Tony Liebenow
Rosendale Police Department



Chief Andrea Dowland
Campbellsport Police Department



Chief Pete Vergos
North Fond du Lac Police Department



Sheriff Ryan Waldschmidt
Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Office