

CHIPPEWA VALLEY HEALTH COOPERATIVE OPENS MORGUE FACILITY FOR CHIPPEWA COUNTY

Partnership Restores Essential Services Lost After HSHS Closure Saving Chippewa County Time and Money

CHIPPEWA FALLS, WI - November 12, 2025 – The Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative announced today that it is providing the morgue facilities in its Chippewa Falls Cooperative Hospital facility to Chippewa County, restoring a critical public service that was lost when Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS) closed St. Joseph's Hospital in 2024.

Under the agreement, the morgue in the basement of the reopened Chippewa Falls Cooperative Hospital will serve as the official county morgue, operated and maintained by the Cooperative as part of its mission to serve the community. The Cooperative is providing morgue services to the County at no cost.

When they purchased the former St. Joseph's Hospital, Cooperative board members reached out to Chippewa County to offer the use of the hospital's morgue facilities. The move eliminates storage and transportation costs and restores timely, local access to an essential service.

Partnership With Chippewa County

"This partnership reflects the spirit of the Cooperative," said Robert Krause, Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative board chair. "When HSHS closed, our community lost more than hospital beds, it lost a wide array of vital services that people and government depend on. Our mission is to restore or improve as many of those services as we can, partnering with the community and local organizations and agencies to serve the greater Chippewa Valley region."

The morgue will be operated in cooperation with the Chippewa County Coroner's Office and is equipped to receive, hold and release the deceased for autopsies, investigations and funeral arrangements as needed. The facility was opened effective October 1st.

When HSHS ceased operations last year, the county was left without a local facility to receive and store the deceased. Since then, Chippewa County has contracted with Altoona-based Stokes, Prock & Mundt Funeral Chapel for these services.

“Having a local morgue again means faster response times, lower costs and less travel for families in moments of grief,” said Chippewa County Coroner Ron Patten. “We’re grateful to Stokes, Prock & Mundt for stepping in to fill the gap, and now to the Cooperative for stepping forward and volunteering their facility for the good of the entire county. This partnership brings back an essential service that our community relied on for decades and ensures we can continue to serve our residents with dignity and compassion.”

Krause added that partnerships like this one are central to the Cooperative’s community-first approach.

“We believe healthcare should serve the community, not the other way around,” Krause said. “This is just one way we hope to contribute to the whole region.”

About the Cooperative

The Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative is a community-owned healthcare organization accountable to the people of Chippewa Valley and dedicated to providing accessible, affordable, and high-quality medical services to residents of the Chippewa Valley region. Any resident in the 18-county Chippewa Valley region at least 18 years old can join the Cooperative [here](#).

The Cooperative bought the former St. Joseph’s Hospital in Chippewa Falls to operate while they build a modern hospital strategically located in Lake Hallie. The Cooperative is a Wisconsin Chapter 193 cooperative and a registered 501c3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization. More information at www.chippewavalleyhealthcooperative.org.

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