BUFFALO COUNTY, WI

Buffalo County Resolution

Drafted By:
Carri Renchin/ Jamie Weaver

County Department:
DHHS

Presented Month/Year:
October 2026

Involved Committees:
Finance & Human Resources

Resolution #26-10-01

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE STATE FUNDING FOR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

WHEREAS, in Wisconsin, local health departments (LHDs) are legally required to provide a core set of public health services under Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 251, Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter DHS 140, and other applicable statutes; **and,**

WHEREAS, responsibilities of LHD's have expanded significantly in recent years due to emerging public health threats, workforce shortages, and increasing community health needs; **and,**

WHEREAS, LHD's rely heavily on a combination of limited state aids, categorical grants, and local property tax levy to fund these mandated services; **and,**

WHEREAS, current state funding mechanisms for public health are largely outdated, not indexed to inflation, and do not reflect the true cost delivering foundational public health services; **and,**

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin currently ranks 49th lowest in state dollars dedicated to public health per person (https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures/PH_funding); **and,**

WHEREAS, Public health initiatives consistently deliver high returns on investment (ROI), with recent data showing a median ROI of 14.3 to 1, often saving $14 in medical and societal costs for every $1 spent (https://www.pew.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2025/07/08/public-health-initiatives-deliver-big-returns-on-investment); **and,**

WHEREAS, reliance on short-term, restricted or competitive grant funding creates instability and limits long-term planning for LHDs; **and,**

WHEREAS, counties bear a disproportionate share of the financial burden for providing foundations public health services to Wisconsin residents, placing additional pressure on local property taxpayers; **and,**

WHEREAS, a strong and adequately funded public health system is essential to protect the health, safety, and economic stability of Wisconsin residents and communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors supports continuing to build and retain public health infrastructure in Wisconsin through increased and flexible funding dedicated to local county health departments; **and,**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such a funding model should:

- Provide increased General Purpose Revenue (GPR) support for LHD's
- Include automatic inflationary adjustments

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- Allow for flexible use of funds to meet local needs
- Reduce reliance on short-term, restricted, and/or competitive grants; **and,**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors recognizes public health as a core governmental function and supports sustained investment in public health services to ensure consistent service delivery across all jurisdictions throughout Wisconsin; **and,**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Buffalo County Board of Supervisors supports the Wisconsin Counties Association in advocating for policies that reduce the reliance on local property tax levy to fund foundational local public health services; **and,**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Governor of Wisconsin, members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and all Wisconsin Counties.

Adopted at a duly called and noticed meeting of the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors on the 26th day of October, 2026.

Lori Schmitt
County Clerk

ATTEST:

County Board Chairperson

Respectfully submitted:

Finance/ Human Resources Committee

Dennis Bork, Chair

Max Weiss

William Bruegger

Brian Michaels

Carol McDonough