

Year-Round Emergency Shelter Management and Operations Plan Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What would be the hours of operation?

A: The facility would be open 24 hours/7days per week/365 days per year.

- The multi-service center would be open from 8am to 8pm
- The shelter common areas would be open from 8am to 10pm
- The shelter sleeping areas would be open 6pm to 9am

Q: What population would be served?

A: Up to 200 shelter clients would be served, at any given time, including chronic and vulnerable homeless people as well as, homeless single men and women. Families with children will also be served, but they will have a separate entrance and location in the facility. The facility will be designed to ensure the safety of all clients. **No sex offenders or felons with open warrants would be served.** Prior to confirmation of a bed reservation, clients will be screened on the Megan's law website and the Orange County Sheriff's Department website to ensure compliance with these rules.

Q. How would clients be screened?

A: Clients would be screened for eligibility through the Coordinated Entry and bed reservation system prior to arrival at the shelter site. Only clients who have been screened and referred for an available bed would be permitted on site. **No person validated on the sex offender registry or felons with open warrants would be allowed to access the property.**

Q: Would sex offenders/felons be allowed?

A: **No. No person validated on the sex offender registry or felons with open warrants would be allowed to access the property.**

Q: How would the Operator be held accountable to the public?

A: Three shelter advisory boards would be formed representing different stakeholders (ie Community Advisory Board, Client Advisory Board, and Service Partner Board). The board compositions will be developed to ensure appropriate representation of stakeholders so all have a voice. The three boards would meet at least quarterly and call special ad hoc meetings as necessary. The public will be allowed to attend these meetings to discuss issues of concern. The County would strictly require the operator to abide by all contract terms and conditions, including the good neighbor policies.

Q: Would there be security on site?

A: Yes. The shelter operator would hire trained and equipped security guards through a contracted third party vendor to ensure the safety of clients and the surrounding neighborhood. Security would be on site at all times and would be stationed both inside and outside the shelter as well as drop off and pick up locations. Security Guards would search clients with metal detector wands and would search client belongings for weapons, alcohol, drugs, and other contraband. The facility would also have interior and exterior cameras and security lighting. The operator would also staff a 24/7 hotline and email.

Q: How would public safety and concerns be addressed?

A: The shelter operator would develop a Good Neighbor Policy that would include communication and coordination with the surrounding neighborhood, businesses, and public as well as the City, County, and service providers. The shelter operator would work closely with local law enforcement agencies on all aspects of the shelter including design, development, services provided, as well as management and operations. The operator would also cooperatively work with local police departments to establish shelter policies and procedures on how and when to contact law enforcement for conflict resolution, theft, trespassing, unruly behaviors, loitering, mental health crises, and emergencies.

Q: How would clients access the program?

A: To minimize neighborhood impact, all clients seeking to access the shelter and services would do so through a designated intake and bed reservation hotline. The year round emergency shelter is a designated entry point for the coordinated entry and would be integrated with the coordinated entry system. The program would utilize a bed reservation system that is based on capacity. **No walk-ins would be permitted.** 5-10% of beds would be held each night to accommodate referrals from local law enforcement agencies with priority to host city police department.

Q: Would the shelter program have rules for admission?

A: Yes. All clients must sign a shelter rules contract. An official ID is required to verify identity and shelter clients would receive a shelter specific ID upon entry.

Q: How would clients get to the shelter and/or multi-service center?

A: The transportation policy requires that all shelter clients access the shelter and services by bus and/or shuttle services. New and returning clients would receive direct transportation to and from the shelter daily. Drop off and pick up locations would be selected by host city/police department and/or in collaboration with neighboring police departments. No drop off or pick up other than the agreed upon locations would be permitted. Drop off and pick up locations are considered an extension of the shelter and any violation of shelter rules such as loitering constitutes a violation of shelter rules and would be strictly enforced. Shelter clients with pre-approved bed reservations who own their own vehicles with current registration and valid insurance would be able to enter and exit the shelter facility at designated times.

Q: What would happen if people leave the program either voluntarily or involuntarily?

A: Clients could leave the program on a voluntary or involuntary basis. If a client leaves the program voluntarily, he/she may rescreen for admission with the Coordinated Entry admission hotline. Clients that do not abide by safety or other shelter rules would be exited from the program. Clients who are involuntarily exited from the shelter may be rescreened for readmission after the time specified by operator staff and would depend on the severity of the infraction. Clients who leave the program voluntarily or involuntarily would be transported to designated pick-up and drop-off locations out of the surrounding area.

Q: How would overflow of clients seeking services or shelter be managed?

