

Due to the current community spread of COVID-19, local facilities that are normally available to prevent death from exposure for people experiencing homelessness are now more limited. Houses of worship, recreation centers, and similar facilities heavily dependent on volunteers may not be options this upcoming winter season. The framework below provides a graduated approach to sheltering from life-threatening temperatures and regular seasonal weather. Coordination with local public health and emergency management partners is essential in design, resource investment, and staffing considerations.

FACILITIES/SPACES TO CONSIDER		
Good Approach Temporary or Converted Spaces	Better Approach Congregate or Semi- Congregate Shelter Spaces	Best Practice Approach Private Individual Rooms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily repurposed public spaces such as municipal service buildings, libraries, and recreation centers Community-based private spaces such as faith-based sanctuaries or basements Pop-up structures such as military tents that can serve ten or more people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated shelters such as Crisis Beds Medical Respite sites Single Room Occupancy (with shared bathrooms and eating areas) Repurposed residential facilities not traditionally used for sheltering households experiencing homelessness Safe Havens and private or semi-private spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-congregate shelters (NCS) such as hotels, motels, and dorm rooms with individual bathrooms Isolation and quarantine spaces (I/Q) that offer separation for people who are sick or exposed to COVID-19
ATTRIBUTES OF THE SPACE		
Good Approach	Better Approach	Best Practice Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects participants from inclement weather Maintains the CDC social distancing requirements A cleaning regimen is in place to reduce the spread of the disease Participants are provided with a safe place to sleep and rest Portable heating and cooling units are present The primary focus is preventing death from life-threatening weather conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects participants from inclement weather Maintains CDC social distancing requirements A cleaning regimen is in place to reduce the spread of the disease Participants are provided with a safe place to sleep, rest, and eat Space is heated or cooled as appropriate Overnight, daytime, or 24-hour access Provides access to sanitary, private, and operational toilets and handwashing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual bedroom (walls on all sides, door) Maintains CDC social distancing requirements by offering private spaces for each household A cleaning regimen is in place to reduce the spread of the disease Meal service/preparation can be congregate or within the room when possible Units are heated or cooled as appropriate Individual bathrooms

PROGRAMMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

Good Approach	Better Approach	Best Practice Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic needs met onsite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management and basic needs are met onsite • Options available for enrollment into other housing programs when inclement weather subsides • Connections between people experiencing homelessness and outside community agencies are prioritized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management and basic needs are met onsite • Options available for enrollment into other housing programs when inclement weather subsides • Assistance with application fees, rental arrearage, and overcoming other barriers to moving into permanent housing

COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS

Good Approach	Better Approach	Best Practice Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face masks are worn by everyone over the age of two • Incorporates social distancing requirements in program design • Transportation is available to access testing and other healthcare needs • Referrals to testing are made when/if people experiencing homelessness have possibly been exposed to COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face masks are worn by everyone over the age of two • Incorporates social distancing requirements in program design • Transportation is available to access testing and other healthcare needs • Referrals to testing are made when/if people experiencing homelessness have possibly been exposed to COVID-19 • Screening for potential COVID-19 exposure occurs regularly • Public health partnerships exist and are activated when necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face masks are worn by everyone over the age of two • Incorporates social distancing requirements in program design • Testing for COVID-19 is accessible with protocol for notifying people experiencing homelessness of test results • Screening for potential COVID-19 exposure occurs at the front door of NCS • Public health partnerships are present onsite or through telehealth healthcare services • People experiencing homelessness are prioritized for access to NCS or I/Q based on high risk for COVID-19 status per CDC guidelines

Funding Considerations

Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program funding is available to cover eligible essential services and shelter operations costs for emergency shelters and temporary emergency shelters. Generally, if a structure can meet habitability standards and environmental review requirements (see 24 C.F.R. § 576.403(b) and 24 C.F.R. Part 58) then it can be considered an emergency shelter for purposes of using ESG or ESG-CV funding. If unable to meet ESG habitability requirements, a structure or portion of a structure may be eligible for ESG or ESG-CV funding if the criteria listed below are met.

As a reminder, emergency shelters and temporary emergency shelters funded with ESG or ESG-CV funding used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 must comply with nondiscrimination and applicable accessibility requirements. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act prohibits providers from requiring program participants to receive treatment or perform any other prerequisite activities as a condition of receiving shelter or other services. Emergency shelters and temporary emergency shelters funded with ESG or ESG-CV cannot prohibit program participants from leaving. Re-entry may be limited based on infection control and safety measures; however, prerequisites—such as submitting to coronavirus testing—are not permitted.

Using ESG Program Funds for Temporary Emergency Shelter

- The structure or portion of a structure is used for a limited time because of a crisis (natural disaster or public health emergency) to provide shelter to individuals and families displaced from their normal place or residence, shelter, or unsheltered locations;

- A local public health official determines that temporary emergency shelter is necessary for the community’s coronavirus response; and
- The structure or portion of a structure is in use for the period of time needed for coronavirus response, but no later than January 31, 2022 unless the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants an exception.

In general, a temporary emergency shelter must be able to meet a person’s basic needs, including:

- Protection from inclement weather that provides cover on all sides and overhead;
- Access to sanitary facilities for hygiene and toileting; and
- Space to sleep and rest, which includes sleeping accommodations (e.g., mat, cot, bed, etc.) for structures that provide overnight shelter.

Eligible Temporary Emergency Shelter?		
Safe parking lots	NO	May be eligible under ESG Street Outreach
Camping tents	NO	May be eligible under ESG Street Outreach
Open courtyard	NO	
Non-congregate sheltering program operated under the Stafford Act	NO	
Shelter of last resort operated by the Red Cross	NO	
Tiny homes	YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In use for a limited time ✓ Determined necessary for coronavirus response by a local public health official ✓ Used to specifically respond to a natural disaster, public health emergency, or other crisis ✓ Provides protection from inclement weather (cover on all sides and overhead) ✓ Provides access to sanitary facilities for hygiene and toileting ✓ Provides space to sleep and rest
Storage sheds	YES	
Warming centers	YES	
Converted buses or train cars	YES	