



FY2021 Winter Plan

Mayor's Office of Homeless Services



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Summary

The Mayor's Office of Homeless Services (MOHS) has developed the FY21 Winter Plan to aid in the coordination of efforts between the City of Baltimore and providers within the Continuum of Care (CoC) to provide hypothermia shelter, other protection and vital, life-saving services for Baltimore residents experiencing an episode of homelessness during the winter season.

The purpose of this document is to detail the specific plan and protocols to activate additional shelter and services to serve individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness during inclement winter weather. The City's partnership with CoC providers will expand sheltering capacity when temperatures are forecasted to reach 32°F or below (with wind chill). The FY21 Winter Plan covers the period beginning October 15, 2020 and ending on April 1, 2021. MOHS may, as a result of inclement weather (as defined in this document), utilize its discretion to activate the Winter Plan prior to October 15th or beyond April 1st. City funded emergency homeless shelters will expand their shelter capacity and **shelter in place** during the winter season when the Health Department declares a "Code Blue Extreme Cold Alert". 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.

Our office has worked with the City's Department of General Services to ensure that our city funded shelters are in compliance with CDC Guidance for Congregate Settings in response to COVID-19. Safety measures and protocols will be in place in compliance with MOHS collaborative efforts with the Baltimore City Health Department's guidance and recommendations.

Last winter shelter season included 58 bed nights and 9 days of sheltering in place. There were 10 hypothermia (cold-related) deaths in Baltimore City for last winter 2019-2020 season that were reported by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Winter Shelter Activation

A Winter Shelter Declaration is made when the temperature is 32 degrees or below, inclusive of wind chill. The Mayor's Office of Homeless Services will serve as the FY21 Winter Plan lead, assuming responsibility for daily declarations and communications with MOHS, nonprofit providers, 211 and 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 program is a multi-agency effort to reduce hypothermia-related deaths during winter months by protecting the City's homeless neighbors. The Code Blue Extreme Cold season is from November 15th to March 15th.

The Health Commissioner declares a Code Blue Extreme Cold day based on the following criteria. When appropriate, the declaration will specify the risk period as "all day" or "night only" based on forecasted 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 5 mph sustained winds or a temperature of 25°F or less with sustained winds.
- Other conditions (e.g., strong winds, forecasted 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 previous business day and by 4:00 p.m. on Friday before the weekend in which extreme cold weather is forecasted. The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) will send out a press release announcing Code Blue Extreme Cold Alert status. BCHD will also notify the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management (MOEM) 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 FY21 Winter Plan focuses on those shelters that received funding from the city.

Shelter Access

The following locations will serve as transportation pick-up and drop off locations for single adults seeking shelter Monday-Friday:

Beans & Bread
402 S. Bond Street

Pinderhughes School (**Temporarily housed at the Fairfield Inn, 101 S. President**)
1200 N. Fremont Ave

My Sister's Place
17 W. Franklin Street

Greenspring School
4701 Greenspring Avenue

Health Care for the Homeless
421 Fallsway

McVets
301 N. High Street

EMERGENCY WINTER SHELTER TRANSPORTATION

All single adults seeking shelter should report to any of the locations listed above where they will be provided with transportation services to available shelter placements. The transportation service will pick up clients from the designated locations on the emergency shelter transportation routes.

For families seeking shelter please contact MOHS at **443-984-9540** for referrals and transportation to the Single Adults and Families Shelter by MOHS Emergency Shelter Transportation Service. Families will be picked up from the location of the incoming referral.

Name of Shelter	Provider	Populations Served	Winter Shelter Capacity	Original Capacity	Hours of Operation
Greenspring Men's Shelter	SVDP	Single Men	29 m	124	24/7
Weinberg Housing Resource Center (WHRC)	Catholic Charities	Single Adults	15m/15w	160	24/7
Pinderhughes Women's Shelter	TIME, Organization, Inc.	Single Women	*40 w	102	24/7
Maryland Center for veterans Education and Training	McVets	Single Men	60 m	0	7pm-7am: 7 days a week upon Winter Shelter Declaration

* MOHS anticipates these beds being available in late December*

Food

Food services for individuals are available at each shelter location.

Case Management

Individuals placed in winter shelter will be offered case management services in an effort to connect those willing to engage with services based upon their identified need.

Warming Sites

Due to COVID-19 unfortunately CAP Centers are currently closed to the public.

SERVICE COORDINATION

Street Outreach Services

The City of Baltimore contracts with a number of agencies to provide outreach services throughout the year.

The outreach agencies provide a vital function in our homeless services system, working to engage vulnerable individuals and connect them to shelter and housing resources. Through this engagement process, the teams provide an array of 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 outreach team will be dispatched to engage homeless households in an effort to aid them in connecting to available city services.

During the winter shelter season all city-funded outreach teams are assigned to all Baltimore City Hospitals for routine rounds to provide transportation assistance for homeless clients to access our shelter systems.

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 Services and Sobering Services

Persons in need of non-emergency medical care or treatment who are able to 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.