

# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## FY21 WINTER PLAN



### *Important Telephone Numbers*

*DC Shelter Hotline: (202) 399-7093*

*Mayor's Call Center: 311*

*Sasha Bruce Youthwork Hotline (Minors): 202-547-7777*

*DC residents experiencing homelessness may call these numbers to seek assistance, and the general public may also call these numbers to request help for someone in need of assistance.*

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In compliance with the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005 (HSRA), this FY21 Winter Plan<sup>1</sup> has been developed by the District of Columbia’s Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH). The District of Columbia is one of only three jurisdictions in the country that provide a legal right to shelter in hypothermic weather conditions. The HSRA mandates that by September of each year, a plan be in place describing how District residents who are experiencing homelessness will be protected from cold weather injury.<sup>2</sup>

**When is Hypothermia Season?**

The Winter Plan generally covers the period beginning November 1 and ending on March 31. While many of the services included in this Winter Plan are in place and operational regardless of temperature, some additional services, including severe weather shelters, operate only when a “hypothermia alert” is called by the District government. (See Section 2 for more information.) In practice, the additional services provided under a hypothermia alert may begin before November 1 or extend beyond March 31 if the criteria for calling an alert is met.

It is important to note that the purpose of this plan is protection from cold weather injury. This plan is being implemented within the context of the broader systems change underway in the District to move from a shelter-based system to one focused on rapid stabilization and connection back to permanent housing. However, the strategies outlined in [Homeward DC](#) (the District’s strategic plan to address homelessness among single adults and families) and [Solid Foundations DC](#) (the District’s plan to address homelessness among unaccompanied youth)<sup>3</sup> will take years to fully implement. Accordingly, the District is committed to ensuring it has effective strategies in place to protect residents experiencing homelessness from cold weather injury.

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the United States in early 2020 resulted in many changes to the District’s homeless services system operations. The world’s growing understanding of COVID-19 and the constantly changing landscape driven by this evolving knowledge base has required the Department of Human Services (DHS) and its provider network to demonstrate flexibility and nimbleness as it strives to keep individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness safe. The same will be true as we look out to the winter months ahead. While this plan provides a framework for our hypothermia season operations in light of COVID-19, we know we will need to be flexible as the conditions around us continue to change. Because of the unpredictable nature of our current environment, the District will use the process described in Section 1.3 to gather partner feedback and share critical system updates as the winter progresses.

<sup>1</sup> The District of Columbia government budgets by fiscal year, which starts on October 1 and ends on September 30. Fiscal year 2021 (FY21) starts October 1, 2020 and ends on September 30, 2021. Unless noted as “winter FY21” or “hypothermia FY21,” all references to “FY” in the plan refer to the entire fiscal year named versus just the winter months.

<sup>2</sup> Due to the public health emergency and its impact on homeless service system operations, the ICH recommended taking an additional month to ensure all known changes could be discussed with partners prior to finalizing the plan.

<sup>3</sup> [Homeward DC: https://ich.dc.gov/page/homeward-dc-ich-strategic-plan-2015-2020](https://ich.dc.gov/page/homeward-dc-ich-strategic-plan-2015-2020)  
[Solid Foundations DC: https://ich.dc.gov/page/solid-foundations-dc-comprehensive-plan-end-youth-homelessness](https://ich.dc.gov/page/solid-foundations-dc-comprehensive-plan-end-youth-homelessness)

## PLAN ELEMENTS

This plan builds on efforts from the past, incorporates new strategies, and responds to lessons learned from previous winters. The plan is organized as follows:

- Section 1 describes the process used to develop the plan;
- Section 2 describes the process for and the considerations involved in calling a hypothermia alert;
- Section 3 estimates shelter capacity needs as well as the plan for delivering the needed beds/units;
- Section 4 outlines the transportation services provided to ensure access to shelter and services;
- Section 5 describes the services provided to help clients access shelter;
- Section 6 discusses protocol and available resources for serving unaccompanied minors and transition aged youth (TAY); and
- Section 7 outlines resources in place to monitor shelter operations as well as the protocol for raising concerns and/or filing complaints.

### 1. PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING, PUBLICIZING, AND UPDATING THE PLAN

The ICH Emergency Response and Shelter Operations (ERSO) Committee is responsible for supporting the developing of the District's Winter Plan. Each summer, the process begins with a review of the previous season's operations so partners can help identify what worked well and where changes or improvements are needed. The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness (TCP) compiles data on shelter utilization trends for partners ahead of the discussion.

Following the review, the Shelter Capacity Subcommittee convenes to more closely review shelter utilization from previous hypothermia seasons and to develop estimates for the number of bed/units needed for men, women, and families for the upcoming season. The Subcommittee's recommendations were presented to the ERSO Committee in June and are detailed in Section 3.3 of this plan.

After incorporating this feedback from partners and working in partnership with DHS to identify necessary modifications in response to COVID-19, ICH staff presented a draft to ERSO members in August. Additional edits were made in response to the August committee meeting, and a final draft was presented to the ERSO Committee in September.<sup>4</sup> Following approval by ERSO stakeholders, the Plan was presented to the ICH Executive Committee for adoption on October 13, 2020.

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<sup>4</sup> Due to the public health emergency and its impact on homeless service system operations, the ICH recommended taking an additional month to ensure all known changes could be adequately reflected and discussed with partners prior to finalizing the plan.

## 1.1 FY20 HYPOTHERMIA SEASON REVIEW

In the FY20 winter season, 86 hypothermia alerts were called, which represents nearly 57% of the days in the five-month season. When alerts were called, as in past years, year-round and seasonal shelters remained open during daytime hours so that clients would have a warm and safe place to stay, and additional shelter capacity was created as it was needed. TCP coordinated daily hypothermia operations in concert with city agencies and providers. This included the distribution of a daily census showing capacity levels at all shelters so that the system could be monitored and adjusted to serve clients optimally. The United Planning Organization (UPO) operated the DC Shelter Hotline and deployed vans for outreach services and transportation.

In contrast to the Homeward DC plan, where the ICH is tracking multiple outcomes towards our goal of preventing and ending homelessness, the most important measure we use to evaluate the success of winter plan operations is the number of hypothermia deaths among persons experiencing homelessness. As part of the FY16 winter planning process, a protocol was established to ensure that the Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) immediately reports all deaths among persons experiencing homelessness to DHS so appropriate follow up actions can be determined; OCME then confirms information on cause of death once it has been established. During the FY20 winter – for the first time since DHS began tracking this data – no hypothermia deaths were reported.

The ICH and its member agencies continue to learn from past efforts with the goal of improving our hypothermia response from one year to the next. Over the past four years, the District has taken a number of additional measures in preparation for the winter season, including adding more vans/buses to reduce wait times, expanding outreach services, and developing a hypothermia outreach protocol. While many of these measures will remain in place for the FY21 hypothermia season, there will be many changes to system operations in response to COVID-19. Those changes are discussed in the sections that follow.

**Table 1: Hypothermia Deaths in the District Among Persons Experiencing Homelessness**

Year	Hypothermia Deaths (Primary Cause of Death)	Hypothermia or Cold Exposure (Contributing Cause of Death)	Total Deaths Associated with Hypothermia or Cold Exposure
Winter FY16	2	0	2
Winter FY17	2	0	2
Winter FY18	2	0	2
Winter FY19	2	0	2
Winter FY20	0	0	0

## 1.2 PUBLICIZING THE PLAN

The success of the Winter Plan depends upon open and constant communications among all stakeholders, including the public, providers of shelter and other services, and those who are homeless.

