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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Kaul Hosts Policy Summit on Emergency Detention and Mental Health

MADISON, Wis. – Today, Attorney Josh Kaul is hosting the Attorney General’s Summit on Emergency Detention. Nearly 300 law enforcement, health care professionals, legislators, county health services and corporation counsel, mental health advocates, and others convened to discuss Wisconsin’s emergency detention process and the availability of mental health services.

“By reforming our emergency detention process, we can both help Wisconsinites who experience severe mental health crises and improve public safety by reducing the amount of time that law enforcement officers need to spend outside of the communities they serve,” said Attorney General Kaul. “This summit brings together law enforcement officers, medical professionals, mental health advocates, legislators, and others in order to identify solutions.”

This summit focuses on emergency detention, a process outlined under Wisconsin State Statute 51.15. An emergency detention happens when law enforcement takes a person into custody because they are believed to pose a significant risk of harm to self or others. Under this process, the person can remain under an emergency detention at a mental health facility for up to 72 hours. This is a process that requires the collaboration of many entities include law enforcement, emergency and psychiatric medical professionals, county health and human services, county corporation counsel, advocates, public defenders, courts, state-run inpatient psychiatric treatment facilities and others.

Attendees are hearing from mental health advocates about their experience going through an emergency detention, Legislative Reference Bureau, and from the

Wisconsin Department of Health Services on the continuum of broader mental health care in Wisconsin.

Additionally, the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Information and Analysis is presenting new survey results on law enforcement perceptions of emergency detention. [See attached infographic.](#)

Following the presentations, attendees will discuss potential policy reforms in the areas of diversion, respite facilities, law enforcement action during mental health incidents, trauma-informed transport during emergency detentions, and access to psychiatric care in Wisconsin.

The event is also [livestreamed and recorded](#) by WisconsinEye.