

# Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Homeless Services Committee: Shelter Capacity, Policy, and Practice in the Region

## Introduction

This document is designed to provide a foundation for discussion regarding how the jurisdictions that comprise Metropolitan Washington can better collaborate around the provision of shelter, supportive housing, and services for the most vulnerable members of our community.

Included in this document are profiles for all jurisdictions responding to the request for information, including:

- City of Alexandria, VA (page 3)
- Arlington County, VA (page 6)
- District of Columbia (page 9)
- Fairfax County, VA (page 14)
- Frederick City and County, MD (page 18)
- Loudoun County, VA (page 20)
- Montgomery County, MD (page 23)
- Prince George's County, MD (page 26)

The profiles attempt to lay out a common set of facts for each community, including information about existing shelter capacity, the community's ability to accommodate increased seasonal capacity, tools and protocols for sharing information about bed availability, transportation assistance to help residents access available resources, residency policies, and policies for allocation of permanent housing resources. Information about the methodology and data sources used is provided in the Appendix.

While we typically look at Point in Time (PIT) count results to get an estimate of the number of people experiencing homelessness in a community on a given night, PIT data have some limitations in that people are only counted if they are known to the system. If bed capacity is limited, then it becomes more difficult to ascertain the true level of need.

Accordingly, for this project, we used a different methodology to compare need across communities in the region. As an equalizing factor, we looked at the poverty rate in each community to get an estimate of the total number of people in the jurisdiction living below the poverty line. We used this number as a proxy for the number of people in the community at risk of homelessness. Then, we looked at the number of year round short-term housing beds<sup>1</sup> available per 100 people living below the poverty line. (See Table 1 below.)

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<sup>1</sup> Short-term housing includes emergency shelter, safe haven, and transitional housing beds.

City of Alexandria	1.31 beds
Arlington County	1.18 beds
District of Columbia	5.73 beds
Fairfax County	1.10 beds
Frederick County	1.62 beds
Loudoun County	.67 beds
Montgomery County	.70 beds
Prince George's County	.46 beds
Prince William County	N/A

When examined in this way, there is widely varying capacity across the region and while each community brings to the table a different set of opportunities, resources, and constraints, the hope is that we may be able to consider how we further collaborate to use our collective resources more effectively to make sure all members of our community have a safe place to call home. Listed below are some examples of how our systems are already operationally aligned:

- Five out of eight responding jurisdictions operate a hotline which helps direct individuals and families in need to available resources.
- Four out of eight responding jurisdictions provide some sort of transportation assistance to help clients get to shelter.
- Three out of eight responding jurisdictions track turnaways, making it easier to get an accurate sense of the need of our system as a whole.
- Three out of eight responding jurisdictions offer low-barrier shelter.

**Key Terms:**

- **By-Name List:** a real-time list of people identified as experiencing homelessness in a city/area/jurisdiction.
- **Continuum of Care (CoC):** a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals.
- **Hypothermia Season:** generally between November and March – although time frames may differ across jurisdictions. Hypothermia season is the time of the year when risks associated with exposure to severely cold weather are highest.
- **Low-Barrier Shelter (LBS):** shelter providing immediate access to persons experiencing a housing crisis without requirements (e.g., identification, documentation, sobriety, engagement in treatment, etc.).

- **Overflow Shelter:** additional shelter bed capacity reserved for when shelter programs are at capacity and can no longer serve new individuals seeking shelter services. Overflow differs from Winter Shelter in that it is offered year-round.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):** an intervention that combines affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services to address the needs of chronically homeless people. This type of housing is permanent in that there is no time limit for how long and individual/family may utilize housing assistance.
- **Point in Time Count (PIT):** is a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuums of Care conduct an annual count of homeless persons who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night.
- **Rapid Re-housing (RRH):** an intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. Supportive services (e.g. financial support, case management, job training) are offered for a limited time.
- **Safe Haven:** a form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who come primarily from the streets and have been unable or unwilling to participate in housing or supportive services.
- **Transitional Housing (TH):** a temporary housing placement (typically between 18-24 months) situated between shelter and permanent support housing aimed at preparing people for more permanent housing during their stay. Transitional housing often offers supportive services such as case management and life skills classes.
- **Winter Shelter:** additional shelter locations and/or shelter beds added during the Hypothermia Season. Amount of additional locations/beds differs across jurisdictions and tends to fluctuate year to year as need increases/decreases.

## City of Alexandria, VA

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

Total Population	160,035
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	9.8% (15,683 people)
Total Number of Year Round Temporary Housing Beds	205
Number of Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	1.31
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	226
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	84
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	142

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

The City of Alexandria has a total of three homeless shelters, all of which are accessible by either metro rail or bus. All three shelters are co-ed with the exception of the domestic violence shelter which uses motel/hotel stays for men seeking services. Currently there are no youth-specific shelters in the City of Alexandria; Transition aged youth, ages 18-24, are served through the shelters serving single adults and families and unaccompanied minors are redirected to Child Protective Services (CPS) for care coordination.

Shelter composition in the City of Alexandria includes the following:

- Single adults and families (2 shelters);
- Domestic Violence Survivors (one shelter);

During the winter/hypothermia season a winter shelter is brought online which provides an extra 50 beds to single adults. During this time, the city of Alexandria sees the utilization rates of their year-round shelter drop from 75% to about 50% for single adults. This change is believed to be caused by individuals choosing to reside in the winter shelter instead of the year-round shelter as winter shelter has lower barriers than year-round emergency shelter. Many clients prefer to have a safe place to sleep nightly, without the additional expectations required to have bed space maintained in the year round shelter.

Comment [HC1]: Need dates.

Comment [S2]: Will ask for City of Alexandria to provide this during their edits and review.

Year Round Beds: Men	101 beds for men and women as shelters are co-ed
Year Round Beds: Women	
Year Round Beds: Youth	0
Year Round Beds: Families	110 beds
Year Round Units/Beds: Adult Couples	0
Low Barrier Shelter Offered?	No
Additional Beds During Winter?	Yes – 50 beds for single adults
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	75% (families) 75% (singles)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	No
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	No
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	Yes (from HSAC to shelter)
Utilize a By-Name List?	Yes (3 separate lists for those in shelter, those chronically homeless, and veterans)

In general, outside of hypothermia season, there is no overflow shelter. However, those seeking services may access an emergency overnight, one night only, stay. These emergency overnights are offered once a year to any household until they are able to be screened by the Homeless Services Assessment Center (HSAC) – the City of Alexandria’s coordinated entry point – on the following business day. The HSAC is open Monday to Wednesday and Friday from 8am to 5pm, and Thursday from 1-5pm.