Individuals seeking help for themselves or on behalf of another individual may call either:

- The DC Shelter Hotline: 202-399-7093 (or)
- The Mayor's Call Center: 311
- The Sasha Bruce Youthwork Hotline (minors under 18): 202-547-7777

The DC Shelter Hotline and the 311 Mayor's Call Center line will be widely publicized. They will appear in advertisements in both print and electronic media, and they will be printed on business cards that will be distributed to those who are homeless by outreach agencies and other partners.

The District's Office of Unified Communications (OUC) will be notified of the Shelter Hotline number to ensure coordination of service requests originating from law enforcement agencies. Police officers, including patrol officers of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and the U.S. Park Police (USPP), can request services through the OUC for any citizen who is homeless and in need of assistance. Law enforcement agencies may also use the 311 line.

All interested persons may register for emergency alerts through Alert DC, an emergency notification system that provides different ways to get real-time information to help prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters.

Sign up for Alert DC at [dc.gov](http://dc.gov) or at <http://hsema.dc.gov/page/alertdc>

The hypothermia media campaign is implemented and managed by DHS. The campaign, which will begin no later than October 1, 2020, and continue throughout the season, will include the following activities:

- Metro Advertisements: DHS will request advertising space on Metro buses and in subway locations as available for the upcoming hypothermia season. Also, Metro drivers will be informed about the emergency assistance telephone numbers and when to call to assist someone who is homeless and in need of assistance.
- Social Media: Non-government partners will be encouraged to publicize the hotline number via their social media campaigns and email signature tags. The District government will also encourage agencies utilizing Twitter to include information on alerts and the hotline as part of their communications.
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs): DHS will develop and release television and radio announcements featuring the DC Shelter Hotline number and information designed to educate the public about the dangers of hypothermia. These announcements will publicize the emergency assistance telephone numbers and encourage District residents to call if they are homeless and in need of assistance or to report the location of individuals who are homeless and possibly in need of assistance, especially in hypothermic weather conditions.

- Newspapers: Quarter-page hypothermia shelter hotline advertisements will be placed in community newspapers throughout the season. In the past, publications such as Hill Rag, DC North, East of the River, and Street Sense have been used.
- Business Cards: Pocket-sized business cards will be printed and distributed that will include key emergency assistance telephone numbers. The cards will be available in both English and Spanish versions, and they will be distributed to the outreach community, to providers, and to those who are homeless.
- Hope OneSource: HopeOneSource is a text messaging application that allows District agencies and service providers to blast text messages to registered users. HopeOneSource, through partnering providers, can also help individuals experiencing homelessness register for a free phone with free, unlimited text messages. Through the HopeOneSource app, District partners send out daily updates to alert consumers to weather conditions, shelter availability, new programs and services, and how to access help they may need. To sign up for HopeOneSource text messages or to learn more, visit <https://www.hopeonesource.org/dc>.

**An Important Message to Community Partners During Hypothermia Season**

Community-based organizations, faith-based groups, and private citizens that have items to donate and/or who want to participate in providing survival items to clients on the street are asked to contact Tom Fredericksen at TCP at 202-543-5298 to allow the District to better coordinate these donations and activities. The District welcomes the partnership, but wants to ensure groups are working in coordination with trained outreach staff to safely deliver services to our vulnerable neighbors, especially in light of the public health emergency.

**1.3 PROCESS FOR UPDATING THE PLAN**

As discussed in the introduction, the COVID-19 public health emergency requires the District to be flexible in its approach to delivering services to people experiencing homelessness to ensure we are being responsive to the changing landscape and using resources as strategically as possible. As we continue navigating the public health emergency throughout the fall and winter, the ERSO Committee will continue to serve as a forum for identifying challenges, soliciting feedback from partners, and providing key updates. In addition, DHS will continue to provide agencywide updates to stakeholders through partner calls, updated guidance, and other communications.

## 2. PROCESS FOR CALLING ALERTS

This section describes the process and considerations involved in calling hypothermia alerts and Cold Weather Emergency alerts. In past years, monitoring temperatures and communicating alert status were critical because of the impact on shelter operations (e.g., hypothermia alert night shelters opening, shelters remaining open during daytime hours). Because of the COVID-related modifications to shelter operations discussed in Section 3, the alerts will have less significance during the upcoming hypothermia season. However, DHS has determined that they will continue the process of monitoring the weather and calling alerts both to ensure staff have the information they need to support operations and to ensure the District has historical data to support future planning efforts.

### 2.1 HYPOTHERMIA ALERTS

Daily consultations will be held between the District's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) and meteorologists at the National Weather Service (NWS) in Sterling, Virginia, to determine real time weather conditions and the likely conditions in the next 24 hours. Additionally, throughout each day, HSEMA and DHS will monitor the NWS website for the published forecast.

Hypothermia alerts will be called when either HSEMA reports or the NWS published forecast indicates that the actual or forecasted temperature, including wind chill, is or will be 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below. DHS will also call an overnight hypothermia alert when the temperature is forecasted to be 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below and the forecasted chance of precipitation is 50% or greater.

By 7:00 a.m. each day, HSEMA will notify TCP, UPO, and DHS whether or not the actual or forecasted temperature, including wind chill, is or will be 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below prior to 7:00 a.m. If so, DHS and HSEMA will put a daytime hypothermia alert into effect until 7:00 p.m. or until the actual temperature including wind chill rises above 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Once in effect, an alert stays on until it is called off by HSEMA. When HSEMA calls an alert, they notify TCP, UPO, and DHS. Shelter providers may call the DC Shelter Hotline at (202) 399-7093 at any time to determine the alert status.

DHS will send out an email alert twice daily, at 7:00 a.m. and then by 3:00 p.m., to notify all interested persons of the alert status regardless of whether the status has changed. The information on the alert status will also be posted on DHS's website, at [www.dhs.dc.gov](http://www.dhs.dc.gov), and will be available via in-person inquiries at open MPD stations, Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) stations, public libraries, and Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) recreation centers. Alert status is also sent out to individuals experiencing homelessness who have signed up for alerts via the HopeOneSource free text messaging app.<sup>5</sup>

DHS will keep a daily record of forecasts and alert status. These data will be available upon request during the season (contact the ICH at [ich.dmhhs@dc.gov](mailto:ich.dmhhs@dc.gov)) and reviewed by the ICH ERSO Committee during the

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<sup>5</sup> To sign up for HopeOneSource text messages or to learn more, visit <https://www.hopeonesource.org/dc>.

debriefing session held after the season is completed. See *Section 1.3 Publicizing the Plan* for additional information on alert notifications.

## 2.2 COLD WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Starting in the winter of FY14, the District government implemented a “Cold Weather Emergency” strategy, which will continue in practice this winter. This strategy is broader than the ICH Winter Plan in the sense that it is designed to “ensure *all* residents, workers, and visitors are protected from extreme cold weather,” though particular attention is given to the needs of residents experiencing homelessness.

