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RACINE COUNTY SECURES \$5 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDING TO ADVANCE NEW MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY

RACINE—Racine County secured \$5 million in federal funding to support the construction of a new county mental health facility, strengthening the County’s crisis response system and expanding access to treatment for residents facing mental health and substance use challenges.

The funding was included in a bipartisan federal government funding package advanced by U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Racine County applied for congressionally directed spending as part of the federal appropriations process, building on years of local planning to advance this project. The investment reflects a strong federal–local partnership to coordinate multiple funding sources toward a shared County priority.

The new facility is part of a braided financing strategy that brings together federal, state, and local resources to build critical infrastructure while maintaining Racine County’s long-term fiscal responsibility. In addition to the newly awarded federal funds, the project uses prior investments from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), opioid settlement funds dedicated to addressing the opioid crisis, and county bonding.

“This project reflects how Racine County approaches major investments: with strong partnerships and respect for our residents and taxpayers,” said Racine County Executive Ralph Malicki. “Through careful planning and strategically aligned resources, we’re bringing significant outside investment to Racine County and delivering a facility that will serve our residents for decades to come.”

Racine County continues to face significant mental health and substance use challenges, particularly related to the opioid crisis. Since 2020, more than 200 Racine County residents have died from opioid use, and state assessments consistently rank Racine County among Wisconsin’s highest-need areas for substance use disorder intervention. While the County currently provides mental health and substance abuse services, a critical gap remains in residential treatment and crisis stabilization. Currently, there are no residential substance use treatment programs within a 40-mile radius of Racine County, forcing residents in crisis to seek care far from home or go without it altogether. At any given time, dozens of residents need structured, 24/7 care. Without appropriate local options, individuals experiencing acute mental health or substance use crises often cycle through emergency rooms, law enforcement, or the jail system—costly, poorly suited settings for treatment and long-term recovery.

The new mental health facility will directly address this gap by centralizing crisis stabilization, residential substance use treatment, mobile crisis response, and protective services under one roof. This integrated approach improves access to care and connects residents to longer-term, community-based services.

“This facility means our residents receive the care they need in the right setting and at the right time,” said Hope Otto, Racine County Human Services Director. “By bringing these services together, we’re improving outcomes for residents in crisis and strengthening the larger system of care in Racine County.”

The new mental health facility is expected to open by the end of 2026.

“This investment delivers high-impact services that strengthen public health and make our County safer and healthier,” Malicki added. “We appreciate our federal partners for working with Racine County to help make this project possible.”

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