



FY 2024

WINTER SHELTER PLAN

v1 10/2023

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SUMMARY

The Mayor's Office of Homeless Services (MOHS) developed the FY23 Winter Plan to coordinate efforts between the City of Baltimore and providers within the Continuum of Care (CoC) to support hypothermia shelters and vital, life-saving services for Baltimore residents experiencing homelessness during the winter season. The plan covers the period beginning November 1, 2023 and ending on April 1, 2024. MOHS may, because of inclement weather (as defined in this document), activate the Winter Plan prior to October 15th or beyond April 1st. This document outlines the winter plan to activate additional shelter and services to serve individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness during inclement winter weather. MOHS and other funded shelter providers will expand sheltering capacity when temperatures are forecast to reach 32°F or below (with wind chill).

- MOHS will shelter in place at all emergency and winter shelter sites when temperatures are forecast to reach 20°F or below.

The City will encourage private homeless shelters to open for extended hours to allow clients to remain indoors on Code Blue Extreme Cold Alert days.

MOHS worked with the City's Department of General Services (DGS) to ensure that city funded shelters follow the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidance for Congregate Settings in response to COVID-19. Safety measures and protocols will comply with Baltimore City Health Department's (BCHD) guidance and recommendations.

Last winter shelter season (2022-2023) included 79 winter shelter declarations and five (5) Code Blue days. There were 18 hypothermia (cold-related) deaths in Baltimore City last winter, as reported by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

ACTIVATION

Winter Shelter Activation

A Winter Shelter Declaration is made when the temperature is forecasted to reach 32°F or below, inclusive of wind chill. MOHS will serve as the FY24 Winter Plan lead, assuming responsibility for daily declarations and communications and coordination with MOHS staff, nonprofit shelter providers, 211, 311, and the coordination of bed utilization for participating shelter providers. MOHS will communicate this declaration via email to city government agencies, hospitals, CoC membership, and the general public via social media and other channels. Partnering shelter providers will increase their capacity to ensure any homeless individual or family seeking shelter is accommodated.

Code Blue Extreme Cold Activation

The Code Blue Extreme Cold (Code Blue) program is a multi-agency effort to reduce hypothermia-related deaths during winter months by protecting the City's homeless neighbors. The Code Blue season is November 15, 2023 through March 15, 2024.

The Health Commissioner declares a Code Blue day based on the following criteria. When appropriate, the declaration will specify the risk period as "all day" or "night only" based on forecast temperatures:

- Temperatures, including wind chill, are expected to be 13°F or below. This threshold can be reached by having a temperature of 20°F or less with five (5) mph sustained winds or a temperature of 25°F or less with sustained winds.
- Other conditions (e.g., strong winds, forecast precipitation for more than two hours, extended period of cold, sudden cold after a warm period) deemed by the Health Commissioner to be severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of vulnerable Baltimore citizens.

If possible, the decision to declare a Code Blue Extreme Cold Alert will be made by 4:00 p.m. on the business day before or by 4:00 p.m. on the Friday before the weekend in which extreme cold weather is forecast. BCHD will send out a press release, announcing Code Blue Extreme Cold Alert status. BCHD will also notify the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and other members of the Code Blue Extreme Cold Planning Committee.

EMERGENCY SHELTER

The City of Baltimore has a number of shelter resources for homeless individuals and families. The FY24 Winter Plan focuses on those shelters that received funding through MOHS.

Transportation

All single adults and couples seeking shelter during the Winter Shelter period should report to any of the locations listed below where they will be provided with transportation to available Winter Shelter locations, Monday-Sunday.

| | |
|--|---|
| My Sister’s Place 17 W. Franklin Street | Health Care for the Homeless 421 Fallsway |
| Beans & Bread 402 S. Bond Street | *Holiday Inn Express 221 N. Gay Street |
| *Sleep Inn 301 Fallsway | *MCVET 301 N. High Street |

*Winter Shelter Sites

For families, adults and couples seeking shelter, please contact the Baltimore City Shelter Hotline at **443-984-9540** for referrals and transportation assistance on all winter shelter declaration days. Families will be picked up from the place where they are calling for help.

For afterhours requests, community partners and shelter seekers can contact the Winter Shelter Hotline at **410-305-7132** between the hours of **9:00 pm - 12 midnight** on declaration days.