All those seeking homeless services in the City of Alexandria must go through the HSAC. Single adults may walk-in to the HSAC during business hours but families must schedule an appointment. Generally the family appointments are scheduled for the next available slot. This could be the same day, next day, or later in the week. If individuals or families need to access emergency shelter outside of the HSAC business hours then they may access the shelter directly for their annual emergency overnight stay (mentioned above).

Once screened at the HSAC, an individual or family will receive a shelter referral if space is available. Referrals to shelter are based upon bed space being available. If there is an opening the same day as a screening, the household is referred. Sex offenders and those with a history of arson are not allowed access to shelter services and – along with those who are turned away due to capacity constraints – receive a handbook of resources which may be able to assist them. Due to the small size of the City of Alexandria, this handbook may include resources of surrounding counties and these turnaways are not currently tracked.

Substance use may be a barrier for shelter access if the use is habitual and viewed as disruptive of shelter services. Individuals who are using substances are often tested via urinalysis and are offered substance use/detox services if test results are positive. While individuals are not typically banned from

shelter services for substance use it may occur if, as mentioned above, the behavior is reoccurring, disruptive, or considered a safety risk.

Other behaviors which may result in a ban are leaving your shelter bed unclaimed, violence, destruction of property, or possession of a weapon on shelter property. Leaving your shelter bed unclaimed may result in a 30-day waiting period being issued while the other behaviors listed may result in a yearlong ban. All bans and waiting periods can be appealed and all bans are system-wide, meaning that once a ban is issued it is active across the entire City of Alexandria's homeless services system.

### **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

The City of Alexandria has a policy-based requirement which states that the individual or family seeking services must be a resident. Those who are seeking services from outside of the jurisdiction are typically redirected back to their original jurisdiction. Transportation to, and resource and contact information for, their original jurisdiction may be provided if needed. The annual emergency overnight stay is still an option for those who are not Alexandria residents.

Individuals and families can prove their residency by providing: an eviction/lease document, a letter from a person living in the City of Alexandria who the person/family was living with, benefits information linked to the city, documented connection with Alexandria services such as a Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) worker, or a receipt of mandated court services in the City of Alexandria.

### **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

The HSAC often facilitates housing placements in the City of Alexandria. Individuals and families are prioritized via the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) Housing Prioritization Tool. HSAC completes the NAEH assessment. Several times a month, the HMIS team pulls the assessment results and places households on the by-name list for the most appropriate type of housing identified by the assessment. The appropriate provider is notified. The by-name list is then used to prioritize households for housing options and supports with the CoC. Some types of housing, such as Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Transitional Housing (TH), often do not have any availability. One reason for their lack of availability is that PSH units are not time-limited and given the lack of available affordable housing options in the metropolitan Washington region, turnover rates for these units are low. Households prioritized for those programs are assisted with identifying and executing other housing options with the support of shelter staff.

While the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Tool (VI-SPDAT) is sometimes used by outreach workers, the VI-SPDAT is being phased out in favor of the NAEH assessment tool.

The City of Alexandria has three by-name lists which assist with tracking who is eligible for housing placement. There is currently a by-name list for those in shelter (used to prioritize Rapid Re-housing placement), a by-name list for those who are chronically homeless (used to prioritize Permanent

Supportive Housing placement), and one for veterans (used to prioritize Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)).

## Arlington County, VA

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

Total Population	234, 965
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	7.5% (17,622 people)
Total Number of Year Round Temporary Housing Beds	208
Number of Shelter Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	1.18
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	221
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	77
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	144

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

Arlington County has a total of five homeless shelters, all of which are conveniently accessible by either metro rail or bus (within one block of public transportation stops). Once a shelter placement is made, their bed can be kept indefinitely. All of Arlington County's shelters are co-ed and the domestic violence shelter has off-site options for men seeking housing.

Shelter composition in Arlington County includes the following:

- Single adults (2 shelters);
- Families (2 shelters);
- Domestic Violence Survivors (one shelter);

During Arlington's hypothermia season (November 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>), the bed capacity for single adults increases by 25 beds while family and domestic violence capacities remain unchanged. Year round, family utilization rates for shelters are 73-74% while single adult utilization rates hover around 93-95%. As hypothermia beds become available, the utilization rates for single adults in the year-round beds drop as people begin to fill hypothermia beds. This drop-in utilization rate may be caused by the expectation that those in year-round shelter need to be actively working towards obtaining permanent housing while is not such an expectation in hypothermia shelter beds.

Year Round Beds: Men	99 combined for men and women as shelters are co-ed
Year Round Beds: Women	
Year Round Beds: Youth	0
Year Round Beds: Families	65 beds
Year Round Units/Beds: Adult Couples	0
Low Barrier Shelter Offered?	Yes – only in Hypothermia Shelter
Additional Beds During Winter?	Yes – 25 for single adults (male or female)
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	74% (families) 94% (singles)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	No
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	Yes
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	No
Utilize a By-Name List?	Yes (chronically homeless, veterans, and those with potential to age into chronicity)

Outside of hypothermia season (when single adults and families may walk-up directly to shelter), all those seeking homelessness services in Arlington County must go through their Centralized Access System (CAS) to receive a referral for shelter. After residency is established, diversion away from shelter service is attempted (e.g. contacting relatives, loved ones who are connected to the Arlington community and who may be able to house), and an intake process is started, individuals and families will receive a referral to one of the five Arlington shelters. It is typical for referrals to be received immediately.

There are several ways for single adults and families to get connected with the CAS. Any individual or family needing to access emergency shelter can walk-in to the Department of Human Services to be assessed Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Single adults and families may also contact Arlington’s Information & Referral hotline (“The 10-10 Line”). The 10-10 Line is accessible twenty-four hours per day, seven days a week, 365 days per year (24/7/365). During the day, the Arlington County Department of Human Services (DHS) staffs and operates the hotline. After hours, the hotline is staffed by a partner nonprofit organization. The nonprofit organization that staffs the hotline rotates every four months. Hotline operators can access HMIS, check vacancies, and get people into shelter temporarily if a shelter placement is needed after hours. The following day the individual or family will be connected to CAS for an intake to receive a permanent shelter referral.

Across shelters, an individual’s or family’s access to shelter may be banned for 30, 60, or 90 days, but this is reserved for cases in which occurred person has demonstrated unsafe behavior towards other



guests or staff. Most conflicts are resolved by partnering with emergency services, de-escalation, and/or creating a plan to move forward while addressing the behavioral concern.

### **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

Per the CAS policy, in order to access homelessness services in Arlington County, individuals and families must be residents. Residency is defined as having lived in the county for at least the past 90 days. Documents which can confirm residency include: social security benefits information, a verification form from a family member or individual who has been providing housing, a verification form from an outreach worker who has worked with individual/family for 90 days, public school enrollment forms, and lease/eviction documents.