A Cold Weather Emergency is called when the temperature falls, or is forecasted to fall, to:

- 1) 15°F or below (including wind chill) or
- 2) 20°F (including wind chill), and one or more of the following conditions exists:
  - Steady precipitation for 60 consecutive minutes
  - Snow accumulation of 3 inches or more
  - Other meteorological conditions or threats as determined by HSEMA

When the National Weather Service (NWS) predicts extreme cold weather conditions, HSEMA will convene a conference call with staff from DHS, DBH, the Department of Health (DOH), the Office of the City Administrator (OCA), the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services (DMHHS), and others as necessary in order to decide whether current or predicted conditions necessitate activating a Cold Emergency Alert and, if so, to determine whether specific interventions are necessary given the anticipated weather conditions. Interventions may include, but are not limited to, the operation of Warming Sites (utilized by anyone needing respite from the cold – e.g., people experiencing prolonged power outages), measures to protect unsheltered residents unwilling or unable to come inside, and coordination of services for other vulnerable populations (e.g., seniors).

### 3. EMERGENCY SHELTER

As noted in the introduction, the District of Columbia is one of just three jurisdictions in the country that provide a legal right to shelter in hypothermic weather conditions. This section describes the type of shelter available during hypothermia alerts, the process used to develop estimates for shelter capacity needs, and the plan for delivering the number of beds/units needed.

#### 3.1 SHELTER FOR INDIVIDUALS: ACCESS, TYPE AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The District will use three types of shelter for adult individuals during the FY21 winter months.<sup>6</sup> A list of year-round and seasonal shelters is included in Appendix A. Overflow locations are not advertised in this plan to prevent individuals from presenting at locations that are not operational.

- Year-Round Low-Barrier Shelters for individuals operate year round and provide a variety of services.
- Seasonal Shelters will be brought online in two phases: phase one on the first night a hypothermia alert is called, and phase two as phase one facilities approach maximum capacity. Once brought online, seasonal shelters will remain open throughout the rest of the season.
- Overflow Shelters will be opened only when all other shelters are at or near capacity.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, low-barrier and seasonal shelters for individuals will remain open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to limit unnecessary movement among clients with the goal of reducing COVID-19 exposure and transmission. Exceptions may be required to facilitate deep cleaning and/or necessary maintenance and repairs. Planned daytime closures will be discussed with partners as described in Section 1.3 of this plan.

Together, DHS and TCP monitor capacity levels carefully and determine when (and where) additional sites need to be activated. These facilities have standby staff that are called in to operate the shelters as needed.

#### **Overflow Shelter Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

While DHS' intent is to operate all shelter 24/7, given the unprecedented nature of the pandemic and our inability to predict with certainty how much additional shelter capacity may be needed in the months ahead, the District may at some point exhaust options for facilities that allow 24 hour access. If the District needs to use overflow locations with daytime use restrictions, the ICH and DHS will use the ERSO Committee (as described in Section 1.3) to discuss options with partners and develop a plan that aims to minimize risk for all individuals involved – including consumers, staff, transportation drivers, and members of the public.

<sup>6</sup> Historically, the District has utilized four categories of shelter during hypothermia season. In addition to year-round, seasonal, and overflow shelters, the District has utilized "hypothermia alert night shelters," which are open only on nights when a hypothermia alert has been called to ensure adequate capacity for the increase in individuals that choose to access shelters when the weather is particularly cold. In FY21, all low barrier and seasonal shelters will remain open 24/7, which eliminates the need for alert night beds but also changes the way seasonal beds will be brought online. In past years, all beds categorized as seasonal were available on the first night a hypothermia alert was called and then remained operational the rest of the season. However, because we know we will not need 100% of the seasonal beds at the outset of the season, these facilities will be opened in two phases.

Individuals staying in shelter will be encouraged to remain at the same location and same bed throughout the season. While individuals can of course leave the shelter to take care of personal business, homeless service system transportation services will be limited due to the pandemic and clients will need to take public transportation. (See Section 4: Transportation for more information.) Given the reduction in transportation services and reduced availability of daytime service programming this winter, DHS will be increasing case management supports at seasonal shelters.

Individuals newly experiencing homelessness can identify a shelter with availability and receive transportation assistance getting to that location by calling the DC Shelter Hotline at 202-399-7093.

### 3.2 SHELTER FOR FAMILIES: ACCESS, TYPE AND HOURS OF OPERATION

During the public health emergency, Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC) has been closed to the public and all eligibility is conducted by VWFRC staff through the DC Shelter Hotline. DHS expects to continue this posture during the hypothermia season but may return to in-person services if/when the District progresses into subsequent stages of its [COVID-19 Reopening Strategy](#).<sup>7</sup>

### 3.3 ESTIMATING SHELTER CAPACITY NEED

As part of the District’s preparation for hypothermia shelter needs, the ICH Shelter Capacity Work Group – a work group under the ERSO Committee – develops estimates of the numbers of individuals and families anticipated to need shelter during the upcoming winter. To develop these estimates, the work group looks at historical trends, including the numbers of individuals and families served during the past three years, noting overall trends, turnaways, seasonal spikes, etc.

While the work group attempts to account for the impact of any changes in policy, new resources coming online, and broader economic conditions that could lead to changes in the number of people experiencing homelessness, the COVID-19 pandemic (and associated economic fallout) has placed an unprecedented number of individuals and families at risk of homelessness. Examples of variables that could impact the number of people experiencing homelessness in our community in the months ahead include if (and how much) assistance the federal government provides to states, how long the District must remain operating in a modified state, whether the District must return to a full shutdown at any point, how many jobs are permanently lost as a result of the shutdown, whether schools remain closed and if parents can find adequate childcare so they may return to work, and whether the surrounding jurisdictions increase their shelter capacity to meet their residents’ needs or if we see additional regional inflow.

While the shelter capacity estimates included in this section do include some buffer over past years, the full impact of the variables described in the paragraph above is, at this point, unknowable. It’s also unknowable *when* the largest impacts may occur. Because there is a cost to leasing/maintaining empty buildings that may or may not be used – resources desperately needed in other parts of the homeless services system –

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<sup>7</sup> Prior to the public health emergency, the VWFRC was open for in-person services Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Outside of these hours, intake was completed telephonically.

the District will continue using the District Economic Recovery Team (DERT) Housing Monitoring Group<sup>8</sup> to monitor key housing and labor market indicators to assist in planning how to best deploy eviction prevention resources and when additional shelter might be needed. The ICH will share any key updates with the ERSO Committee to ensure nonprofit and private sector stakeholders also have access to this information.

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### 3.3.1 COVID CAPACITY LEVELS

To reduce density and support social distancing within the District’s congregate shelters, in spring 2020, DHS took beds offline at each year-round shelter but added facilities (hotels) to maintain overall capacity within the system. While the “COVID capacity targets” are not fixed (e.g., a shelter could go over their target to accommodate an individual returning from an Isolation and Quarantine, or ISAQ, site), DHS will use these COVID capacity targets for the purposes of determining how many additional facilities will be needed this winter to meet needs within the system. Further, any additional facilities brought online will also take social distancing guidelines into consideration and operate at reduced density levels (relative to the number of people that could be served under normal conditions at each location).

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### 3.3.2 CAPACITY NEEDS: ADULT MEN

Based on the methodology described above, the Shelter Capacity Work Group recommended that DHS identify 1,297 beds for single adult men at the outset of the hypothermia season, and then continue to monitor shelter utilization and other housing market indicators to determine if additional beds will be needed as the eviction moratorium is lifted and eviction cases begin making their way through the court system. *Table 1: Shelter Capacity Overview, Adult Men* shows where these beds will be located throughout our system and the capacity at each site.

