

# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## FY23 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. The general public may also call these numbers to request help for someone in need of assistance.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In compliance with the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005 (HSRA), this FY23 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 that provide a legal right to shelter in hypothermic weather conditions. The HSRA mandates that a plan is in place by September of each year describing how District residents 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 2.0](#) (the District's second strategic plan to address homelessness among single adults and families) and [Solid Foundations DC](#) (the District's plan to address homelessness among unaccompanied youth) will take years to implement fully. Accordingly, the District is committed to ensuring it has effective strategies in place to protect residents experiencing homelessness from cold weather injury.

Additionally, the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the United States in early 2020 resulted in many challenges and 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 to keep individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness safe. The same will be true as we move into the FY23 winter with COVID-19's continued presence. DHS has relied on and will continue to align with CDC and DC Health guidance, including exposure and quarantine-related guidelines and best practices.

This year, two ever-evolving situations may impact the District's homeless services.

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<sup>1</sup> The District of Columbia government budgets by fiscal year, which starts on October 1 and ends on September 30. Fiscal year 2023 (FY23) starts October 1, 2022 and ends on September 30, 2023. Unless noted as "winter FY23" or "hypothermia FY23," 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.

1. Monkeypox is an emerging worldwide health threat with a documented and increasing presence in the District; and
2. Influx of Migrants. As of April 13, the governors of Texas and Arizona have transported thousands of migrants to sanctuary cities (including Chicago, the District, and New York City).

Given our experience addressing the threat of COVID-19, the Winter Plan integrates and accounts for the most significant operational adjustments associated with COVID-19, including lower densities and 24/7 operation of low barrier shelters. We expect that some of the strategies adopted to address the threat of COVID will position us to mitigate against the dangers of Monkeypox successfully. Still, we also know that we need to be flexible as the conditions around us continue to change.

Regarding the influx of migrants, the Mayor proposed, and the District's Council passed, the Migrant Services and Supports Emergency Amendment Act of 2022. This act creates an Office of Migrant Services responsible for providing services and support to incoming migrants (including offering grants to nongovernmental organizations to support the provision of services) and seeking reimbursement and additional assistance from the federal government. Services may include meeting buses, providing meals and urgent medical care, providing temporary shelter, facilitating onward travel, and linking migrants to resettlement and asylum-related legal services. Such efforts will be culturally competent and temporary. Services provided through the Office of Migrant Services are not a part of the homeless service Continuum of Care. The District's homeless services Continuum of Care, however, will coordinate with the Office of Migrant Services so that migrants seeking homeless services are appropriately triaged and connected to the services rendered by the Office of Migrant Services and its non-governmental partners, including temporary shelter as appropriate. It is the intention of the Winter Plan that between OMS and the homeless services Continuum of Care, all migrants who are homeless in the District will have timely access to shelter during hypothermia conditions.

To summarize, we know that the District has a long and well-established history of expanding shelter resources and options, as and when appropriate, to protect residents experiencing homelessness against cold weather injury. We expect to draw on this extensive expertise as needed. To ensure that we are accounting for and abreast of the ever-evolving situations highlighted here, the District will gather the pertinent partner feedback and share critical system updates monthly using the process described in Section 1.3.

#### 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 or filing a complaint.

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

The ICH Emergency Response and Shelter Operations (ERSO) Committee is responsible for supporting the development of the District's Winter Plan. At the end of each Hypothermia Season, 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 Workgroup convenes to review shelter utilization from previous hypothermia seasons and to develop estimates for the number of beds/units needed for the upcoming season, with a particular focus on the beds needed for men and women. The Workgroup's recommendations were presented to the ICH ERSO Committee in July and are detailed in Section 3.3 of this plan.

At the August ERSO committee meeting, the Committee discussed the strategy for addressing the uncertainties related to Monkey Pox and the influx of migrants and established a schedule for reviewing a draft of the Winter Plan in mid-September. Based on the discussion and consensus at the August meeting, ICH staff presented a draft to ERSO members mid-September. Concerns and edits flagged were incorporated and addressed before a final draft was presented to the ICH ERSO Committee for review and approval at the 9/28 ERSO Committee meeting. Following approval by ICH ERSO stakeholders, the Plan was presented to the ICH Executive Committee for adoption on October 11, 2022.

### 1.1 FY22 HYPOTHERMIA SEASON REVIEW

In the FY22 winter season, 114 hypothermia alerts were called (60 after 7 pm and 54 after 7 am). Additionally, there were 28 Cold Weather Emergency Alerts.