### **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

All housing referrals and placements in Arlington County are coordinated through the CAS. The Full SPDAT score is used in order to determine which type of housing is best suited to an individual or family (e.g. Rapid Re-housing vs Permanent Supportive Housing). All those who go through the CAS are referred to housing regardless of whether or not a placement is available.

In Arlington County only those who meet the definition of chronically homeless, are veterans, or are at risk for aging into chronicity are added to the by-name list. Arlington has reached functional zero for veterans and is aiming to reach functional zero for the chronically homeless population by December 31, 2018. Once functional zero is reached for the chronically homeless population, Arlington will focus on vulnerable adults and ending family homelessness.

## District of Columbia

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

Total Population	693,972
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	16.6% (115,199 people)
Total Number of Year Round Temporary Housing Bed	7,402
Number of Shelter Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	5.73
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	6,904
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	3,134
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	3,770

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

Per the District's Homeless Services Reform Act (HSRA), residents of the District have a legal right to shelter during hypo- and hyper-thermic weather conditions. Accordingly, the District government has a detailed process for scaling beds throughout the year to meet need. The District operates a network of year-round facilities for families, single men, single women, and youth. Additionally, the District's Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) is responsible for producing a winter plan, which details how the District will scale shelter and services in the winter to meet increased demand.<sup>2</sup> The plan identifies the number of additional beds (for individuals and youth) and units (for families) anticipated to be needed, as well as the locations that will be utilized. The plan also describes how services (street outreach, mental health assistance, transportation assistance, etc.) will be coordinated.

To access shelter, the District operates a single point of entry in their family system (the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center, or VWFRC). Families in need of assistance must present at VWFRC. If the family has somewhere they can safely stay for even one night, the family will be referred to prevention specialists, who will work with the family to stabilize them in their housing. If the family has no safe place to stay, a shelter placement will be made. (Note, families referred to a prevention specialist will be placed directly in shelter in instances where the prevention attempt was unsuccessful; they do not have to return to VWFRC.) VWFRC is staffed during daytime business hours but operates a 24 hour hotline for assistance after-hours. Clients needing assistance in the middle of the night will receive an interim placement by a hotline worker and then must return to VWFRC the following day for intake.

<sup>2</sup> The Winter Plan is available on the DC-ICH website at: <https://ich.dc.gov/page/winter-plan>

<b>Table 7: District of Columbia - Shelter Operations at a Glance</b>	
Year Round Emergency Shelter /Transitional Housing (ES/TH) Beds: Men	2,040
Year Round ES/TH Beds: Women	718
Year Round ES/TH Beds: Youth	242 beds
Year Round ES/TH Units/Beds: Families	1,004 units/ 3,372 beds
Year Round Units/Beds: Adult Couples	0
Low Barrier Shelter Offered?	Yes for single adults; no for families
Additional Beds During Winter?	Yes – the District has a Right to Shelter during hypothermic weather. Beds are brought online until demand is satisfied.
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	97% (families) 92% (singles)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	Yes
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	Yes
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	Yes
Utilize a By-Name List?	Yes

With regard to the single adult system, the District operates a “no-wrong door” system. Currently, the majority of shelter for single adults is “low-barrier,” a specific category of shelter under the HSRA that allows entry without identification or any other requirement.<sup>3</sup> Individuals may walk up to any location with availability and be placed in a bed.

Shelter composition in the District of Columbia includes the following:

- Single adults ( shelters);
- Families ( shelters);
- Single adults and Families ( shelters);
- Domestic Violence Survivors ( shelters);
- Youth shelter (shelters)

<sup>3</sup> Under the HSRA, “low barrier shelter” is an overnight accommodation that is provided without imposition of identification, time limits, or other requirements. Clients typically enter between 5pm and 7pm and must leave the next morning between 7am and 9am. A second kind of shelter identified within the HSRA is “temporary shelter,” which is a longer-term accommodation; once placed in a temporary shelter, the client remains in that bed/unit until they have resolved their homelessness and exited the system.

The District contracts with a nonprofit partner, the United Planning Organization (UPO), which operates a 24-hour shelter hotline. Hotline workers coordinate with the shelters so they have real-time information on bed availability by location and can direct clients to facilities with availability. Additionally, UPO provides transportation assistance. Although most of the District's facilities are accessible by public transportation and many clients will travel by metro/bus or by foot, UPO also operates buses and large passenger vans to assist clients in accessing shelter. UPO runs scheduled routes (where they pick up individuals at designated locations at designated times and bring them to designated destinations), and during severe weather, they also operate "on demand" services, where they are responding to calls from individuals seeking shelter, outreach workers, and/or concerned citizens. UPO will dispatch drivers to do a safety check, but also bring clients desiring shelter to a facility with bed availability.

Under the HSRA, clients may be terminated from *a program* for designated reasons (e.g., violence), but due to the District's right to shelter law, clients have a right to be seek shelter at an alternate facility if they so choose.

Because individuals can arrive on foot, shelters that are at capacity may have to refer a client elsewhere (or call the shelter hotline for transportation assistance). Each provider tracks turnaways. The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP) produces weekly shelter census reports, which are distributed to system administrators each week. Additionally, the data are shared with and reviewed by community stakeholders that participate in the ICH Shelter Capacity work group. This information greatly aids in planning to help the District meet its shelter obligations.

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

In 2017, the District updated their local legislation, the Homeless Services Reform Act (HSRA), to align with changes at the national level under the HEARTH Act. During this process, the District also updated the definition of "Resident."

The HSRA defines a "resident" as an individual or family who:

1. Is not receiving locally administered public assistance from a jurisdiction other than the District;
2. Is living in the District voluntarily and not for a temporary purpose and who has no intention of presently moving from the District; and
3. Demonstrates residence by providing evidence that the individual or family is receiving assistance from the District as administered by the Department of Human Services, or by providing one of the following:
  - a. Documents from the U.S. Social Security Administration addressed to the individual or a member of the family at a residential address in the District;
  - b. Evidence that the individual or a member of the family is attending school in the District;

- c. A valid, unexpired District motor vehicle operator’s permit or other non-driver identification in the name of the individual or a member of the family;
- d. A utility bill for water, gas, electric, oil, cable, or land-line telephone issued within the last 60 days that contains the name and a residential District address of the individual or a member of the family;
- e. A personal income tax document issued within the last year by the District or federal government that contains the name of the individual or a member of the family and indicates a residential address in the District;
- f. A pay stub issued within the last 60 days to the individual or a member of the family that indicates a residential address in the District;
- g. A valid voter registration card, military identification, or veteran’s identification issued by the District or federal government that contains the name of the individual or a member of the family and indicates a residential address in the District;
- h. An unemployment document or stub issued to the individual or a member of the family that indicates a residential address in the District;
- i. A current motor vehicle registration in the name of the individual or member of the family that indicates a residential address in the District;
- j. An eviction notice from a residential property in the District issued to the individual or a member of the family within the last 60 days;
- k. A valid unexpired District lease or rental agreement with the name of the individual or a member of the family listed as the lessee or as a permitted resident or renter; or
- l. Any other document the Department identifies as acceptable proof of residency; or
- m. In addition, individuals may use expired documents on the list above that were issued or otherwise valid within the last two years along with a written verification by a verifier who attests that the individual or family became homeless in the District and has not established a permanent residence outside of the District in the previous two years.

