

## COUNTY JAILS HOUSING FEWER FEDERAL PRISONERS

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### **Body**

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The number of **federal** inmates in Wisconsin is dropping as **federal** immigration officials shift their focus from finding illegal immigrants to investigating reports of terrorist activities.

The average number of illegal immigrants detained in Wisconsin, Indiana and Illinois has dropped this year from a high of 486 in March to a low of 397 on May 27, said John Longshore, interim director of the **federal** Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services' Chicago district, which covers the three states.

The number now is around 420.

The detainees are typically held in local **county jails** at **federal** expense while they await trial or deportation, and the drop in arrests means a subsequent drop in the amount of money for which **jails** are reimbursed.

Longshore did not know how many immigration inmates are currently held in the five Wisconsin **jails** with contracts -- Dodge, Kenosha, Ozaukee, Walworth and Waukesha **counties**.

In Ozaukee **County**, the number of immigration detainees has dropped to about 25, compared with about 75 in March, Sheriff Maury Straub said.

That loss means the **county** might not meet its \$1.7 million revenue projection this year for **housing federal** inmates, Straub said.

"The whole focus of investigation has shifted from immigration cases to more time-intensive terrorism investigations" since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, Longshore said.

If **county jails** remain less than full, officials could consider bringing back some of the nearly 2,300 Wisconsin inmates held in Oklahoma and North Dakota **jails**.

But those inmates don't pay as well as their **federal** counterparts.

### **Notes**

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STATE CORRECTIONS

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