In past years, before the pandemic, when alerts were called, year-round and seasonal shelters remained open during the daytime so clients would have a warm and safe place to stay. Additional shelter capacity was created as 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. During the height of the pandemic, when Stay-At-Home orders were in effect, year-round and seasonal shelters were open 24/7, regardless of the temperature or alerts. Last year, as the District emerged from the pandemic, year-round shelters were available 24/7, irrespective of the temperature or alerts.

In contrast to [Homeward DC 2.0](#), 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 the information on the

cause of death once it has been established. During the FY22 winter, there were three (3) deaths in which the primary cause was Hypothermia.

The ICH and its member agencies continue to learn from past efforts to improve our hypothermia response from one year to the next. Over the past five years, the District has taken several additional measures in preparation for the winter season, including adding more vans/buses to reduce wait times, expanding outreach services, developing a hypothermia outreach protocol, and operational changes in response to COVID. Due to the continued threat of COVID and the additional concerns related to Monkey Pox, many of these measures will remain in place for the FY21 hypothermia season.

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

<b>Year</b>	<b>Hypothermia Deaths (Primary Cause of Death)</b>	<b>Hypothermia or Cold Exposure (Contributing Cause of Death)</b>	<b>Total Deaths Associated with Hypothermia or Cold Exposure</b>
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
Winter FY21 <sup>3</sup>	2 (previously reported as 4)	0 (previously reported as 3)	2 (previously reported as 7)
Winter FY22	3	0	3

## 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.

<sup>3</sup> When the ICH contacted the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) to establish the number of deaths related to hypothermia amongst people experiencing homelessness for FY22, OMCE also reviewed the numbers reported for FY21 (and captured in the FY22 Winter Plan) and noted that those figures accounted for ALL deaths related to hypothermia, not just the deaths of individuals experiencing homelessness. The data reported for FY21 is revised in this document so that it only captures deaths related to hypothermia for individuals experiencing homelessness.



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 individuals experiencing homelessness 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 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 experiencing homelessness and needing assistance. Law enforcement agencies may also use the 311 line.

All interested persons may register for emergency alerts through Alert DC. This emergency notification system 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](https://dc.gov) or <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, 2021, 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 in 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 experiencing homelessness and possibly needing assistance, especially in hypothermic weather conditions.
- Newspapers: Quarter-page hypothermia shelter hotline advertisements will be placed in community newspapers throughout the season. Publications such as Hill Rag, DC North, East of the River, and Street Sense have been used.

- Business Cards: Pocket-sized business cards, including key emergency assistance telephone numbers, will be printed and distributed. The cards will be available in English and Spanish and distributed to the outreach community, providers, and those experiencing homelessness.
- HopeOneSource: 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 the help they may need. To sign up for HopeOneSource text messages or to learn more, visit <https://www.hopeonesource.org/dc>.

### 1.3 PROCESS FOR UPDATING THE PLAN

As discussed in the introduction, several factors (especially COVID-19, Monkey Pox, and the influx of migrants) require the District to be flexible in its approach to delivering services to people experiencing homelessness to ensure we are responsive to the changing landscape and using resources as strategically as possible. As we continue navigating these global and local concerns, the ICH ERSO Committee, which meets monthly, will continue to serve as a forum for identifying challenges, soliciting feedback from partners, and providing critical updates. In addition to leveraging monthly ERSO meetings, DHS will continue to provide updates to stakeholders through the other relevant ICH Meetings, updated guidance, and other communication channels.

## 2. PROCESS FOR CALLING ALERTS

This section describes the process and considerations involved in calling hypothermia and Cold Weather Emergency alerts. In past years, monitoring temperatures and communicating alert status was 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 will continue monitoring the weather and calling alerts to ensure staff have the information they need to support operations and that 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), DHS, 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, HSEMA and DHS will monitor the NWS website for the published forecast throughout the day.

Hypothermia alerts will be called when the NWS published forecast indicates that the actual or forecasted temperature, including wind chill, is 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 predicted chance of precipitation is 50% or greater.

By 7:00 a.m. each day, HSEMA will notify DHS and UPO whether the actual or forecasted temperature, including wind chill, is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below. 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.