Persons seeking shelter by reason of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, refugee status, or asylum are eligible to receive services under the HSRA without providing demonstration of District residency.

Additionally, individuals and families seeking assistance at a low-barrier shelter or a severe weather shelter operating as low-barrier shelter are not required to demonstrate residency. In practice, because the majority of the District’s shelter beds for single adults are low barrier, and one hundred percent of shelter beds for families are “temporary shelter,” the residency requirement does not get applied consistently across subpopulations.

Finally, under the HSRA, DHS is required to search their databases and other data systems to which is has access (e.g., Office of the State Superintendent) to assist individuals and families in demonstrating residency. In the family system, if an applicant does not have any documentation that would

demonstrate residency, and there is no information on the family within any of the databases to which DHS has access, DHS will make an “interim eligibility” placement until eligibility can be confirmed.

## **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

The District has a separate Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement (CAHP) system – and accordingly separate by-name lists – for families, single adults, and youth. Permanent housing resources are allocated according to the prioritization processes developed by stakeholders of those systems.

The District uses a progressive engagement model within the family system, meaning that every family entering shelter has immediate access to rapid re-housing assistance. They also receive an assessment (the District uses the F-SPDAT), which helps identify those families that may need more intensive assistance to exit shelter. Once in housing and a case manager has had the opportunity to begin working with a family, a family may be “stepped up” to Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) or another longer-term resource as needed.

Within the single adult system, there is far more need than available resources. Accordingly, the District uses the VI-SPDAT to triage clients and help determine priority for available housing resources. As previously mentioned, the District uses a no-wrong door approach for single adults, which means outreach workers, shelter staff, staff at daytime service centers, and other partners (hospital social workers, reentry liaisons), are all trained to conduct assessments. No specific documentation is required to be assessed and entered into the District’s CAHP registry. Housing matches are made on bi-weekly basis using the District’s by-name list, which is pulled from the CAHP registry using a 30-day lookback period (i.e., the by-name list includes any clients that have touched the District’s homeless services system within the past 30 days).

The housing placement process within the District of Columbia’s youth CAHP system mirrors the process used for single adults.

## Fairfax County, VA

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

Total Population	1,148,433
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	6% (68,905 people)
Total Number of Year Round Temporary Housing Beds	760*
Number of Shelter Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	1.1
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	987
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	488
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	499

\* There is a notable discrepancy between year round shelter beds reported on the HUD exchange (760 beds for 2017) and reported by Fairfax (494 beds for 2018). For consistency across reports on all jurisdictions presented in this document, the HUD exchange number was used for calculations in this table.

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

Fairfax County has a total of eight shelters in its jurisdiction and all but one are accessible by bus or metro rail station. All shelters are considered within walking distance from public transportation. Shelter composition in Fairfax County includes the following:

- Single adults (2 shelters);
- Families (3 shelters);
- Single adults and Families (one shelter);
- Domestic Violence Survivors (one shelter);
- Youth shelter (one shelter, for ages 13 -24 years)

During hypothermia season (December to March for Fairfax) a hypothermia shelter is opened which operates seven days a week. During hypothermia season a “no turnaway” policy is implemented across the Fairfax emergency shelters. This policy can be extended past the December to March timeline if the temperature and weather conditions do not improve. The hypothermia shelter serves anywhere from 150-200 people per night during the season and all other shelters are typically at capacity during and outside of the hypothermia season.

Year Round Beds: Men	138 singles; not broken down by gender
Year Round Beds: Women	
Year Round Beds: Youth	8 beds
Year Round Units/Beds: Families	~60 units / 261 beds
Year Round Units/Beds: Adult Couples	0
Low Barrier Shelter Offered?	No
Additional Beds During Winter?	Yes – 282 beds
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	99% (families) 99% (singles)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	No
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	Yes – youth only
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	Yes
Utilize a By-Name List?	Yes; single adults, families, and veterans

Outside of hypothermia season there is no overflow capacity for single adults. Families can use open spaces in shelters, such as common areas, for temporary beds while diversion efforts (e.g. connecting with relatives or friends who may be able to provide housing) are being made. Thus far, a need has not been seen for youth overflow capacity.

The way in which shelter is accessed in Fairfax County differs depending on the population being served. Single adults should directly contact any of the three emergency shelters which serve their population; these shelters can be contacted 24/7, 365 days a year. Before a shelter placement is made, the single adult will be assessed by a Shelter Triage, Access and Referral System for Singles (STARSS) specialist via the STARSS assessment. After the assessment the STARSS specialist will attempt to divert the single adult from emergency shelter but if the individual is unable to be diverted then an emergency shelter placement will be made. If no space is available then the individual will be placed on a waitlist.

Families seeking homeless services assistance are assessed by Coordinated Services Planning’s (CSP) call center during the week (Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) to determine current housing status and level of need. When the call center is closed then families may access the shelter directly. CSP will send a referral to the Regional Homeless Referral Coordinator (RHRC). Households who stayed in emergency shelter within the last year and are seeking services again are referred by CSP to the regional partner agency last providing services. Upon receipt of the referral, the RHRC completes the Prevention Screening Tool in person or over the phone with the head of household to confirm eligibility. If the household is assessed to be experiencing literal homelessness without any other safe, viable housing options, the RHRC will coordinate placement in emergency shelter.



Youth seeking to access homelessness services should call the Second Story youth shelter hotline, text TEENHELP, or go directly to the shelter's location. The hotline is accessible 24/7, 365 days a year. It should be noted that along with emergency shelter, the Fairfax County youth shelter (i.e. Second Story) can also provide food and clothing, intensive individual counseling, group counseling, family counseling, and academic support. For transition aged youth (18-24) Second Story operates a Rapid Rehousing (RRH) program which can serve up to 20 youth (single or with families) per year.