Based upon the ICH’s Shelter Capacity Workgroup’s review, the highest reported usage for men in FY20 was 1,208, but the most frequently reported usage for men was 1,080. Peak shelter utilization typically occurs within the District in late January or early February. As of the drafting of this plan, the District’s eviction moratorium runs through at least December 9 (end of public health emergency plus 60 days), while the national eviction moratorium ordered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention runs through December 31. In a worst case scenario where the moratorium lifts at the end of December and there are no additional funds allocated by Congress for rent relief – given the amount of time it takes for cases to move through the court system – it would likely be late winter or early spring before we start to see impacts on the shelter system. The 1,319 beds being planned for offer the District a more than 20% buffer over last year’s average utilization as we continue to monitor emerging trends. If additional beds are needed at any point in the season, DHS will activate overflow beds.

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<sup>8</sup> The DERT Housing Monitoring Group is a District government interagency group that was stood up at the beginning of the public health emergency to support interagency communication, coordination, and planning. Members include (but are not limited to) the Office of Planning, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the DC Housing Authority, the Office of the Tenant Advocate, DHS, and ICH.

**Table 1: Shelter Capacity Overview, Adult Men**

Name of Shelter	Provider	Year-Round Beds (COVID Capacity)	Seasonal Beds		Overflow	Total
			Phase 1	Phase 2 <sup>9</sup>		
New York Avenue	Catholic Charities	200				200
801 East Shelter	Catholic Charities	240				240
Adams Place Shelter	Catholic Charities	115				115
Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV) Drop-In Center	CCNV		70			70
Kennedy Recreation Center	Catholic Charities		70			70
Phase 2 Site	Catholic Charities			70		70
Phase 2 Site	Catholic Charities			70		70
Pandemic Emergency Program for Vulnerable Individuals (PEPV) Hotels (Double-Occupancy) <sup>10</sup>	Catholic Charities	484				484
<b>Men's Capacity</b>		<b>1,039</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>140</b>	--	<b>1,319</b>
Banneker Recreation Center (Coed) <sup>11</sup>	Catholic Charities		30			30
Overflow Capacity	DHS				As needed	

### 3.3.3 CAPACITY NEEDS: ADULT WOMEN

The Shelter Capacity Work Group recommended that DHS identify 577 beds for single adult women at the outset of the hypothermia season, and then continue to monitor shelter utilization and other housing indicators to determine if and when additional beds might be needed for women. Based upon the ICH's Shelter Capacity Workgroup's review, the highest reported usage for women in FY20 was 473, but the most frequently reported usage rate for women was 432. Accordingly, the 600 beds being planned for offer the

<sup>9</sup> Phase 2 Seasonal Facilities will be activated when Phase 1 Facilities reach approximately 75% capacity. This plan will be updated with the facility names at that time.

<sup>10</sup> The PEPV sites were brought online as part of DHS' emergency response to the pandemic under DHS' mass care emergency support function. Although the sites are not part of the Continuum of Care, they are reflected in this table given the relationship between the PEPV sites and overall system capacity.

<sup>11</sup> Co-ed location. Beds are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

District an over 30% buffer over last year’s average utilization as we continue to monitor emerging trends. If additional beds are needed at any point in the season, DHS will activate overflow beds. *Table 2: Shelter Capacity Overview, Adult Women* shows where these beds will be located throughout our system and the capacity at each site.

**Table 2: Shelter Capacity Overview, Adult Women**

Name of Shelter	Provider	Year-Round Beds (COVID Capacity)	Seasonal Beds		Overflow	Total
			Phase 1	Phase 2 <sup>12</sup>		
D.C. General Building 9-Harriet Tubman	Catholic Charities	130				130
Patricia Handy	N Street Village	105				105
Saint Josephine Bakhita (formerly Nativity Shelter)	Catholic Charities	20				20
Adams Place Day Center	N Street Village		30			30
Sherwood Recreation Center	Catholic Charities		60			60
Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV) Drop-In Center	CCNV		24			24
Patricia Handy Extension <sup>13</sup>				23		23
Pandemic Emergency Program for Vulnerable Individuals (PEP-V) Hotels (Double-Occupancy) <sup>14</sup>	Catholic Charities	208				208
<b>Total Capacity</b>		<b>463</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>23</b>		<b>600</b>
Banneker (Co-ed) <sup>15</sup>	Catholic Charities		30			30
Overflow Capacity	DHS				As needed	

<sup>12</sup> Phase 2 Seasonal Facilities will be activated when Phase 1 Facilities reach approximately 75% capacity.

<sup>13</sup> In the fall of 2020, Pat Handy Shelter will be temporarily relocated to swing space to allow for needed repairs/renovations at the permanent facility. The swing space is larger than the current facility and will accommodate an extra 23 beds.

<sup>14</sup> The PEPV sites were brought online as part of DHS’ emergency response to the pandemic under DHS’ mass care emergency support function. Although the sites are not part of the Continuum of Care, they are reflected in this table given the relationship between the PEPV sites and overall system capacity.

<sup>15</sup> Co-ed location. Beds are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

### 3.3.4 CAPACITY NEEDS: FAMILIES

The number of shelter units needed for families on BOTH shelter entries and exits per month. This is because once placed in shelter, a family remains until they find permanent housing. Once they exit the shelter unit, however, that unit becomes available for a new family experiencing homelessness. This cycle repeats itself throughout the season.

To estimate the number of shelter units needed for the FY21 hypothermia season, DHS began with a review of actual entries and exits throughout the FY20 hypothermia season. This is depicted in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Actual Number of Families Served by Month, FY20 Hypothermia Season**

	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	March 2020
Families in shelter on last day of previous month	497	527	521	539	576	567
(+) Entries	107	78	104	114	61	69
(-) Exits	77	84	86	77	70	89
Total Families	527	521	539	576	567	547

Over the past several years, the District has realized significant reductions in family homelessness as a result of homelessness prevention programming, year-round access to shelter (which has helped normalize shelter utilization throughout the year), and increased housing resources to help families exit shelter to permanent housing. As a result of these reductions, in recent years, DHS combined actuals with an improvement factor of 5% to estimate the number of overflow units needed throughout the season. Given the current public health and economic crisis, however, it is difficult to predict how many families will experience homelessness this year and how rapidly they will be able to exit to permanent housing. Therefore, DHS did not include the improvement factor this year and has instead planned for increases in inflow throughout the winter months. As shown in Table 5, DHS assumes a 25% increase in inflow each month (beginning in October), resulting in an approximate 63% increase in the census by the end of the season.<sup>16</sup> While the District has increased funding for its Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) and Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) and is ramping up other eviction prevention programs, it is also planning for up to 250 hotel rooms for overflow family shelter should they be needed (see Table 6 for planned family shelter capacity).

<sup>16</sup> This estimate aligns with [research](#) from Columbia University economist Brendan O’Flaherty, who has projected that homelessness could increase across the country between 40-45% if historic relationships between unemployment and homelessness hold constant in the months ahead.

