

## Contact Information

Please contact us with any specific questions or concerns.

La Crosse County Human Services  
Adult Protective Services  
608-785-5700  
Children's Crisis Intake Unit  
608-784-4357

### Additional Resources:

Public Defender's Office 608-785-9531

24 Hour Crisis and  
Community Information Referral:  
Mobile Crisis 608-784-HELP (4357)  
Great Rivers 211 Dial 2-1-1

### Family Advocacy/Parent Support:

Wisconsin Family Ties  
800-422-7145  
info@wifamilyties.org  
wifamilyties.org

National Association for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)  
La Crosse 608-784-0062

### Family Concerns/Services:

La Crosse County Human Services  
608-784-4357  
300 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
La Crosse, WI 54601

## Notification of Financial Responsibility

For Mobile Crisis Services provided through La Crosse County Human Services Department

*There is a charge for mobile crisis services provided through La Crosse County Human Services Department. Your insurance will be billed directly for any services you or your family may receive. If you do not have insurance, or find that services are not covered by your insurance, you may apply for a reduced fee by scheduling a Financial Review with our billing department.*

**YOU WILL BE CHARGED THE FULL FEE FOR SERVICES RENDERED UNLESS OTHER ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE THROUGH FISCAL SERVICES**

**To apply for a reduced fee you must schedule an appointment by calling: 784-4357**



Prepared by La Crosse County Human Services

Phone: 608-784-4357  
Fax: 608-785-5812  
300 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
La Crosse, WI 54601

This document is intended to provide general information about Chapter 51 Emergency Detentions.

It is not intended to provide legal advice.



La Crosse County Human Services  
Information for Families  
Chapter 51 ~ Emergency Detentions

This brochure provides general information about the Emergency Detention procedure outlined in Chapter 51, the Mental Health Act of the Wisconsin Statutes. It is intended to familiarize families with the procedure for involuntary treatment when a child or adult poses a threat to self or others.

# Emergency Detention

## What is an Emergency Detention?

An emergency detention occurs when a law enforcement officer takes a person into custody because their recent actions pose a significant risk of harm to self or others. An individual can remain under an emergency detention for up to 72 hours during which time he or she will be assessed at a mental health facility. Local law enforcement, the mental health treatment facility, the La Crosse County Office of Corporation Counsel and the Department of Human Services collaborate to ensure the safety of the person and the community.

## Who can initiate an Emergency Detention?

Any person in the community who witnesses a serious mental health act can contact the La Crosse County Mobile Crisis Support Program. A mobile crisis worker will assess the situation and determine if law enforcement needs to be contacted or if the person is able to be diverted to an alternative setting for safety. For life threatening acts law enforcement can be contacted directly. Law enforcement will contact the Mobile Crisis Unit to assess the person for level of dangerousness. If it is determined a Chapter 51 is needed, the person will be transported by law enforcement to the hospital where the officer will complete the necessary paperwork placing a person into secure physical custody. This does not mean that they are under arrest.

## Where will a person be taken?

A person detained in La Crosse County will be initially taken to a local hospital emergency room. If the person is under the age of 13, when the medical facility determines the child is medically stable, he or she will be transferred to an alternate location or mental health treatment facility. Depending on availability, this location may be outside of La Crosse County. If the person is over the age of 13 and a psychiatric bed is available to meet the person's needs, he or she will remain in the facility.

## What happens once someone arrives at the mental health treatment facility?

An individual can remain in custody for up to 72 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) at the designated treatment facility. The treatment team, including a licensed psychiatrist, interviews and assesses the person's treatment needs. The treatment team makes recommendations for treatment and determines whether further involuntary treatment is necessary. The treatment team communicates these recommendations to the La Crosse County Corporation Counsel and the Human Services Department.

Possible outcomes include:

- *Discharge from the treatment facility:* The individual has been assessed to be stable and safe to return to the community. If he or she requires follow up mental health treatment, they have agreed to do this on a voluntary basis and his or her needs will be best met by outpatient providers.
- *Voluntary inpatient hospitalization:* The individual requires further assessment or mental health treatment and is not ready for discharge to the community. The person is willing to stay in the hospital and receive treatment on a voluntary basis. If the person is under age 18, the parent must also consent to this treatment.
- *Court intervention:* The individual requires the court intervention to comply with recommended mental health treatment.

## What can happen in court?

If the treatment team recommends court intervention, one of the following outcomes will occur.

- *A settlement agreement:* In this type of court order, a person formally agrees to comply with all mental health treatment recommendations and other stated rules for up to 90 days. Compliance with the court order is monitored by a representative of Human Services. Compliance for 90 days results in dismissal of the court action; non-compliance may result in the continuance of the court process for involuntary treatment.

- *A probable cause hearing:* A hearing is held to determine whether further involuntary treatment is necessary. At this hearing evidence is presented to a judge to determine whether there is probable cause to believe that the individual is mentally ill and in need of further involuntary treatment to ensure his or her safety. This court process is used when a person with mental illness continues to refuse treatment and requires protection to remain safe.

If an individual is under the age of 18, family will be notified by the Adult Protective Services Unit regarding court hearings. If the person is over age 18, by state statute, all information is confidential and the individual must sign a release of information form in order to disclose any information to the family. Representatives from Corporation Counsel and Human Services will attend the hearing and be available for any questions. The person will be transported to the hearing by the La Crosse County Sheriff's Department. He or she will be assigned legal representation for any hearing.

## Who makes the decisions about what course of action will be pursued?

A representative from the Human Services Department makes recommendations regarding the best course of action. These recommendations must be approved by a judge, should the matter proceed to court.

Based on recommendations by a psychiatrist or psychologist, the judge decides on when the initial treatment shall occur. After the initial treatment, the Department of Human Services and the treatment team determine additional treatment options.

Families may direct any specific questions about the Emergency Detention to the Adult Protective Services Unit.