Fairfax County has several different types of bans or suspensions: temporary suspensions, shelter-specific bans, and system-wide bans. Any of these three bans may be put into effect when the safety of staff, volunteers, and/or shelter residents is threatened or when harm is done. See below for more detail:

- ❖ Temporary suspensions: destruction of property, use of illegal drugs on shelter property, repeated alcohol consumption on property, possession of weapon, stealing from staff, volunteers or guests, speech or behavior which threatens others; (1 month maximum, 7 day maximum during hypothermia season)
- ❖ Shelter-specific bans: physically threatening behavior that cannot be deescalated, refusal to comply with staff direction related to possession/disposal of drugs, alcohol, or potential weapons, repeated suspensions for behaviors that disrupt overall operations or services; (should not exceed one calendar year for the most serious infractions, or one season if shelter-specific ban takes place during hypothermia season)
- ❖ System Wide/Fairfax County Ban: possession of a firearm on shelter property, physical violence that results in harm/injury of resident, staff, volunteer or anyone else on shelter property, refusal to comply with policies regarding illegal drug use on shelter property (directors of each singles shelter must agree that this action is appropriate and necessary to ban someone system wide; a request for approval must be made to Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH) to implement the ban; may be permanent or may be time-limited)

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

Fairfax County requires that those who receive homelessness services in their jurisdiction be a resident. Examples of documentation which can be used to prove residency include: ID with Fairfax County address, utility bills within the past 180 days, verification via benefits documents, documentation indicating that the individual's children are enrolled in Fairfax public school, or verification from a third party such as an individual who the person/family used to live with.

Although Fairfax County has this residency requirement, residency is not prioritized as heavily as is the individual's or family's length of time homeless and chronicity. If an individual or family is considered literally homeless, they will typically be able to access shelter. These situations – where an individual or family is not a resident but have a high length of time homeless or are considered chronically homeless - are handled on a case-by-case basis. Fairfax County may attempt to connect with supports in the

individual's or family's original jurisdiction, they may place the individual or family within a Fairfax shelter, or they may do both.

### **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

A Prioritization Pool is used in HMIS, which incorporates and sorts all of the eligibility and prioritization components of the program types it is used for. Homeless service providers use a uniform referral form and various assessment tools to add clients to the Prioritization Pool. Single adults are assessed with the VI-SPDAT and both the VI-SPDAT score and length of time homeless are considered for prioritizing housing placements. Families are assessed with the Housing and Services Triage Tool (HSTT) and both the HSTT score and length of time homeless are considered for prioritizing housing placements.

Housing providers that operate Permanent Supportive Housing, Other Permanent Housing, Transitional Housing, and a HUD funded Rapid Re-housing program dedicated to serving youth (ages 18-24) use the Pool to fill vacancies.

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## Frederick County, MD

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

Total Population	252,022
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	6.9% (17,389 people)
Total Number of Year Round Shelter Beds	282
Number of Shelter Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	1.62
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	316
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	109
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	207

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

Frederick County has a total of seven shelters, all of which are accessible by bus<sup>4</sup>. Currently there are no youth specific shelters in Frederick County, and transition aged youth, ages 18 -24, are served through the adult shelter system.

Shelter composition in Frederick County includes the following:

- Single adults (2 shelters);
- Families (4 shelters);
- Domestic Violence Survivors (one shelter);

During the winter/hypothermia season additional capacity may be added if required. It is typical for approximately 10-15 beds to be added for the season to accommodate those seeking shelter. Despite having a typical utilization rate of around 90% for all shelters excluding the domestic violence shelter, additional capacity (i.e. overflow) outside of the hypothermia season has generally not been needed. In the rare instances where shelter space was not available, Frederick County has provided housing via motel/hotel stays.

<sup>4</sup> It is unclear exactly how close each shelter is to the associated bus stop.

Year Round Beds: Men	127 beds for men and women as shelters are co-ed
Year Round Beds: Women	
Year Round Beds: Youth	0
Year Round Units/Beds: Families	42 units/147 beds
Year Round Units/Beds: Adult Couples	0
Low Barrier Shelter Offered?	Yes – only in Emergency Shelter
Additional Beds During Winter?	Yes – 15 beds individuals/families
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	90% (families) 90% (singles)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	No
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	No
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	No
Utilize a By-Name List?	No

There are two primary routes for accessing shelter services in Frederick County. Families must complete an in-person intake via Frederick’s Coordinated Assessment (FCA) system, while single adults may contact the shelter directly and be admitted if capacity allows. For basic information on shelter and homelessness services, individuals and families can call 211.

In general, persons using shelter services must be clean and sober while receiving shelter services. Frederick County does not employ a “one strike, you’re out” system for substance use but continued use, or use on the shelter property, may result in a temporary ban. More extreme behavior such as a violent threat or actual physical assault could result in a permanent ban. However, all bans may be appealed and banning from one facility does not mean an individual/family cannot access housing services through another organization in Frederick.

### **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

As a general practice, Frederick County requires that those receiving shelter services be county residents. Individuals/families from outside of the county who are attempting to access shelter services in Frederick must make an attempt to establish residency within the first three days of services. The following are examples of ways which individuals/families can document their attempt to establish residency: a documented attempt to transfer benefits to Frederick, or registration for social services in Frederick (e.g. documented work with an outreach provider).

If an individual/family is unable to provide this documentation then they will no longer be able to access shelter services. However, these individuals and families may still use case management and outreach services in Frederick.

Transportation assistance may be provided to an individual/family that has a confirmed permanent housing option in another jurisdiction.

## **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

For families, once an FCA intake is completed, a placement meeting is arranged between the family and all of the organizations which provide family housing. These placement meetings are completed once per week (Wednesday afternoons at 1 p.m. as of November 2018). Once the meeting is conducted, organizations decide among themselves which of the group could best accommodate the family's service level and need. Each organization serving families has its own particular waitlist and Frederick County and City do not employ a by-name list system.

Single adults are primarily connected to housing placements by completing an intake assessment and working with a case manager at the shelter. The shelter residents and case managers complete and send housing applications to housing programs throughout Frederick. While case management is not strictly enforced, it is encouraged and case managers will continue to attempt to exit persons from the shelter into more permanent housing options. Recently, Frederick County's domestic violence shelter has applied for funding to provide Rapid Rehousing beds internally to its clients.

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## Loudoun County, VA

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

Total Population	398,080
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	3.5% (13,932 people)
Total Number of Year Round Shelter Beds	94
Number of Shelter Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	.67
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	134
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	48
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	86

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

Loudoun County has a total of three homeless shelters. Two of Loudoun’s shelters are emergency shelters with one serving families and singles and one privately-operated shelter serving single women with children. The third Loudoun shelter is a domestic violence shelter which serves families. Men seeking domestic violence services are offered short-term motel/hotel stays when the need arises.

Shelter composition in Loudoun County includes the following:

- Single women with children (one shelter);
- Single adults and families (one shelter);
- Domestic Violence Survivors (one shelter);

Transition age youth (ages 18-24) work with the county’s nonprofit youth service provider. Young adults seeking homeless services, are able to access traditional emergency shelter via the county’s Coordinated Entry Line. Unaccompanied minors (17 or younger) are referred to Child Protective Services (CPS) for care coordination and may be connected to community services for additional support.

