



# Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Governor Tony Evers | Secretary Kevin A. Carr

## Office of Detention Facilities

November 11, 2021

Sheriff Dennis Stuart  
Washburn County Sheriff's Department  
421 US Hwy 63  
Shell Lake, WI 54871

### **Re: 2021 Annual Inspection**

Dear Sheriff Stuart:

On August 25, 2021, the annual inspection of the Washburn County Jail was conducted pursuant to WI Statute 301.37(3). The inspection compared the facility and its operation to applicable state statutes and Department of Corrections Administrative Code Chapter DOC 350. This inspection consisted of a tour of the facility; interviews with administration, staff and inmates; review of inmate files; and a review of facility records and documentation.

### **Changes Since Previous Inspection**

- Continuing to work on updating policies.
- Three additional jail sergeant positions have been approved totaling four positions.
- The jail painting project has started using inmate labor.
- Four full-time staff members have been hired in the last 12 months.
- $\frac{3}{4}$  time dispatch only position hired, moving the jail closer to separating the dispatch center from the jail.

### **Goals and Initiatives**

- Continue to work towards filling vacant positions within the jail.
- Continue to work towards separating the dispatch from the jail.
- Obtain equipment to convert the interview room into a remote courtroom.
- Upgrade the only receiving cell in the jail.

### **Summary of Jail Operations**

I met with the administrative, security, healthcare, and foodservice staff to conduct the annual inspection.

The inspection included a review of records and practices, as well as a walkthrough of the detention area to assess the safety, sanitation, adequacy, and fitness of the facility. My observations during

the inspection revealed cordial and professional interactions between the staff and persons in custody.

The maximum rated capacity of the facility is 30. On the day of the inspection, there were 24 inmates incarcerated in the facility and 7 inmates housed in another county. The Washburn County Jail is not approved for double celling per DOC 350.20 and is not approved to house juveniles.

As referenced in past inspections, the jail is old and antiquated, limiting the opportunity to provide programming and education, as well as meeting safety and security expectations. The facility lacks the proper space needed for booking in new inmates, providing proper classification, and housing individuals. On the day of inspection, inmates with mixed classification were housed together due to the lack of proper bed space. Another concern is that the facility has one receiving cell for the whole jail. The lack of receiving cells in the facility is a concern because it makes it very difficult for staff to have inmates change clothing when being processed into the jail. If the receiving cell is occupied, staff has the inmate walk through the secure perimeter of the jail to the multipurpose room and step into a closet to change over.

Also, the medical room is very small, making it difficult for medical staff to provide treatment and examinations while also having adequate space for administrative duties and properly securing confidential medical records.

In addition to the above issues, the jail and the dispatch center are combined and centrally located within the jail. This makes it difficult to provide proper staff supervision with the added responsibilities when 911 calls come into the jail. This often takes staff away from jail duties and negatively affects overall safety and security. As referenced in past inspections, it is recommended that control center and dispatch be separated so staff can focus on their jail duties.

Again, the facility is over 30 years old and, since it opened, corrections has changed dramatically. There should be thought given to future needs of the facility when it comes to conditions of confinement, housing options for classification, programming, and efficiency.

### **Programs**

The following programs are provided to both male and female inmates in the Washburn County Jail:

- Men's ministry
- Women's ministry
- Family Values ministry
- AODA
- AA
- Female Inmate Victims
- GED
- Group Skill Building
- Individual Skill Building

### Variances

- The Washburn County Jail does not have any approved variances on file with the Department.

### Administrative Codes Found Not in Compliance

- **Administrative Code DOC 350.06(6) *Physical Environment***  
On the day of inspection, inmates of mixed classification were housed in the same dormitories.
- **Administrative Code DOC 350.17(10)(d)(e) *Suicide Prevention***  
The inspection material provided failed to show the name, date and time the supervisor was notified when an inmate was placed on a suicide watch.
- **Administrative Code DOC 350.24(f) *Discipline***  
Regarding minor discipline, the inspection material provided failed to show inmates were notified of their right to appeal a supervisor's decision and of the jail's procedure for making the appeal.

### Inspection Comments

- It is recommended that the facility consider the purchase of a body scanner for the detection of contraband.

### Approval

The Washburn County Jail is approved by the Department of Corrections for the secure detention of adult inmates with the maximum capacity of 30.

I wish to thank Captain Brereton and his staff for their assistance, cooperation and professionalism during the inspection process.

If you have any questions regarding the inspection results summarized in this letter or any other correctional matters, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Brad Hoover  
Detention Facilities Specialist

cc: Captain Brereton, Jail Administrator  
Greg Bucholtz, Director-ODF  
File