**Table 5: Projected Number of Families to be Served by Month, FY21 Hypothermia Season**

	<b>Oct. 2020</b>	<b>Nov. 2020</b>	<b>Dec. 2020</b>	<b>Jan. 2021</b>	<b>Feb. 2021</b>	<b>March 2021</b>
Estimate of families in shelter on last day of previous month	310	373	388	441	504	515
<i>(+) Estimated Entries (based on prior year)</i>	110	80	110	110	65	65
<i>(+) Possible surge due to COVID<sup>17</sup></i>	28	20	28	28	16	16
<i>(-) Estimated Exits (based on prior year)</i>	75	85	85	75	70	90
<b>Total Families</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>506</b>

**Table 6: Capacity Retained by Month, FY21 Hypothermia Season**

	<b>Oct. 2020</b>	<b>Nov. 2020</b>	<b>Dec. 2020</b>	<b>Jan. 2021</b>	<b>Feb. 2021</b>	<b>March 2021</b>
Short Term Family Housing Units	276	276	276	276	311	311
Apt Style Units	102	102	102	102	102	102
12 <sup>th</sup> St SE (Temporary Shelter Capacity)	26	26	26	26	26	26
Overflow Hotel Capacity <sup>18</sup>	0	0	50	100	100	100
<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>539</b>

<sup>17</sup> The District's moratorium on evictions is in place through December 9, while the CDC national order runs through December 31. While there is likely to be a time lag between the end of the eviction moratorium and any surge in shelter entries, to be conservative, the model assumes a 25% increase in inflow each month beginning in October.

<sup>18</sup> As of the drafting of this plan (August 2020), year-over-year reductions in family homelessness have allowed DHS to close contracted hotels being used for overflow family shelter. However, DHS is planning for up to 250 rooms to serve as overflow family shelter during the upcoming hypothermia season if additional capacity is needed.

When a family is referred from VWFRC to emergency shelter and needs a reasonable accommodation – e.g., a wheelchair-accessible unit or a placement with private bathrooms, eating or sleeping areas due to a disability of a household member – DHS will make every attempt to provide an appropriate placement on the day the family is determined eligible for such shelter.

#### 3.4 WARMING SITES AVAILABLE DURING COLD WEATHER EMERGENCIES

During a Cold Emergency Alert, the District will continue operations in accordance with the annual Winter Plan but takes additional steps, as explained in *Section 2.2 Cold Weather Emergencies*, including the activation of Overnight Warming Sites.

Overnight Warming Sites are designated public buildings, including but not limited to public libraries, recreation centers (not otherwise being used as seasonal shelters for FY21), and senior wellness centers, serving as temporary respite from the cold. Overnight Warming Sites will be in operation from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Some sites may open later than 7:00 p.m. based on regularly scheduled business operations. Sites may be opened prior to 7:00 p.m. and close later than 7:00 a.m. based on the severity of the weather and as determined by the Cold Emergency Steering Committee.

By November 1 of each year, DHS – in coordination with the Department of General Services (DGS) – will update the list of available Warming and Overnight Warming Sites. This information will be available on <https://snow.dc.gov/>.

## 4. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an important resource for those who are homeless, especially during the winter months. Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, however, there will be significant changes to transportation services during the FY21 hypothermia season.

During hypothermia season, DHS typically—that is, when we are not in a public health emergency — provides two types of transportation assistance:

- Scheduled Transportation. Scheduled transportation is designed to provide direct transportation in the mornings from shelters to specific locations throughout the District, and in the evening from those designated pick-up locations back to the shelters.
- Unscheduled Transportation. Unscheduled (or “on demand”) transportation is provided outside of scheduled transportation hours to assist vulnerable individuals in accessing shelter when an alert is in effect.

Because of the added COVID-19 exposure and transmission risks associated with moving large numbers of people in and out of shelter each day via passenger vans, DHS eliminated scheduled transportation routes in the spring when they transitioned to 24/7 shelter operations. The scheduled routes will continue to be on hiatus throughout the FY21 hypothermia season. Clients staying in shelter will be encouraged to take public transportation when they need to take care of personal business. The ICH anticipates receiving private/philanthropic resources during the FY21 hypothermia season to support client transportation needs (e.g., Metro, Uber) for clients engaged in housing or employment search, attending healthcare appointments, or conducting other essential business. Resources will be distributed to clients via their case managers.

Unscheduled transportation services will be prioritized for clients newly experiencing homelessness, clients newly seeking shelter (e.g., individuals staying in an unsheltered location), relocating clients to a PEP-V site, or other needs as determined by DHS. Wait times will depend on a variety of factors, including call volume, weather conditions, and location of pick-ups.

If at any time during the FY21 hypothermia season the District reaches Phase 4 of its reopening plan, DHS will resume scheduled transportation and will publish transportation routes and times, sharing information with partners as described in Sections 1.2 and 1.3 of this plan.

### 4.1 COORDINATING TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES AND OUTREACH

UPO personnel conduct outreach, offering safety checks, warming items, and unscheduled transportation to shelter for clients in unsheltered locations. On each shift, at least one of the vans deployed by UPO will be accessible for people who have disabilities. Additionally, UPO will operate an internal radio communications system on a 24-hour schedule to coordinate hypothermia services on the streets.

Van drivers will have hand-held radios with them at all times to facilitate effective communications between UPO vans and their central office. Outside of the scheduled transportation, if a person needs

assistance, a van will be dispatched and a shelter assignment may be made, based on bed availability and the person's needs. The Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS) Department will be notified to provide emergency medical care and possible transportation to a medical facility whenever a person appears to be suffering from hypothermia or any other medical issues.

With regard to safety checks and the distribution of warming items, UPO vans will focus their outreach efforts in areas that have the largest concentrations of individuals experiencing homelessness. As part of their outreach activities, UPO personnel will offer transportation to shelter and distribute blankets and other supplies to persons who decline to come into shelter. In addition, the vans will transport individuals from shelters that have exceeded capacity to shelters that have available beds. Outreach and transportation services, as necessary, will also be provided to those who have called an emergency assistance number for service.

In instances of extreme weather when roads are impassable, DHS will coordinate with the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) to provide vital transportation for persons in need.

#### 4.2 TRANSPORTATION FOR MINORS AND TRANSITION AGE YOUTH (TAY)

Transportation protocols for minors and Transition Age Youth (TAY) differ depending on the age of the youth or young adult:

- Minors. UPO does not transport minors. For unaccompanied **minors under the age of 12**, please contact the DC Child and Family Services Agency Hotline at 202.671.7233 or MPD by calling 911. These agencies coordinate closely and either may be contacted for assistance.

For unaccompanied **minors between the ages of 12 and 17**, the best number to call is the Sasha Bruce Youthwork Hotline at 202.547.7777. This hotline is operated out of Bruce House and staffed 24 hours a day. If a young person does not have access to transportation and calls the Sasha Bruce Youthwork Hotline, an outreach worker or taxi (depending on the time of day and availability of staff) will be dispatched to bring the youth to a safe location.<sup>19</sup>

- Transition Age Youth. For Transition Age Youth (TAY) between the ages of 18 and 24, contact the DC Shelter Hotline at 202.399.7093.

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<sup>19</sup> Sasha Bruce works closely with District Government agencies, including DHS, MPD, and the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), to get young people home safely. We know young people may be intimidated if immediately referred to the government or picked up by police, so the District works closely with its nonprofit partners to make sure young people have a safe and welcoming place to go when they need help.

## 5. SERVICES COORDINATION

### 5.1 MEALS

Food service for families at District-owned temporary shelter locations will include three meals a day. If at any point in the season DHS expands into overflow motels where 100% of units are contracted for overflow, the motels will provide breakfast and a hot dinner meal will be served on site via contract with an outside vendor. In facilities where meal service is not possible, DHS will work to the maximum extent possible to ensure rooms are equipped with microwaves and refrigerators. Gift cards and/or other forms of financial assistance for food will be provided as needed on a case-by-case basis, and motels will be supplied with non-perishable snacks to help in the case of late-night placements and emergency situations. In all cases, information regarding provision of meals and food resources will be discussed with families at the time of placement.