During hypothermia season, additional shelter beds are brought online within the emergency shelter system. Transportation to the winter shelter is available. This additional capacity typically serves about 20 residents on any given night during the hypothermia season which runs from November until March. Currently there is no seasonal capacity added for families and outside of hypothermia season there is no overflow capacity within Loudoun County.

Year Round Beds: Men	9 beds
Year Round Beds: Women	7 beds
Year Round Beds: Youth	0
Year Round Beds: Families	51 beds
Year Round Units/Beds: Adult Couples	This is reflected as singles - n/a
Low Barrier Shelter Offered?	No
Additional Beds During Winter?	Yes – 20 beds for single adults
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	75-80% (families) 75-80% (singles)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	Yes (per month: 7-10 single adults; 2-3 families)
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	Yes
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	Yes – van for emergency shelter and hypothermia shelter
Utilize a By-Name List?	Yes (veterans only)

Loudoun County launched the Coordinated Entry System (CES) in July 2017. The CES covers the full geographical area of Loudoun and utilizes one standardized assessment tool for making referrals to homeless services. Individuals and families that wish to access homeless services are directed to contact the CES phone line Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm. If shelter services are needed outside of CES operating hours, households may contact the emergency shelter directly. Once the household contacts the CES Intake Line, they are connected with support staff that completes a brief referral form to assess for most immediate housing need. Once the referral form is completed, staff then forwards that referral on to the appropriate homeless services program. The Drop-In Center is available to members of the community that are experiencing homelessness but for various reasons may not wish to enroll in the emergency shelter program. Staff can connect households accessing the Drop-In Center with case management services including mental health, healthcare and other services. The Drop-In Center does not require prescreening through the Coordinated Entry System.

A photo ID is required to access the emergency shelter. Sex offenders are not able to enroll in the emergency shelter program given that the facility also houses children. Individuals may be banned for violent behavior or threats towards staff or residents. A ban may be shelter specific at which point the individual could still receive services at Loudoun County’s drop-in center or the ban may be considered a “no trespass” which involves receiving an official notice from law enforcement stating that the individual may not be on shelter grounds. The time limit on bans is situational with a permanent ban being reserved for extreme incidents.

On a month to month basis it can be expected for shelter utilization rates to be around 75% for the emergency shelter serving families and single adults and 60% for the domestic violence shelter (12 beds). These utilizations generally increase during the winter months and the holiday season. While Loudoun County does not have a requirement to track shelter turnaways.

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

Loudoun County requires that those who receive homelessness services be a resident of the county. Callers are asked where they slept the night before they request services and also where current mainstream benefits are accessed to determine residency. Loudoun County is currently in the process of updating its operations (as of November 2018) to formalize residency requirements to access services.

Those seeking services in Loudoun County who are not residents will be referred to their original jurisdiction except for those fleeing domestic violence who will be automatically referred to Loudoun's domestic violence shelter. If there are significant barriers (e.g. physical disability) preventing the individual from returning to their original jurisdiction then transportation may be provided.

## **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

All homeless services are referred through the CES Intake Line and a homeless services referral is required prior to program entry. The county has a housing locator that works with individuals and families to locate and secure housing. The Housing Locator can also serve as a mediator between clients and landlords/property managers to advocate on behalf of the household. Housing Location services links clients to both subsidized and unsubsidized housing opportunities.

Housing-Focused Case Managers work with households to locate and secure stable housing. Case Management staff also work with local service providers to stay abreast of vacancies in housing programs such as Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing or other housing program. For Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), the VI-SPDAT is used to prioritize households. If there are several candidates with the same score, then a multidisciplinary team is convened to assess each individual need and make the decision based on the highest vulnerability.

Currently, a by-name list is employed only for veterans. Veterans in the community can access homeless services through contacting the CES Intake Line and are also connected to the Loudoun County Veteran Services Coordinator to receive assistance for other Veteran-specific services. Loudoun County also coordinates with our Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program to assist Veterans with access to VA Benefits or other needed resources.



## Montgomery County, MD

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

**Table 14: Montgomery County, MD Overview**

Total Population	1,058,810
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	6.9% (73,057 people)
Total Number of Year Round Shelter Beds	510
Number of Shelter Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	0.7
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	840
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	272
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	568

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

Montgomery County has six emergency shelters, all of which are accessible by metro or bus (within 1000 feet of the front door of facilities). The overflow shelter utilizes a van that transports residents to and from the facility.

Shelter composition in Montgomery County includes the following:

- Single adults (2 shelters);
- Families (3 shelters);
- Domestic Violence Survivors (one shelter);

During hypothermia season, (from November 1 to XXX) an overflow shelter serving single women and women with children is open in the Silver Spring area to provide an additional 20 beds. A seasonal shelter for single adult men and women is also brought online during the hypothermia season that provides 40 beds for men and 25 women in Silver Spring. A seasonal shelter for women opens November 1<sup>st</sup> to provide 28 beds. The year round shelter for men expands on November 1 each year to serve an additional 70 men, and will operate an overflow when the seasonal beds are full. During hypothermia season, there is no residency requirement, but homeless persons are encouraged to utilize shelter where they lost permanent housing or are receiving other benefits such as Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP).

Year Round Beds: Men	65 beds
Year Round Beds: Women	70 beds
Year Round Beds: Youth	0
Year Round Beds: Families	97 beds
Year Round Units/Beds: Adult Couples	0
Low Barrier Shelter Offered	No
Additional Beds During Hypothermia Season	258 beds
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	98% (families) 98% (singles)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	No
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	In development
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	Yes – tokens
Utilize a By-Name List?	Yes; single adults and families

Outside of hypothermia season, Montgomery County has overflow capacity for both families and single adults. Families are housed in motels/hotels within the county (capacity of 30 family households) and single adults have two facilities (one co-ed, the other serving only men).

Homeless families access services through three regional county offices, which are typically open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in addition to the Crisis Center, which is available 24-hour 7 days per week. Single adults are served through outreach providers and the Crisis Center who can make a referral to any shelter via a standardized referral form. Montgomery County is currently developing a separate homeless services hotline.

Single adults seeking homelessness services and/or shelter in Montgomery County can either reach out to the shelter directly or be referred to a shelter through an outreach worker. In order for a family to be able to access homeless services and/or shelter they must contact one of the county's regional intake offices. From the intake office, families will be screened to see if they can be diverted from entering the shelter system. If not, the family will be referred to the appropriate shelter vacancy. If a family is determined to be literally homeless, the case is transferred to a Homeless Intake Worker and the VI-FSPDAT is completed with further assessment.

Individuals and families may be terminated from shelter if they: destroy shelter property, physically assault or make a threat of violence against staff/volunteers/guests, or carry weapons onto shelter property. The amount of time an individual or family is banned is dependent upon the situation with the longest ban being for a period of one year. Individuals and families can also receive short-term suspensions (between 1-5 days).