A. Access to services would be managed through the Coordinated Entry System. At-Risk or homeless clients would be diverted to other resources prior to shelter entry in coordination with transitional and bridge housing providers and other year round emergency shelter program providers before accessing or being transported to the shelter site. Services for families would be coordinated with the Family Year Round Emergency Shelter Program. The operator may utilize alternate locations for additional beds to accommodate homeless in the event of inclement weather as budget and funding considerations permit. Due to the mandated bed reservation and Coordinated Entry system requirements, Year-Round Emergency Shelter/ Multi-Service Center would not have more clients than available beds.

Q: What policies and activities are included in the Good Neighbor Policy to coordinate and communicate with neighbors?

A: The Good Neighbor Policy would implement an operator led Neighborhood Patrol to monitor a 1-mile radius around the shelter perimeter to collect litter, promote cleanliness, engage with neighbors, enhance safety and cleanliness of the immediate vicinity, prevent and control issues of loitering, unauthorized parking of client vehicles, abandoned property, shopping carts, and other blight. Operator staff would maintain a log of weekly patrols and collaborate with law enforcement as appropriate.

Q: What policies and activities are included in the Good Neighbor Policy to support local police and fire departments?

A: The shelter operator would act as self-sufficiently as possible to minimize the impact on police and fire departments. The shelter operator would station security officers both on-site and at bus/shuttle locations and may provide on-site medical facilities to respond to minor non-emergency medical needs of clients. If desired, by law enforcement, an on-site police substation would be available. In addition, designated beds would be reserved each night for law enforcement referrals. An array of services and support that would be beneficial to local law enforcement would be provided by the shelter operator including the neighborhood patrol, training opportunities on mental illness, homeless sensitivity or other topics of interest to supplement existing departmental trainings, and direct referral access to the Coordinated Entry System to assist law enforcement in connecting homeless individuals to available shelter and housing resources.

Q: How was the Shelter Management and Operations Plan developed?

A: The Shelter Management and Operations Plan was developed with feedback from local law enforcement, industry experts such as non-profit homeless housing and services providers and the County.

Q: How would the Coordinated Entry System work?

A: Coordinated Entry is a national best practice that utilizes a centralized system to facilitate connection of homeless individuals and families to available shelter and housing resources. Coordinated Entry utilizes a survey to assess homeless individuals for eligibility for shelter/housing/services and prioritizes highest need/highest barrier homeless based on vulnerability and severity of service needs. Coordinated Entry would help ensure that homeless are directed to the shelter/housing/services to best meet their needs and only referring individuals to Year-Round Emergency Shelter based on eligibility, and if there are no other more appropriate and available housing resources.

Q: What types of services would be provided?

A: Examples of services that may be provided include but are not limited to health care (lab tests, health/disease screenings, medication support, chronic disease management), mental health care (assessment, diagnosis, treatment, medication management, substance abuse services), employment and housing navigation services (housing plan creation, linkage to housing providers, assistance in obtaining housing documentation and resources, linkage to employment resources, vocational counseling, job placement support), basic needs and supportive services (laundry, food, transportation assistance, individual or group counseling, life skills training), and veterans services (benefits assistance, linkage to VA medical support, housing and employment, counseling, peer support services).

Q: Would there be target goals and expected outcomes for the program and clients?

A: Target goals and expected outcomes of clients accessing services at the multi-service center and participating in shelter services are rapid transition to housing, reduction in length of time homeless, successful resolution of housing/homeless crises, and reduction in returns to homelessness.

Q: How many staff members would be on site?

A: The shelter program would be staffed to provide the safest and most dignified environment for all clients. It is recommended that a total of 37 Full-Time and Part-Time employees staff the shelter. Staff schedules would be structured to optimize the safety of staff, volunteers, and clients.

Examples of positions include but are not limited to: Program Director, Program Manager, Emergency Services Site Leader, Emergency Services Program Logistics Support Coordinator/Multi-Service Center Concierge, Employment and Housing Navigator, Program Intake Coordinator, Program Food Coordinator, Program Kitchen Staff/Cook, Emergency Services Overnight Coordinator, and Driver.

Q: Could members of the public volunteer at the shelter or multi-service center?

A: Yes. Volunteers can assist with intake to register and sign in clients, distribute donations and hygiene items, organize and set up donations of clothing, help direct lines to donations and food, serve meals and snacks, organize play hour and other activities for children and families and other service opportunities as assigned by operator. Policies for the selection, screening, and background checks of volunteers would be established by the operator. Volunteers would receive an orientation and training and identifiable lines of authority.