



Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness
Temporary Emergency Shelter
Written Standards

Philosophy

Temporary Emergency Shelter is a critical intervention for people experiencing homelessness who want and need shelter as they work to secure permanent housing. An effective Homeless Response System provides immediate access to low-barrier shelter to anyone experiencing homelessness who needs and wants it. Implementing a low-barrier shelter model across the NWCEH ensures that unsheltered homelessness is rare in our region, and all services provided within temporary emergency shelters are focused on securing permanent housing solutions outside of shelter for all shelter stayers. Emergency Shelters must support a flow from housing crisis to housing stability by identifying and assisting households facing crises with rapid and effective permanent housing connections.

Eligibility

People experiencing homelessness who need temporary emergency shelter must meet the following definition of homelessness to qualify for a shelter bed: eligible shelter stayers must meet the category 1 or 4 “homeless” definition found at 24 CFR 576.232.

Minimum Standards

- Participation in Coordinated Entry (see participation in Coordinated Entry section below)
- Must enter data in to HMIS or a comparable database for Victim Service provider agencies.
- Follow HUD requirements under 24 CFR 576.400-e related to temporary emergency shelters and essential services.
- Temporary Emergency Shelters should follow LOW BARRIER guidelines and practices for households to access and enter shelter. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Emergency Shelters must ensure access and enrollment to shelter and services follow local and federal nondiscrimination policies such as the Equal Access Rule.
 - Emergency Shelters must allow access and place all persons based on self-identification of gender. Single-gender shelters must not require proof of gender for an individual to enter shelter.
 - Emergency Shelters must be free of charge. Shelters must not require participants to pay a fee to enter the shelter or utilize its services.
 - Emergency Shelters must not create barriers to shelter such as requiring drug testing and/or sobriety, require income, criminal history restrictions, require medication adherence, or mandate participation in mental health treatment.
 - Emergency Shelters reserved for families must not require that families separate to enter shelter and must not deny admission to families based upon the composition of the family in accordance with Section 404 of the McKinney-Vento Act as amended by the Hearth Act.
- Temporary Emergency Shelters must provide services and or access to the following services:
 - Crisis Intervention and Safety Planning.
 - Housing referrals and linkages to Permanent Housing location placement services
- Emergency Shelter programs must inform participants of all their rights, responsibilities, and expectations prior to intake AND these rights, responsibilities, and expectations, and other site-specific rules and policies impacting clients.
 - Information must be provided in accordance with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) guidance and
 - Must be visibly and publicly posted for all persons to reference at any time.

Participation in Coordinated Entry

Federally and State funded temporary emergency shelters must participate in the NWCEH Coordinated Entry System by following the process listed below:

1. Accept shelter referrals from the CE Call Center.
2. Prioritize shelter beds based on acuity and chronicity.
3. Participate in the NWCEH Shelter Diversion and Rapid-Exit program.
4. Coordinate with the local HARA to provide easy access to short-term rental assistance programs through the MSHDA ESG program to rapidly exit shelter stayers who are eligible for ESG and have secured permanent housing.
5. Coordinated with the local HARA to ensure all shelter stayers are placed on the MSHDA HCV with Homeless Preference waiting list.

**It is highly recommended that ALL temporary emergency shelters in the NWCEH area follow these same guidelines regardless of funding.

Time Frame

Temporary Emergency Shelter is intended for short-term (days or months) stays. Time limits are left to the discretion of the individual shelters but must be clearly communicated to all clients upon entry into the shelter.

Funding

Temporary Emergency Shelters within the NWCEH must adhere to and follow all guidelines provided by the state or federal funder of the shelter program (HUD, MSHDA, M-DHHS, Salvation Army).

Service Standards

In accordance with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), Temporary Emergency Shelters are expected to strive for continuous improved in specific areas of focus to strengthen the implantation and impact of emergency shelter programs. The following guidance from USICH must be embedded within the culture and operating procedures of all participating shelters across the NWCEH:

- [USICH Emergency Shelter Standards](#)

Outcomes of Temporary Emergency Shelters

Rate of exits to permanent housing