For unaccompanied individuals, three meals a day will be provided at all year-round and seasonal shelters.

### 5.2 STREET OUTREACH SERVICES

The District government contracts with a number of agencies to provide outreach services during hypothermia season and extreme weather conditions. The ICH facilitates a work group composed of these District-funded outreach providers, privately funded outreach teams, and the outreach specialists at DHS and DBH to ensure that community resources are strategically deployed and effectively coordinated.

The outreach agencies provide a vital function in our homeless services system, working to engage vulnerable individuals and to 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 who 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 hospitalization evaluation) are needed to protect individuals from cold weather injury.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to secure client cooperation with voluntary transport to a warm and safe setting, if an individual refuses to go inside and conditions are such that the individual's wellbeing is believed to be at risk, community outreach teams may call on DBH's Community Response Team (CRT) or MPD for assistance executing an involuntary hospitalization, known in the District as an FD-12. It is important to note the following about the FD-12 process:

- Individuals authorized to complete the FD-12 form include a DBH officer-agent, an MPD officer, a physician, or a licensed psychologist.
- Regardless of who executes the FD-12 paperwork, MPD should be called to assist with transport. It is important to note that DBH policies prohibit DBH staff from providing transport for an involuntary hospitalization.
- When an FD-12 is executed by an authorized agent other than MPD, and MPD is called to assist with transport, *MPD does not need to witness the behavior directly* to proceed with transport.

Individuals will be taken to Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) or to other local emergency departments for emergency physical and mental health evaluation in accordance with provisions of the Ervin Act (78 Stat. 944; D.C. Official Code § 21-521).

### **Calls for Information Regarding Outreach Services**

Calls for information regarding outreach services should be directed to the DC Shelter Hotline at 202-399-7093 or the Mayor’s Call Center at 311. UPO will triage the appropriate safety check and outreach services to those persons in need of outreach services.

### **5.3 POLICE AND OUTREACH PROVIDERS COOPERATION**

MPD is committed to assisting homeless outreach agencies and workers who wish to enter a vacant building to engage a person who is homeless whenever there is a safety risk in the opinion of the outreach representative. Assistance from MPD may be obtained by calling 911.

MPD officers also play an important role in protecting vulnerable individuals who are unable or unwilling to go inside during extreme cold weather situations. As explained above in Section 5.2, while every effort will be made to secure client cooperation with voluntary transport to a warm and safe setting, if an individual refuses to go inside, outreach staff may contact MPD for assistance executing an FD-12, or for assistance with transport once an FD-12 has been issued by another authorized entity.

### **5.4 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

If a service provider is concerned about a client’s mental health stability, a request may be made to the Community Response Team (CRT) at DBH. The CRT is a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week service. When called, the team will attempt to link or re-link the consumer to mental health services or provide a crisis assessment and initiate the appropriate intervention. DBH staff will provide homeless services outreach workers with orientation, training, and written materials to increase their understanding of psychiatric impairments and how to make an initial determination of whether DBH involvement is needed. The overarching goal is to protect the health and safety of the consumer, especially during severe weather conditions.

Homeless services system outreach providers will work closely with the DBH CRT team and may contact the CRT team directly when assistance is needed. Members of the public attempting to seek assistance for an unsheltered individual experiencing a psychiatric crisis should always contact the DBH CRT team at (202) 673-6495.

### **5.5 HEALTH SERVICES AND DETOXIFICATION SERVICES**

Unity Health Care (UHC) operates year-round clinics at various shelter locations, including Federal City Shelter, 801 East Shelter, New York Avenue Shelter, the Pat Handy Center, Adams Place Shelter, and Adams Place Day Center. It also operates a mobile medical outreach van for non-sheltered persons who are homeless. 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 UHC for follow-up. FEMS should be contacted for persons in need of emergency health care and/or immediate transport to a hospital.

Comprehensive detoxification services from alcohol and opioids are available at the Psychiatric Institute of Washington (PIW) for those requiring/requesting assistance. PIW is located at 4228 Wisconsin Avenue NW (phone: 202- 885-6510) and assessments are offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. MPD is responsible for transporting persons in need of detoxification services. Individuals who are uninsured, or are DC Residents with Fee-For-Service Medicaid, must first visit the Assessment and Referral Center (ARC), Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at 75 P Street NE (at the intersection of P Street and Florida Avenue) for a referral to PIW.

#### 5.6 SERVICES FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUESTIONING (LGBTQ) COMMUNITY

The District is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all persons served by the Homeless Services Continuum of Care. Gender expression, gender nonconformity, or the fact that a person is transgender may not be used as a factor by District government agencies or providers funded by the District government in determining access to programs and services. Without exception, all persons who are eligible to receive homeless services in the District of Columbia may receive services at a facility serving persons of the gender with which he/she identifies regardless of the sex assigned at birth, whether or not he/she has had medical procedures to align his/her physical bodies with his/her gender expression. Staff should also ensure that individuals know that there is a co-ed shelter during hypothermia season, in case the individual would feel most safe in a co-ed environment.

In sex-segregated facilities, the service provider, in consultation with the client, will make individualized decisions about where to place the client within the facility based on the level of comfort, safety, and degree of privacy required to preserve physical and mental well-being. Low-Barrier, Seasonal, Hypothermia, and Overflow Shelter providers that are not able to make an appropriate accommodation for safety or privacy concerns onsite should contact the DC Shelter Hotline at 202-399-7093 so that the client may be transported to a facility that can make such an accommodation. Clients waiting for a pickup by UPO must be provided with a safe location in which to wait.

For more information on the District of Columbia Homeless Services Continuum of Care Policy on Serving Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Clients, please visit TCP's website at <http://www.community-partnership.org/>.

#### 5.7 SERVICES FOR THE LATINX COMMUNITY

Printed materials will be provided in Spanish for distribution to organizations that primarily serve the Latino community. The District Shelter Hotline will seek to have bilingual staff at the Hotline office, and has minimally one bilingual driver. UPO will have access to interpretation services for Spanish-speaking callers through Language Line Services at 1-800-367-9559.

As cited in the section above, the District is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all persons experiencing homelessness. All individuals, regardless of legal status, will be provided access to shelter to prevent cold weather injury.

## 5.8 INTERPRETATION SERVICES

Interpreters are available through Language Line Services, a professional, telephone-based interpretation service that provides interpreter assistance in more than 140 languages, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. UPO has access to Language Line Services through a toll free number made available by DHS, 1-800-367-9559.

## 5.9 SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Individuals experiencing domestic violence should keep the following guidance in mind:

- 1) If in immediate danger, call 911.
- 2) If fleeing domestic violence and lacking safe housing, but have time to assess options, call the DC Victim Hotline (available 24 hours) at 1-844-443-5732 (1-844-4HELPDC).
- 3) If no domestic violence beds are available, contact the DC Shelter Hotline at 202-399-7093.

If a client calling the DC Shelter Hotline discloses domestic violence, shelter hotline staff will confer with the client about his/her ability to access a safe location while they wait, and will determine the pick-up location based on the client's safety needs.

Domestic violence resources and information will be made available at all shelters, including hypothermia sites. If a client discloses domestic violence to a shelter provider, the provider will review options with the client, including calling the DC Victims Hotline (if that is desired but has not already been attempted), identifying a location within the facility that maximizes the client's safety and privacy, or – if the facility cannot make an appropriate accommodation – contacting the DC Shelter Hotline for transport to an alternate location with bed availability. Clients waiting for a pickup by UPO must be provided with a safe location in which to wait.

