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News Release

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Winnebago County Sheriff's Office Lowers Hiring Age for Corrections Officers

The Winnebago County Sheriff's Office is pleased to announce a change in its hiring policy for corrections officers, lowering the minimum age requirement from 21 to 18 years old. This decision is aimed at expanding the pool of qualified applicants and addressing ongoing recruitment and retention challenges in the Corrections Division.

The change was proposed by AFSCME Local 473 during regular labor-management meetings focused on recruitment and retention strategies. After careful discussion and collaboration, the Sheriff's Office agreed to move forward with the adjustment.

"This is a common sense step that opens the door for young adults who are ready to start a meaningful and rewarding career in public service," said Sheriff Gary Caruana. "We value the partnership with the Union and appreciate their engagement in helping us find practical solutions to staffing challenges in the jail."

AFSCME Local 473 President Jenny Zammuto-Williams also voiced strong support for the change. "Lowering the hiring age to 18 creates a path for young, motivated individuals to begin their careers earlier, receive proper training, and grow with the department. It's a win-win for the agency and the community we serve."

The Sheriff's Office will begin accepting applications from 18- to 20-year-old candidates immediately. New hires will still be required to complete all state-mandated training and certifications.

For more information on how to apply, visit www.winnebagoheriff.com

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