



OFFICE OF GUILFORD COUNTY SHERIFF



July 5, 2022

From: Danny H. Rogers, Sheriff of Guilford County

To: Melvin "Skip" Alston, Chairman of the Guilford County BOCC, and
Michael Halford, County Manager

Re: Request to Release Deputies from Further Duties at the Guilford County
Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center ("BHUC")

Gentlemen, I am respectfully requesting your consideration to terminate the Lease Agreement provisions that require the Guilford County Sheriff's Office ("GCSO") to provide sworn Deputies at the Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center ("BHUC") operated by Cone Health, located at 931 Third Street in Greensboro, NC, effective August 1, 2022. Below please find the bases for my request, as well as a recommendation for Guilford County's continued support of BHUC pursuant to the enclosed Lease Agreement.

Supervision: The GCSO currently has six individuals assigned to provide security for BHUC – four deputies are assigned to BHUC full time and they are supervised by a Master Corporal and a Sergeant. Based on competing staffing issues, the GCSO is experiencing difficulty providing experienced supervision to the Deputies assigned to the BHUC.

Specifically, because of critical staffing shortages in the Bailiff's Office, the BHUC Sergeant and Master Corporal were diverted to assist the Bailiffs. The Sergeant is being utilized as a Courtroom Bailiff with no supervisory responsibilities. The Master Corporal is also working in a courtroom each day with no supervisory responsibilities and is only released from the Bailiff's Office whenever the Deputy assigned to BHUC is absent and the position needs to be covered.

This arrangement not only takes away two supervisor positions, but it also leaves the lone Deputy at the BHUC without an immediate supervisor. In the last month the GCSO has had a use of force, vehicle accident, and officer complaint at BHUC. None of these could be investigated or reported by an immediate supervisor as both supervisors were assigned to the Bailiff's Office.

Furthermore, the 1st Lieutenant and Captain who oversee these positions are assigned other duties with the School Resource Officers Division and are heavily involved in the operation of the ABLE-1 aircraft. There are numerous days where no one is available to attend to the supervisory needs of the BHUC positions.

Liability: The BHUC Director informed the GCSO that she would only like sworn officers present to provide a “show of force,” but not to use any force. The Director has instructed us that only Cone Health employees are to touch patients because they have specialized training and she would like to protect the GCSO from any potential liability claims. To assist with her intent, Cone Health Security agreed to provide two security officers per 12-hour shift, yet there have been numerous days where only one security officer is present. The inability of Cone Health Security to consistently keep their positions filled has increased the likelihood of GCSO deputies having to assist with hands-on control of violent and disruptive patients. Although BHUC does not want us involved in touching patients, we cannot allow their staff to be assaulted by combative patients.

Officer Safety: BHUC policy prohibits our Deputies from wearing their firearms inside of the patient areas. This creates an officer safety concern because our Deputies must secure their firearms in a separate part of the facility, leaving them unarmed in the event of an armed attack.

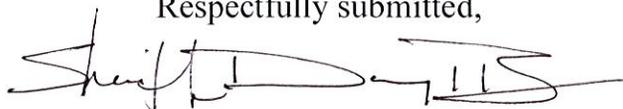
Career Progression, Morale, and Job Satisfaction: The Deputies assigned to BHUC do not serve a genuine law enforcement purpose. Their responsibilities can be compared to those of a sworn security guard. The BHUC Deputies monitor surveillance cameras for most of their 12-hour shift and will become stagnant over time, having little opportunity to use or improve upon the skills they were taught in Basic Law Enforcement Training and field training. This type of work offers little professional job satisfaction. Additionally, if those Deputies are rotated from BHUC, they likely will have fallen behind their sworn colleagues in other areas of the agency, necessitating significant refresher training.

GCSO Support Needed Elsewhere / Proposed Solution: As you are aware, the North State Company Police contract which provides for security at our courthouse entrances expires on July 31, 2022. Thus four additional courthouse positions will need to be filled by the GCSO starting on August 1, 2022. Should we be authorized to remove our presence at BHUC, I intend to utilize those deputies to fill the courthouse entrance billets.

In order to fulfill the security obligations pursuant to the enclosed Lease Agreement, Guilford County is to provide a “sworn officer” for external security at BHUC. The sworn officer does not need to be a GCSO Deputy and could be a Company Police Officer or other sworn position. As North State’s contract is set to expire at the courthouses, they may wish to fill the “sworn officer” role at BHUC, in place of the GCSO Deputies.

I hope to discuss this matter with you further. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheriff D. Rogers', written over a horizontal line.

Danny H. Rogers
Guilford County Sheriff