## 5.10 SUPPLIES

TCP works closely with volunteers and nonprofit agencies to secure supplies for distribution and use during the hypothermia season. An ample inventory of other supplies will also be on hand, namely, sleeping bags and essential items to guard against the effects of the cold such as hats, gloves, scarves, socks, and thermal underwear. TCP and the UPO hypothermia staff will coordinate the retrieval and storage of all supplies. Any provider seeking supplies should contact the DC Shelter Hotline directly.

### **Donations During Hypothermia Season**

Community-based organizations, faith-based groups, and private citizens that have items to donate and/or who want to participate in providing survival items to clients on the street are asked to contact Tom Fredericksen at TCP at 202-543-5298 to allow the District to better coordinate these donations and activities. The District welcomes the partnership, but wants to ensure that groups are working in coordination with trained outreach staff to deliver services to our vulnerable neighbors, particularly in light of the public health emergency.

## 5.11 TRAINING

Training for outreach workers and shelter providers on the District’s hypothermia season protocol will be conducted by TCP in conjunction with DHS and DBH. All agency directors or designated staff directly involved in the provision and management of hypothermia-related services will be required to attend an initial review of protocols, processes, communications, and responsibilities related to the upcoming hypothermia season.

Ongoing hypothermia-related training opportunities, including training on customer-service topics and the Homeless Services Reform Act (HSRA), will be offered during the season at times and places that are convenient for staff members involved in the provision of hypothermia services.

## 6. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND TRANSITION AGED YOUTH

Since the launch of Solid Foundations DC, the landscape in the District around homeless services for unaccompanied youth looks dramatically different. Building on the work of prior years, resources allocated in the FY19 and FY20 budgets allowed us to launch the District's first 24-hour youth drop-in center, develop prevention programming for young people seeking support, create additional shelter beds needed to ensure a more immediate connection for youth seeking a safe place to sleep, and expand transitional housing capacity for young adults experiencing homelessness.

Much work remains to fully implement Solid Foundations DC. The strategies identified in the plan\_ call for more program interventions needed within the District's homeless services system to stabilize and assist young people experiencing a housing crisis and to ensure homelessness among youth is brief, rare, and nonrecurring. As with Homeward DC, the strategies in Solid Foundations DC will take time to implement; we will not be able to bring all the needed programs to scale overnight. Accordingly, the information in this FY21 Winter Plan is to ensure that, in the meantime, the District government and its network of providers have strategies in place to ensure that vulnerable youth have a safe place to go and are protected from cold weather injury during the hypothermia season.

### 6.1 UNACCOMPANIED MINORS (<18 YEARS OF AGE)

The system for responding to the needs of unaccompanied children under the age of 18 is fundamentally different from the system designed to assist adults, and there are a number of resources dedicated to minors who have left home without permission or who are experiencing homelessness.

The Strengthening Teens Enriching Parents (STEP) Initiative was developed in September 2017 in response to Mayor Bowser's call to action to address the issue of youth reported missing to police. STEP is a voluntary prevention/intervention program that lasts for up to six months depending on the youth's and family's needs. STEP is a collaboration between DHS, the Child & Family Services Agency (CFSA), the Department of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS), Court Social Services (CSS), and Sasha Bruce Youthwork. Through a daily call, partner agencies ensure that youth reported missing to MPD are assigned to a lead agency. Youth already engaged with CFSA, CSS, DHS, or DYRS are assigned to those agencies as leads; youth not already engaged with one of these agencies are assigned to a STEP case manager or Sasha Bruce for outreach. Each lead agency is required to determine why the youth was reported missing and what services/interventions can be put in place to support the youth and family and reduce the likelihood of additional missing persons reports. The ultimate goal is to reduce the likelihood of future incidents (of the youth running away or being kicked out) by providing families with tools to resolve conflict in a healthy way and ensuring youth have the support of caring adults.

For those youth who do not immediately return home, the Sasha Bruce Youthwork Bruce House, a 24-hour facility for minors, provides emergency shelter to minors to ensure that youth have a safe place to stay while the situation is being resolved. Current capacity for unaccompanied minor children is 15<sup>20</sup> beds.

Family reunification is the goal whenever minors can return home safely, and when they cannot, CFSA is engaged. Consequently, there is a high turnover rate on beds earmarked for minors.<sup>21</sup> The ICH monitors bed utilization over the hypothermia seasons to ensure the District is deploying resources as strategically as possible.

While the STEP Program is targeted to minors who are reported missing, similar services are available to minors who leave home and are *not* reported missing by a parent. Any minor, or anyone that comes into contact with a minor on the street, can request assistance by calling the Sasha Bruce Youthwork Hotline, at (202) 547-7777.

**6.2 TRANSITION AGED YOUTH 18 TO 24 YEARS**

A number of new shelter beds for Transition Age Youth (TAY) have come online, with more beds being added in FY20. (See Table 9 below.) Additionally, under the Solid Foundations DC plan, additional beds/units of varying program types are being brought online. This is notable because having more transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and extended transitional housing earmarked for TAY ensures we have the resources to help youth exit shelter more quickly to a more stable environment, which in turn helps us reserve emergency beds for young people with no safe alternatives.

**Table 9: System Capacity – Unaccompanied Transition Aged Youth (18 – 24)**

Type of Bed	Inventory
TAY Shelter	128 <sup>22</sup>

Ideally we would have a developmentally appropriate resource for every young person who presents, but as discussed in the opening of this section, it will take time to scale youth programming. In instances where no dedicated beds are available, TAY can access shelter at any of the District’s low-barrier shelters, including year-round, seasonal, alert night, and overflow facilities. In cases where a youth has entered an adult shelter but prefers placement in a youth-specific facility, the youth will be transferred to a dedicated TAY resource as it becomes available.

<sup>20</sup> The Youth System regularly tracks utilization of minor beds. This plan will be updated if more minor beds are needed over the hypothermia season.

<sup>21</sup> According to the District’s Framework for Serving Unaccompanied Minor Children, shelter and reunification services for unaccompanied minors may be provided by the homeless services system for up to three days without parental or court approval. Average stay is 21 days, but can be extended as needed. Using an average three-week length of stay, these beds will be able to provide shelter for an estimated 430 youth over the course of the year.

<sup>22</sup> DHS received additional shelter bed funding in FY2020 that are in the final stages of launching. The winter plan will be updated as new shelter resources come online.

### 6.3 OUTREACH & IN-REACH SERVICES FOR YOUTH

Youth-focused outreach is conducted year-round by a variety of youth serving agencies. In addition to the youth-focused outreach, there are street outreach organizations that cover catchment areas across the city. These outreach organizations engage with all persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness in their respective catchment areas regardless of age. Providers and partners should refer to the youth transportation protocol outlined in Section 4.7 to connect a youth on the street to shelter or services.

Ongoing data tracking in the ICH Youth Committee shows us that we continue to have a fairly significant number of TAY accessing the adult low-barrier shelter system who did not appear on the District's youth CAHP system registry (meaning they were directly accessing the low-barrier shelter system, versus being referred there from youth providers because youth beds were at capacity). While it is always up to the youth to access the program they feel is most appropriate for them, we want to ensure youth are aware of their options. Accordingly, the ICH Youth Committee will continue to analyze utilization data throughout the winter to continue doing targeted shelter in-reach. Likewise, training will be provided to all low-barrier shelter operators on youth system resources, referral protocols, and techniques for offering more developmentally appropriate services in the context of the adult low-barrier system.

