



ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

ESTABLISHED 1830

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PRESS RELEASE:

JUNE 14, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PORTAGE MANOR CLOSURE

St. Joseph County has spent approximately three years thoroughly researching whether it was possible to save the operations and the mission of Portage Manor. The County employed industry experts to provide guidance on this issue. After a lengthy and exhaustive process, the County has arrived at the following conclusion.

Despite the State of Indiana and the Federal Government providing numerous programs to serve those in need (approximately 40 forms of Medicaid, Medicare, HUD programs, etc), there is a subset of the mentally ill population that is not served by any current program other than the Indiana Residential Care Assistance Program (RCAP). This program helps to fund county homes such as Portage Manor. The RCAP reimbursement rate has not been raised in approximately 15 years. The very low reimbursement rate and other factors have led to the closing of all but 10 county homes (soon to be 9 once Delphi County closes), mainly because the facilities are not financially viable. With only 10 county homes remaining, the communities that operate these facilities have had added pressure to assist with solving a statewide gap in servicing the mentally ill. For instance, when LaPorte County closed its county home, approximately 25 of its residents were relocated to Portage Manor, without any financial assistance being provided by LaPorte County. St. Joseph County now faces the same realities that 83 other counties have already faced, the facilities need major costly repairs, and the program operates at a significant loss. Continuing to operate Portage Manor is not financially viable.

Thus, on February 14, 2023, the St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners voted to transition the residents of Portage Manor to alternative housing. On June 13, 2023, the St. Joseph County Council approved a Resolution Approving the St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners Discontinuance of the County Home. The decision to close Portage Manor comes after years of strategic investigation and collaboration among local stakeholders, mental health professionals, and community members. The St. Joseph County Board of Commissioners have directed the Administrator of Portage Manor to follow the legal guidance provided by the Indiana Department of Health related to the closing of residential care facilities and submit the legally required plan to the State of Indiana providing for a closure date of July 31, 2023. Pursuant to State guidelines, the Portage Manor staff will be working with residents to find appropriate placement with resident choice being the priority and contacting the guardians and POA's of the effected residents in a timely manner.

The Board of Commissioners are continuing to work on finding a best-case scenario to place as many residents as possible in or near by St. Joseph County while keeping as many

residents together as possible. St. Joseph County will continue to work with potential community partners, the Indiana Department of Health, and FSSA in an effort to accomplish this goal through the closure process.

St. Joseph County would like to extend its heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated staff who have worked tirelessly to provide care and support to residents over the years. Their unwavering commitment and dedication will always be remembered and appreciated.