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 key personnel administering critical homeless services programs impacted by the alert status regardless of whether the status has changed. The information on the alert status will also be posted and available for all interested parties on DHS's website at [www.dhs.dc.gov](http://www.dhs.dc.gov). It 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. The alert status is also sent out to individuals experiencing homelessness who have signed up for alerts via the HopeOneSource free text messaging app.<sup>4</sup>

DHS will keep a daily record of forecasts and alert status. This 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 debriefing session after the season is completed. See *Section 1.3 Publicizing the Plan* for additional information on alert notifications.

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<sup>4</sup> To sign up for HopeOneSource text messages or to learn more, visit <https://www.hopeonesource.org/dc>.

## 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 because it is designed to “ensure *all* residents, workers, and visitors are protected from extreme cold weather.” However, 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 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 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 two types of shelter for adult individuals.

- Year-Round Low-Barrier Shelters for individuals operate year-round and provide various services. Low barrier shelters are listed in Appendix A: Shelter Locations – Single Adults.
  - Hours of Operation: For the most part, the low barrier shelters available year-round are currently operating 24/7.
    - There are two exceptions: Blair (which serves men) and St. Josephine’s (which serves women). These two low barrier shelters operate from 7 pm to 7 am.
    - Additionally, it is important to recognize that the provision of 24/7 operations is not baked into DHS’ base budget. DHS is establishing its spending plan for FY23. As such the agency is working to determine whether this is a reasonable expectation for FY23 hypothermia season. Moreover, DHS will provide 60-day notice to providers and the ERSO Committee if continued 24/7 operations is not feasible.
- Overflow Shelters for individuals will open based on demand, only after year-round low barrier shelters are at or near capacity. Some critical features for operating overflow shelters include:
  - Threshold: The threshold for activating overflow shelters, to the extent that overflow shelters are available, is population specific:
    - Men: a total of 20 vacant beds across all low-barrier and overflow beds available for single adult men and
    - Women: a total of 10 vacant beds across all low-barrier and overflow beds available for single adult women.
  - Hours of operation: once an overflow shelter is open, for as long as there is consistent demand, the District will make every effort to operate overflow shelters from 8 pm to 7 am for the rest of the season. However, there may be sites that can only operate during alert nights.
  - Location details: Only the overflow locations associated with low barrier shelter sites are listed in this plan. All other overflow locations are not advertised in this plan to prevent individuals from presenting at locations that are not operational.

- Back up: once DHS exhausts all available options for overflow shelters, it will have to consider returning to pre-COVID shelter densities at strategic shelter locations to ensure that it can meet the charge of preventing cold weather injury.

This is a departure from prior years, which included a specific set of seasonal shelters that opened at the beginning of hypothermia season and operated for the entirety of the season. Given our inability to predict how much additional shelter capacity may be needed in the months ahead, the District is preparing to open overflow shelters as needed. Overflow shelters operate from 8 pm to 7 am. Once brought online, to the extent possible, overflow shelters will remain open throughout the rest of the season if there is a consistent demand for the facility. Together, DHS and TCP monitor capacity levels carefully. As the number of vacant beds falls below the threshold for overflow capacity, DHS and TCP will activate the overflow sites available, leveraging standby staff to operate the shelters as needed.

Otherwise, low-barrier shelters for individuals and Pandemic Emergency Program for Vulnerable Individuals (PEP-V) will remain open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Exceptions may be required to facilitate deep cleaning and necessary maintenance and repairs. Planned daytime closures will be discussed with partners as described in Section 1.3 of this plan.

Individuals staying in low barrier shelters will be encouraged to remain at the same location and bed throughout the season, although individuals can, of course, leave the shelter to take care of personal business.

Individuals 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) was closed to the public, and all eligibility was conducted by VWFRC staff through the DC Shelter Hotline. As of July 12, 2021, VWFRC has reopened to the public and is conducting eligibility both by phone and in person with capacity limits on the number of people permitted to enter VWFRC at a time.

#### **Accessing Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC)**

VWFRC operates Monday-Thursday 8:30 am to 4:00 pm and Friday 8:30 am to 12:00 pm.

Clients can complete the intake either in person or virtually. For the safety of staff and families, DHS encourages families to complete the eligibility process for homeless services by contacting VWFRC at 202.526.0017 or using the shelter hotline at 202.399.7093. When the families contact either of those numbers, they will be connected to a member of the VWFRC team.

Concerns can be flagged at [VWFRC.concerns@dc.gov](mailto:VWFRC.concerns@dc.gov).