## 7. COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES

### 7.1 HOMELESS SERVICES MONITORING

DHS monitors shelter operations year-round to ensure that clients are being served well and to note any corrective actions that must be taken. When corrective actions are required, these actions must be accomplished within a given time, and DHS will confirm that they have been completed.

### 7.2 COMPLAINTS OR SUGGESTIONS

Customers with specific concerns may report an incident or file a complaint with the Homeless Services' Office of Program Review, Monitoring and Investigation (OPRMI) Unit through the following avenues:

DHS Website: [dhs.dc.gov/page/suggestions-and-complaints](https://dhs.dc.gov/page/suggestions-and-complaints)

Email: [OPRMI@dc.gov](mailto:OPRMI@dc.gov)

Telephone: 202-673-4464 (Hotline)

Postal Mail: OPRMI, 64 New York Avenue, NE, 6th Floor  
Washington, DC 20002.

Appendix A outlines locations that will be used to provide shelter for single adults during the FY21 hypothermia season. Because overflow shelters are opened only if additional capacity is needed, they are not identified in this document to prevent individuals from seeking shelter at locations that are not open.

An individual seeking assistance (directly or on behalf of another individual) should always call the DC Shelter Hotline at 202-399-7093 to be directed to a location with availability.

**Table 10: Men’s Shelter –Year-Round Low-Barrier Sites**

<b>Name of Shelter</b>	<b>Location</b>
801 East Shelter	801 Making Life Better Lane, SE
Adams Place Shelter	2210 Adams Place, NE #1
New York Avenue Shelter	1355-57 New York Ave., NE

**Table 11: Men’s Shelter –Seasonal Locations**

<b>Name of Shelter</b>	<b>Location</b>
Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV)	425 Second Street, NW
Kennedy Recreation Center	1401 7 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW
Phase 2 Site	Plan to be amended with address when site brought online
Phase 2 Site	Plan to be amended with address when site brought online
Banneker Recreation Center (Co-ed)	2500 Georgia Ave, NW

**Table 12: Women’s Shelter –Year-Round Low Barrier Sites**

<b>Name of Shelter</b>	<b>Location</b>
Harriet Tubman, D.C. General Building 27	1910 Massachusetts Ave, SE #27
Saint Josephine Bakhita Women’s Shelter (formerly Nativity Shelter)	6010 Georgia Ave, NW
Patricia Handy Place for Women	1009 11 <sup>th</sup> St, NW <sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> During the fall of 2020, Pat Handy Shelter is being temporarily relocated from its permanent location (810 5<sup>th</sup> St, NW) to swing space (1009 11<sup>th</sup> St, NW) to allow repairs at the shelter’s permanent facility.

**Table 13: Women’s Shelters –Seasonal Shelters**

<b>Name of Shelter</b>	<b>Location</b>
Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV)	425 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street, NW
Sherwood Recreation Center	640 10 <sup>th</sup> St, NE
Adams Place Day Center	2210 Adams Place, NE
Patricia Handy Extension	1009 11 <sup>th</sup> St, NW

**APPENDIX B: SHELTER, DROP-IN AND OUTREACH LOCATIONS – YOUTH**

Appendix B outlines locations that will be used to provide shelter to Transition Age Youth and unaccompanied minors during the FY20 hypothermia season.

**Table 14: Youth Shelters**

<b>Name of Shelter</b>	<b>Population Served</b>	<b>Location</b>
Low-Barrier Crisis Beds (Casa Ruby)	Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18 to 24 (LGBTQ safe space, open to all youth 18-24)	7530 Georgia Ave, NW
Muriel’s House	Families Headed by a Youth Aged 16 to 21	Location not public - contact: 202-696-0043 for more information
The Sanctuary (Covenant House)	Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18 to 24	129 Yuma St, SE
BruceHouse (Sasha Bruce Youthwork)	Minor Children	1022 Maryland Ave, NE

**Table 15: Youth Drop-In Centers**

<b>Youth Drop-In Centers</b>	<b>Population Served</b>	<b>Location</b>
LAYC’s DC Safe Housing Drop-In Center	Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18 to 24	1419 Columbia Rd, NW
Sasha Bruce Youthwork’s Barracks Row Drop-In Center	Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18 to 24	741 8th St, SE
DC Doors’ Zoe’s Doors Drop-In Center	Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18 to 24	900 Rhode Island Ave, NE
Casa Ruby’s Drop-In and Respite Center	Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18 to 24 (LGBTQ safe space, open to all youth 18-24)	7530 Georgia Ave, NW
Covenant House Service Center	Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18 to 24	2001 Mississippi Ave, SE

**Table 16: Youth Street Outreach Teams**

<b>Youth Street Outreach Teams</b>	<b>Population Served</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Friendship Place	Unaccompanied Youth under 25	202-364-1419
Sasha Bruce Youthwork	Unaccompanied Youth under 25	202-506-7264
HERS Resiliency	Unaccompanied Youth under 25	202-643-7831

**APPENDIX C: WINTER PLAN PHONE NUMBERS**

Appendix C is a list of key phone numbers associated with the Winter Plan.

**Table 17: Winter Plan Phone Numbers**

Number	Purpose
Emergency/MPD: 911	For immediate medical emergency. If you see an unsheltered neighbor who appears to be unconscious or not breathing, or who is exhibiting erratic or threatening behavior, contact 911. Likewise, if you or someone you know is fleeing domestic violence and is in immediate danger, contact 911.
DC Shelter Hotline: (202) 399-7093 Mayor's Call Center: 311	District of Columbia residents experiencing homelessness may call either of these numbers to seek shelter. Members of the general public may also call these numbers to request help for someone on the street.
Safe Place Hotline: (202) 547-7777	A 24-hour hotline that can assist when an unaccompanied minor is identified (e.g., via street outreach or other system partners) or otherwise presents for assistance anywhere in the community. RHY Hotline staff will dispatch an outreach worker or cab (depending on the time of day and availability of staff) to bring the youth to safety. A staff person will conduct an initial screening and determine appropriate next steps.
DBH Community Response Team Line: (202) 673-6495	DBH Community Response Team (CRT) will respond to individuals throughout the District who are experiencing a psychiatric crisis and who are unable or unwilling to travel to receive mental health services. CRT services are provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
DC Victim Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)	24 hour hotline that provides free, confidential, around the clock information and referrals for victims of all crime in the District of Columbia.
Donation/Volunteer Coordination: 202-543-5298 (Tom Fredericksen at The Community Partnership)	Community members, faith-based groups, and other volunteer organizations that have items to donate and/or who want to participate in providing survival items to clients on the street are asked to contact Tom Fredericksen at The Community Partnership at 202-543-5298 to allow the District to better coordinate these donations and activities. The District welcomes volunteers,

	but wants to ensure groups are working in coordination with trained outreach staff to deliver services to our vulnerable neighbors.
Language Line Services: 1-800-367-9559	For providers who need language related assistance, interpreters are available through Language Line Services: a professional, telephone-based interpretation service that provides interpreter assistance in more than 140 languages, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. DHS has made provisions for Language Line Services through the listed toll free number.
DHS Homeless Services Monitoring Unit: 202-673-4464 or <a href="http://dhs.dc.gov/page/shelter-monitoring">http://dhs.dc.gov/page/shelter-monitoring</a>	Advocates and/or consumers can report concerns or file a complaint related to Homeless Services with the Homeless Services Monitoring Unit by calling its 24-hour customer service number or by submitting a form online.

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