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

In order to access Montgomery County's homeless services, people have to lose their housing within the county. Proof of housing loss within the county may take the form of a lease or a notarized statement from someone in the community who indicates that the person resided with them from a certain date, their contact information, and that they rent/own where they staying. People must have lived in the county for at least 9 months to be considered a resident if they were staying with a family member or friend in the community or a documented lease agreement for at least 4 months. Outreach providers and case managers are often tasked with helping single adults and families gather these documents. If no documentation is provided, then the single adult or family will be considered out-of-jurisdiction.

Those who are not residents of the county may still access shelter for a maximum of 30 days and during this time, an effort will be made by the case manager or shelter staff to develop a diversion plan aimed at returning the client to his/her/their original jurisdiction. An extension of the 30 day maximum stay occurs on a case-by-case basis. "Original jurisdiction" in this case is defined as the community in which the individual or family lost their housing.

## **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

Montgomery County uses two assessments to prioritize who receives placement in housing programs (e.g. Permanent Supportive, Rapid Re-housing). The VI-SPDAT which is used to measure the individual's or family's vulnerability and a modified version of the Calgary Acuity Scale is used to measure the individual's or family's degree of need for case management services. Montgomery County's Rapid Re-housing program uses a coordinated entry list for individuals and families when a vacancy occurs. Each case manager averages a caseload of approximately 16 households, with a balance of individuals and families and vulnerability scores from the VI-SPDAT ranging from 4 – 9 if no disability or documented need for on-going case management support. The acuity score is used as a guide for amount of service visits per month to stabilize the household.

Permanent Supportive Housing vacancies are also filled via a coordinated entry list. Individuals must score for PSH from the assessment with a documented disability and the need for on-going case management support to stabilize housing.

## Prince George's County, MD

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

Total Population	912,756
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	9.2% (83,973 people)
Total Number of Year Round Shelter Beds	389
Number of Shelter Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	0.46
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	478 (2 of 478 were unaccompanied minors)
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	273
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	203

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

Prince George's County has a total of six emergency shelters, all of which are accessible by metro and bus.

Shelter composition in Prince George's County includes the following:

- Single adults (one shelter for men);
- Single women with children (one shelter)
- Families (one shelters);
- Single adults and Families (one "overnight" shelter);
- Domestic Violence Survivors (one shelter);
- Youth shelter (one shelter, for ages 13 -24 years)

During hypothermia season an additional 50 beds are brought online.

<b>Table 17: Prince George’s County, MD - Shelter Operations at a Glance</b>	
Year Round Beds: Single men	24 beds
Year Round Beds: Single Women	20 beds
Year Round Beds: Unaccompanied youth 13-24	20 beds
Year Round Beds: Families	127 beds (families and adult couples)
Year Round Beds: Adult Couples	
Year Round Beds: Survivors	43 beds
Low Barrier Shelter Offered?	No
Additional Beds During Winter?	Yes – 50 beds
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	100% (families) 100% (singles) 80% (youth)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	Yes by Homeless Hotline
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	Yes
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	Yes during hypothermia season
Utilize a By-Name List?	Yes

Outside of hypothermia season, Prince George’s County has 25 year-round overflow beds which are accessible to any unsheltered person seeking shelter.

All persons seeking homeless services access services through the Homeless Hotline which provides system-wide access 24/7/365. Callers are screened and diversion, prevention and/or shelter services are provided as appropriate. Street outreach teams working with unsheltered persons provide a warm transfer to the hotline team to facilitate system access when the customer is unable to perform those actions on their own. Shelter cannot be accessed by direct contact.

Once connected to the hotline and proof of residency is established, single adults, families, and youth are able to receive a shelter referral. These referrals are made on a first come, first served basis. The single adult, family, or youth can access the shelter immediately once the referral is made provided a shelter bed is available.

Prince George’s County does not ban a single adult, family, or youth from accessing shelter services except in very extreme, violent cases and when instituted, the ban is system wide.

### **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

Prince George’s County requires that single adults, families, and youth be residents in order to access homeless services. While an individual does not need a photo ID, at least one form of documentation or

verification must be provided which proves residency. These documents may include but are not limited to: public school records, benefits information linked to the county, verification by a street outreach or other crisis worker, mail in their name with a local address or a lease/eviction notice.

When persons seeking shelter are identified as non-County residents, a referral is made back to their home jurisdiction. If a single adult, family or youth is seeking services during the hypothermia season then they will be placed in the overnight shelter and the following day Prince George's County shelter staff will begin to coordinate with the individual's jurisdiction and facilitate a warm handoff. Uber and other ride-share programs may be used to transport people to their original jurisdiction.

### **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

All emergency shelter teams are trained to rapidly connect residents to stable permanent housing. Households entering the system who have been assessed as having complicated and high acuity needs are forwarded to the Coordinated Entry team for further assessment and prioritization for longer term supportive housing programs within the Continuum.

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## Prince William County, MD

### BASIC POPULATION DATA

Prince William County, MD Overview	
Total Population	463,023
Percent of Population (and Number of People) Living Below the Poverty Line	6.1% (28,244 people)
Total Number of Year-Round Shelter Beds	356
Number of Shelter Beds Per 100 People Living Below Poverty Line	1.32
2018 PIT Count (Total Persons)	374 (2 of 374 were individual households from the Youth Traffic victim program)
2018 PIT Count (Persons in Families)	182
2018 PIT Count (Single Adults)	190

### SHELTER OPERATIONS/PRACTICES

Prince William County has a total of five emergency shelters, all of which are accessible by bus. The domestic violence shelter’s location is undisclosed so proximity to public transportation is unclear. However, issues regarding transportation and access to the domestic violence shelter have not been reported to Prince William County. Currently there is no community-wide transportation assistance provided to those seeking to access shelters, but individuals and families can receive tokens and/or cab vouchers from service providers.

Shelter composition in Prince William’s County includes the following:

- Single adults (one shelter, co-ed);
- Single adults and Families (3 shelters);
- Domestic Violence Survivors (one shelter);

During hypothermia season an additional 24 beds are brought online through partnerships with faith-based volunteer groups. No noticeable changes to shelter capacity numbers are seen during seasonal change, with family shelters running at about 75% capacity and the singles shelter running at about 90% capacity year-round.