### 3.3 ESTIMATING SHELTER CAPACITY NEED

As part of the District’s preparation for hypothermia shelter needs, the ICH Shelter Capacity Workgroup – a Workgroup under the ICH ERSO Committee – develops estimates of the numbers of individuals and families anticipated to need shelter during the upcoming winter<sup>5</sup>.

Annually, TCP prepares a hypothermia debrief report that outlines, among several factors, the maximum, minimum, median, mode, and average occupancy of shelters serving Men and Women on both alert and non-alert nights.

**Table 2: Occupancy of Men and Women Shelters on Alert and Non-Alert Nights, Nov 2021 – Mar 2022**

Population	Alert Status	Maximum	Minimum	Median	Mode	Average
All Men’s Shelters Combined	Alert Nights	1328	1159	1280	1301	1267
	Non-Alert Nights	<b>1393</b>	1130	1231	1144	1239
All Women's Shelters Combined	Alert Nights	<b>526</b>	433	501	507	495
	Non-Alert Nights	516	412	477	485	469

This year, the ICH Shelter Capacity WG also considered, for the first time, forecasting developed by DHS. DHS has created a sophisticated, data-driven model projecting the number of beds for the upcoming Hypothermia Season. The model uses shelter data from previous years, PIT count data on the entire homeless population, weather data, and DC population data.

**Table 3: DHS Forecast of Beds for Single Adults (Men and Women) for the FY23 Hypothermia Season**

Month and Year	Bed Forecast for Single Men	Bed Forecast for Single Women	Total Bed Forecast
November 2022	1,159	442	1,601
December 2022	1,199	436	1,635
January 2023	1,285	454	1,739
February 2023	1,286	451	1,737
March 2023	1,237	440	1,677

<sup>5</sup> These estimates take PEPV operation and occupancy into account. Moreover, these estimates also assume that PEPV is available as an intervention for FY23. However, these estimates do not take the influx of migrants into consideration as the first migrants bussed from Texas and Arizona arrived April 13, 2022 whereas the data analysis that is used to estimate and project demand for Hypothermia season is limited to Hypothermia season from November 2021 to March 2022.

Given that this is the first year that the District is moving in the direction of modeling and forecasting capabilities and because the number of beds recommended by the forecast is significantly lower than the number of beds based on the traditional methodology, the ICH Shelter Capacity workgroup recommends that instead of limiting the estimate of demand to the model, the District would benefit from comparing the forecast against actual shelter usage for this coming hypothermia season. If the forecast proves accurate, we can move towards limiting the shelter beds in our system to the model’s predictions.

### 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 (Pandemic Emergency Program for Vulnerable Individuals, PEP-V) to maintain overall capacity within the system. We refer to the shelter densities at the height of the pandemic as the COVID Capacity.

For the FY22 hypothermia season, DHS increased shelter capacity over the “COVID Capacity;” however, shelter densities are still lower than pre-COVID levels. We will refer to the FY22 as the current shelter densities or capacity.

For the FY23 Winter Plan, DHS is using the current shelter densities to calculate year-round capacity at low barrier shelters. It is important to recognize that the current capacity levels are targets, not limits. As such, once DHS exhausts all available options for overflow shelters, it will have to consider returning to pre-COVID shelter densities at strategic shelter locations to ensure that it can meet the charge of preventing cold weather injury.

### 3.3.3 CAPACITY NEEDS: ADULT MEN

The ICH Shelter Capacity Workgroup recommends that DHS identify 1,400 beds for single adult men and continue to monitor shelter utilization to determine if additional beds will be needed.

Using the methodology described above, the workgroup estimated demand at the maximum utilization in FY22. The workgroup did not recommend adding a 10 – 20% buffer because significant PSH resources are available to address chronic homelessness. Last year, the District successfully reduced Chronic Homelessness by 20% (as documented in the 2022 PIT Count), and we expect similar gains this year. This is particularly important to shelter inventory because individuals experiencing chronic homelessness usually occupy a bed year-round. As we house our longest stayers, a bed that was previously only serving 1 individual is now serving multiple individuals during the hypothermia season.

**Table 4: Shelter Capacity Overview, Adult Men Shelter** shows where these beds will be located throughout our system and the capacity at each site. If additional beds are needed, DHS will activate overflow beds.