MOHS Winter Shelter Emergency Shelter Sites

| Name of Shelter | Provider | Populations Served | Winter Shelter Capacity | Location | Hours of Operation |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Maryland Center for veterans Education and Training (MCVET) | MCVET | Single Adult Men | 60 | 301 N. High Street | 4pm-9am: 7 days a week upon Winter Shelter Declaration |
| Sleep Inn | MOHS | Single Adult Men, Women, and Couples | 60 | 301 Fallsway | 4pm-9am: 7 days a week upon Winter Shelter Declaration |
| Holiday Inn Express | MOHS | Families | 15 | 221 N. Gay Street | 4pm-9am: 7 days a week upon Winter Shelter Declaration |

MOHS Emergency Shelters *(Note: These are not Winter Shelter sites and can only be accessed via the Hotline.)*

| Name of Shelter | Provider | Populations Served | Emergency Shelter Capacity | Location | Hours of Operation |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Holiday Inn Express | TIME, Organization, Inc. | Single Adult Men | 119 | 1701 Russell Street | 24/7 |
| Weinberg Housing and Resource Center (WHRC) | Catholic Charities | Single Adult Men and Women | 84 M 64 W 6 Convalescent Beds | 620 Fallsway | 24/7 |
| Fairfield Inn | TIME, Organization, Inc. | Single Adult Women | 145 | 101 S. President Street | 24/7 |

Food

Food services to include hot beverages for individuals are available at each shelter location. Meal services for declarations are dinner; breakfast and lunch are provided if we have shelter in place (Code Blue days).

Case Management

Individuals placed in winter shelter beds seeking case management services will be provided information for drop-in centers to assist them with their identified needs. Additionally, clients will be provided hygiene kits.

Public Health Services

The Baltimore City Health Department will provide onsite vaccine clinics on designated declaration days.

Warming Sites

All MOHS funded drop in centers will be used as warming sites this season.

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| My Sister's Place 17 W. Franklin Street | Beans & Bread 402 S. Bond Street |
|--|-------------------------------------|

SERVICE COORDINATION

Street Outreach Services

In addition to MOHS Outreach staff, two other organizations (People Encouraging People (PEP) and Downtown Partnership of Baltimore (DPOB) are contracted to provide targeted street outreach services across Baltimore throughout the year.

The outreach agencies provide a vital function in our homeless services system, working to engage vulnerable individuals and connect them to services, including shelter and housing resources. Outreach teams provide an array of direct services, including routine safety checks and the provision of essential survival items (e.g., food, water, blankets, hats, gloves, socks, thermal underwear) for clients that are not yet willing or able to come into shelter, connection to shelter and support services for clients willing and able to accept assistance, and crisis evaluation to determine when additional measures (e.g., involuntary evaluation) are needed to protect individuals from cold weather injury.

Requests for outreach services can be made by emailing homelessoutreach@baltimorecity.gov. A member of the appropriate outreach team will be dispatched to engage individuals to aid them in connecting to available city services.

Behavioral Health Services

Persons in need of behavioral health services are encouraged to call the Crisis, Information, & Referral Line at 410-433-5175 (available 24/7, 365 days a year). As the local behavioral health authority, Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) funds a range of services, such as outreach and crisis

response, that work closely with people who are vulnerable to severe weather. BHSB provides consultation and training on issues related to the public behavioral health system. More info at <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org>

Health and Sobering Services

Persons in need of non-emergency medical care or treatment who can wait until the clinics open the next day will be referred to Health Care for the Homeless, 421 Fallsway. Call 911 for persons in need of emergency health care and/or immediate transport to a hospital. Sobering services and linkage to treatment for substance use disorders are available through the Maryland Crisis Stabilization Center, Tuerk House, 730 Ashburton St., Baltimore, Md, 410-233-0684.

THE EQUAL ACCESS RULE

The Equal Access Rule requires equal access to HUD programs without regard to a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. MOHS requires all grantees, regardless of funding source, to comply with these regulations.

Shelter and housing programs serving families with children and receiving funding through MOHS may not exclude children from programs on the basis of age or gender.

[HUD Guide for Equal Access for Transgender People](#)