



# Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Governor Scott Walker | Secretary Jon E. Litscher

## Office of Detention Facilities

January 10, 2018

Sheriff Jeffrey Wallace  
Rusk County Sheriff's Department  
311 E. Miner Ave, Suite L100  
Ladysmith, WI 54848

### **Re: Annual Jail Inspection**

Dear Sheriff Wallace:

On October 25, 2017 the annual inspection of the Rusk 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 report summarizes my findings, including the progress made following the 2016 inspection, any statute or administrative code violations, physical plant and maintenance issues, and an overall summary of facility operations. The inspection worksheet document is attached to this report and includes detailed inspection results.

On the day of the inspection, there were 42 inmates incarcerated in the facility. There was one inmate on electronic monitoring and one inmate housed in another jurisdiction.

### **Progress following the 2016 Inspection**

- Captain George Murray was promoted on August 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Receiving cell metal bunks were removed and a concrete slab was installed in both receiving cells.
- 11 new cameras were ordered and installed.
- In August staff started wearing body cameras.
- Three new jailers were hired.
- Moved the jail log station into the old kitchen area.

### **Goals and initiatives**

- Switch the inmate phone system from Securas to NCIC.
- Install 16 new cameras throughout the jail.
- Increase staff training utilizing POSC instructor Deputy Kerry Read.
- Take steps towards PREA compliance.
- Upload law library, PREA information and inmate rules onto the kiosk system.

- Install a drug/alcohol testing kiosk for offenders.
- Switch the JMS to a more compatible system.
- Eliminate contact visits with attorneys.
- Install a metal detector outside of jail entrance.

### **Physical environment**

The Rusk County Jail was originally constructed in 1985 and consists of six linear-designed housing units and four dormitories. The facility has a maximum rated capacity of 52 adult detainees and is not approved to hold juvenile offenders.

### **Summary of Jail Operations**

I met with the administrative, security, healthcare, and foodservice staff to conduct the annual inspection. The site visit included a review of facility records and documentation as well as a walkthrough of the detention areas. The attached checklist details my findings as they relate to the Department of Corrections Administrative Code Chapter DOC 350 and applicable State Statutes.

The jail is old and antiquated, limiting the opportunity to provide programming and education, along with meeting safety and security expectations. The facility has some facility plant issues that are identified in the inspection document. In addition to the above issues, the communication center is located within the jail. This often takes staff away from jail duties and negatively affects overall safety and security.

A staffing analysis is recommended as staffing levels in the facility have been of some concern. I also feel you may benefit from the addition of a first line supervisor as well. This person would assist with day-to-day operations along with assisting the Jail Administrator to move forward with new initiatives.

After a walkthrough of the detention areas, there were no repetitive complaints from inmates regarding conditions of confinement or staff supervision. The staff is to be commended for the overall positive climate and their observed professional interaction with inmates.

### **Violations:**

*The following violations were documented during this inspection:*

- DOC 350.18(6) - A review of facility records indicates that staff did not receive annual strip search training in accordance with WI Stat. 968.255.
- DOC 350.19(4) – A review of facility records and confirmation by staff show that fire evacuation procedures were not practiced or simulated in 2017.
- DOC 350.24 - A review of facility records reveals general compliance regarding minor disciplines. The reports do not indicate inmates are afforded the ability to make statements and does not show if a supervisor reviewed the discipline administered. Also, documentation does not show if the inmate was notified of their appeal rights. It is encouraged that

administration develop and utilize a standardized form to make sure all steps in the discipline process are followed.

- DOC 350.12(1) - There were several ceiling tiles throughout the facility that had stains showing and many that appeared to be broken. There were several walls throughout the facility that had paint missing or appeared to be worn off. Several vents throughout the facility had dust in them and need to be cleaned.

### **Recommendations**

*The following is a list of recommendations to enhance safety, security and efficiency:*

- It is recommended that search patterns of the facility are varied to prevent routine and expected searches.
- It is recommended that a procedure be put in place to review the necessity of excess keys located in the control center.
- It is recommended that an eye wash station be placed in the vehicle sally port to help with the decontamination of chemical agents. This will also help prevent exposure to staff and inmates in the secure perimeter of the jail.
- It is recommended that a more comprehensive checklist be created to show what staff are inspecting when they conduct their sanitation inspections.

### **Approval**

The Rusk County Jail is approved by the Department of Corrections for the secure detention of adult offenders with the maximum capacity of 52. This approval is contingent on the continued compliance with all applicable state statutes and administrative codes.

I would like to thank Captain George Murray and his staff for their patience, professionalism and assistance while I conducted my inspection.

If you have any questions regarding the inspection results summarized in this letter and found in the inspection worksheet document attached or if I may be of any assistance regarding correctional matters, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Detention Facilities Specialist

cc: George Murray, Captain  
Kristi Dietz, Director-ODF  
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Enclosure – Inspection Worksheet Document