Prince William County, MD: Shelter Operations at a Glance <sup>5</sup>	
Year-Round Beds: Single men	90 beds
Year-Round Beds: Single Women	
Year-Round Beds: Unaccompanied youth 13-24	8 beds (female Trafficking victims)
Year-Round Units/Beds: Families and adult couples	190 beds
Year-Round Units/Beds: Survivors	18 beds
Low Barrier Shelter Offered?	Yes
Additional Beds During Winter?	Yes – Approximately 24 beds
Average Monthly Shelter Utilization Rate?	75% (families) 90% (singles)
Shelters Track Turnaways?	No
Hotline to Direct Clients to Available Space?	No
Assistance with Transportation Provided?	Yes (tokens and cab)
Utilize a By-Name List?	Yes; separate for Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-Housing

Outside of hypothermia season, Prince William County does not have overflow bed capacity – utilizing motel and hotel vouchers for time-limited assistance. The time-limit of motel/hotel stays are based on the individual’s or family’s need.

The primary way that single adults and families access Prince William County shelters is by contacting the County’s Coordinated Entry System (CES) phone line and receiving a referral for services. The phone line is open from 9am to 9pm, seven days a week. Outside of phone line hours, calls are received by an answering service. During the time the phone line is closed, single adults and families can walk directly up to shelter sites and be accepted as an emergency placement if capacity allows. The following morning, when the CES’s phone line is re-opened, the shelter will make contact to inform the CES of the emergency placement.

Prince William County does not require those seeking shelter to show ID or maintain or present as clean/sober. While a CES referral is required for a shelter stay of more than one night, those seeking shelter services can utilize the emergency placement system mentioned above if they are in need of a safe place to stay. The individuals and families seeking shelter services are screened through the sex offender registry. If they are on the sex offender registry then a shelter stay at a family shelter is prohibited, while access to the single adult shelter is still granted.

Prince William County does not ban shelter residents but can issue a discharge from shelter services with length-of-time of discharge depending upon the severity of the situation (e.g. 30-60 days for a

<sup>5</sup> Source: 2018 COG Final PIT Report and county representative interview



weapon on the property, 90 days and a signed behavioral contract for an assault). Prior to any discharge being filed, a community case review is conducted to see if alternative options are available (e.g. increased case management engagement) to prevent discharge. All discharges can be appealed and once the discharge time has expired, the individual or family can return to the shelter from which they were discharged.

### **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

Currently, Prince William County has no residency requirement for those seeking homeless services. Anyone can access the system through the CES line or by contacting the shelters directly after CES line hours.

When persons seeking shelter are identified as non-County residents Prince William staff will try to connect them with their original County, especially if space is unavailable. If the non-County resident is not interested in reconnecting with their original County, then the individual or family will go through the CES to receive a referral for services.

### **HOUSING PLACEMENT PRACTICES**

Once an individual or family contacts the CES line, a referral will be made to a Prince William County shelter. Via case management, shelter staff will work with the individual or family to divert them away from a long-stay in the shelter system. For instance, if shelter staff believes that an individual or family would best benefit from one-time rental assistance then this decision can be authorized. If diversion is not possible, then the individual or family will complete a VI-SPDAT and Housing Barrier assessment. Once these assessments are completed, the individual/family will be placed on the Prince William County by-name list (either for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) or Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)).

There are two separate Prince William County by-name list admissions committees: one which focuses on PSH placements and one which focuses on RRH placements. Both committees meet once per month to match those from their list to available housing resources.

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## Appendices

### APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

The majority of the information gathered for this report was collected via phone interview between an intern detailed to the COG for this project and each county's representative. Each county representative was emailed a copy of the COG interview questions (see Appendix B) and their county's basic population data for their review prior to the interview. Once the interview was completed, the COG intern provided the county representative a typed-up summary of the information for final review and approval.

The table below provides sources of the numerical data used in each county profile (i.e. total population, percentage of population living below the poverty line, total number of shelter beds, and 2018 PIT results). While different sources were used for different data points, the same data source was used for each county to ensure consistency across profiles.

<b>Total Population</b> Information gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau Website (all numbers are population estimates for July 1, 2017); <a href="https://www.census.gov/quickfacts">https://www.census.gov/quickfacts</a>
<b>Percentage of Population Below the Poverty Line</b> Information gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau Website (all numbers are from the 2016 SAIPE: Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates); <a href="https://www.census.gov/quickfacts">https://www.census.gov/quickfacts</a>
<b>Total Number of Shelter Beds</b> Information gathered from the 2017 HUD Housing Inventory Count Reports; <a href="https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-housing-inventory-count-reports/">https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-housing-inventory-count-reports/</a>
<b>2018 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Numbers</b> Results obtained via 2018 COG Final PIT Report; <a href="https://www.mwcog.org/documents/homelessnessreport/">https://www.mwcog.org/documents/homelessnessreport/</a>

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### I. Basic Population Data

- a. Review basic population information about jurisdiction (see excel spreadsheet attached in email):
  - i. Total population
  - ii. % of population living below the poverty line
  - iii. Total number of shelter beds (families, single adults, youth)
  - iv. Number of shelter beds per 100 people living below the poverty line
  - v. PIT numbers
- b. Is this information accurate?

### II. Basic Information on Shelter Operations

- a. By population (i.e. families, single adults, youth), how many shelters do you have in your jurisdiction? Where are these shelters located?
  - How accessible are your shelters by public transportation?
- b. Is additional shelter capacity brought on during the year (e.g. during severe weather seasons of winter/summer)? Is capacity added for shelter overflow?
- c. How do people access your shelters (e.g. first come first served, central intake system)? Does this differ by population (i.e. families, single adults, youth)?
  - What requirements do you have for those accessing shelter (e.g. clean/sober, need ID, referral)?
  - Do people ever get banned? If so, for what?
  - How families, single adults, and youth are in a housing crisis informed of *available* shelter services (e.g. shelter hotline informing folks where to go, shelter status information online, mobile app)?
  - Is transportation provided? If so, what are the basics of how this works?
- d. What is your monthly average utilization rate for your shelters? How does this differ by population (i.e. families, single adults, youth)?

- Is this consistent across sites, for only particular sites? Do you notice changes by season?
- e. Do your shelters track turnaways? If so, is this a requirement and what is the monthly average?
- f. Lastly, what, if any, are your current practices for working with out-of-jurisdiction clients?

### III. Residency Requirements

- a. Do you have any residency requirements with regards to accessing homelessness services? If so, what documentation do you require to confirm residency and is it the same across population (i.e. families, single adults, youth)?
  - Are these requirements written in law/policy?

### IV. Housing Placement Practices

- a. How are housing placements made for people experiencing homelessness in your jurisdiction?
- b. Does your jurisdiction have a by-name list? If so, how are people added to the list and how many people were on the by-name list as of August, 2017?

Not in the draft, but I think a helpful addition:

- c. A chart for ALL CoCs that combines the information in the charts above for reference. That way you can see in one place who is or isn't tracking turnaways, for example.
- d. There is an ongoing desire to have a list with points of contact to call to facilitate a warm hand off. I would include name, contact info, email address and include by families/singles/youth and who to call when it's a) business hours and b) after hours.

DRAFT