



January 20, 2022

Ms. Courtney Avery, Administrator  
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board  
525 West Jefferson  
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: #E-056-21/Discontinuation of Services at Javon Bea Hospital-Rockton Avenue/Mercyhealth

Dear Ms. Avery,

The Winnebago County Board of Health strongly opposes the discontinuation of the medical surgical category of service at Javon Bea-Rockton (JBR) located at 2400 North Rockton Avenue, Rockford, IL). While the current inventory of hospital beds in Planning Area B-01 in which JBR is located indicates a surplus of 159 beds, the location of these beds in the planning area needs to be taken in to consideration.

JBR is geographically located on the west side of Rockford. The west side has suffered from economic disinvestment and resultant aging infrastructure. The census tract in which JBR is located and its surrounding census tracts have significantly higher social vulnerability indices (SVI) with significant health disparities and equity concerns. This part of the city of Rockford is home to black and brown communities who have suffered disproportionately the consequences of health inequities. The closure of the beds at JBR places this part of our community at increased risk for negative social determinants of health and poor health outcomes.

In 2015, the Winnebago County Board of Health supported Javon Bea/Mercyhealth in its application to build a new facility located northeast of the city of Rockford with the understanding and commitment from Mercyhealth leadership that services would continue to be provided along with expansion and enhancements to JBR. Inherent in that commitment, was the commitment to the community as employees of JBR. Since 2015, Mercyhealth leadership has demonstrated a pattern of closures and discontinuation of services including Pediatric Intensive Care, Mental Health, Level II Emergency Services, and now Medical – Surgical Services. The current application proposes that JBR function primarily as an outpatient site providing clinical services, diagnostic, and rehabilitation services. The community needs greater access in this area to high quality and high acuity inpatient and outpatient care.

Generations of families in Rockford and Winnebago County supported the growth of the not-for-profit community hospital on Rockford's west side. The community deserves a voice in decisions to discontinue and/or relocate services since JBR continues to hold a tax-exempt status. An essential component in determining whether services are appropriate for a community is that those services will be accessible to the people who need them. Moving services to the far east boarder of the community does not service this purpose.





Winnebago County

# Health Department

Sandra Martell, RN, DNP  
Public Health Administrator

We as the Board respectfully issue an intent to deny.

Sincerely,

Robert McCreath  
President

On behalf of the Winnebago County Board of Health:

Angie Goral, Member – Winnebago County Board  
Ronald Gottschalk, JD  
John Halversen, DDS  
David Helland, DVM  
Luci Hoover  
Patricia Lewis, PhD, RN  
Jennifer Muraski  
James Powers, LCSW  
Gabrielle Torina, Alderman – City of Rockford  
Allen Williams, MD



**Winnebago County Health Department**  
555 North Court Street, Rockford, IL 61103  
(815) 720-4000 • [www.wchd.org](http://www.wchd.org)