**Table 4: Shelter Capacity Overview, Adult Men Shelter**

Name of Facility	Provider	Year-Round Beds	Overflow	Total
801 East Shelter <sup>6</sup>	Catholic Charities	332	40	
New York Avenue	Catholic Charities	225		
Adams Place Shelter	Catholic Charities	125		
Pat Handy Legacy	Catholic Charities	130		
Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV) Drop-In Center	CCNV	67		
Blair	Coalition for the Homeless	72		
Living Life Alternatives (LGBTQ+)	Coalition for the Homeless	28 <sup>7</sup>		
Pandemic Emergency Program for Vulnerable Individuals (PEPV) Hotels (Double-Occupancy) <sup>8</sup>	Multiple Providers	465 <sup>9</sup>		
<b>Total Capacity</b>		<b>1,444</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1,484</b>
Overflow Capacity	DHS		As needed	

<sup>6</sup> 801 East location includes 192 low barrier beds, 140 specialized beds, and 40 overflow beds at the Day Center.

<sup>7</sup> Assumes a 70/30 split, meaning that 70% of the facility will likely serve individuals previously utilizing facilities for men.

<sup>8</sup> PEP-V sites were brought online under DHS' mass care emergency support function during the pandemic. Although they are not part of the Continuum of Care, they are included here given the relationship between PEP-V and overall system capacity.

<sup>9</sup> Based on a 70/30 split between men and women

### 3.3.3 CAPACITY NEEDS: ADULT WOMEN

Based on the methodology described above, the ICH Shelter Capacity Workgroup recommends that DHS identify 550 beds for single adult women across hypothermia season and then continue to monitor shelter utilization to determine if additional beds will be needed. **Table 5: Shelter Capacity Overview, Adult Women**, shows where these beds will be located throughout our system and the capacity at each site. DHS will activate overflow beds if additional beds are needed at any point in the season.

*Table 5: Shelter Capacity Overview, Adult Women*

Name of Facility	Provider	Year-Round Beds	Overflow	Total
D.C. General Building 9-Harriet Tubman	Catholic Charities	155		
Patricia Handy Swing Space	N Street Village	140		
Saint Josephine Bakhita (formerly Nativity Shelter)	Catholic Charities	20		
Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV) Drop-In Center	CCNV	24		
Living Life Alternatives (LGBTQ+)	Coalition for the Homeless	12 <sup>10</sup>		
Pandemic Emergency Program for Vulnerable Individuals (PEP-V) Hotels (Double-Occupancy) <sup>11</sup>	Catholic Charities	199 <sup>12</sup>		
Adam's Place Day Center	DHS		30	
<b>Total Capacity</b>		<b>550</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>580</b>
Overflow Capacity	DHS		As needed	

<sup>10</sup> Assumes a 70/30 split, meaning that 30% of the facility will likely serve individuals previously utilizing facilities for women.

<sup>11</sup> The PEPV sites were brought online under DHS' mass care emergency support function during the pandemic. Although they are not part of the Continuum of Care, they are included here given the relationship between PEPV sites and overall system capacity.

<sup>12</sup> Based on a 70/30 split between men and women

### 3.3.4 CAPACITY NEEDS: FAMILIES

The number of shelter units needed for families is based on monthly shelter entries and exits. This is because once placed in a 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 FY23 hypothermia season, DHS began with a review of actual entries and exits for the past three hypothermia seasons (FY20, FY21, FY22). This is depicted in **Table 6: Actual Number of Families Served by Month, FY20, FY21, FY22 Hypothermia Season** below.

**Table 6: Actual Number of Families Served by Month, FY20, FY21, FY22 Hypothermia Season**

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
	19	19	19	20	20	20	20	20	20	21	21	21	21	21	21	22	22	22
<b>Families in shelter on the last day of the prior month</b>	497	527	521	539	576	567	302	277	275	240	210	166	173	170	166	156	164	148
<b>(+) Entries</b>	107	78	104	114	61	69	53	58	53	50	47	50	70	55	59	55	43	64
<b>(-) Exits</b>	77	84	86	77	70	89	78	60	88	80	91	87	73	59	69	47	59	71
<b>Total Families</b>	527	521	539	576	567	547	277	275	240	210	166	129	170	166	156	164	148	141

This was another extraordinary year. During the pandemic, the District saw fewer families seeking shelter placement. As we exit the pandemic, the District continues to see a reduction in the number of families seeking shelter placement. The comprehensive system reforms initiated in 2015 likely to continue to be impactful. As such, the District will continue to prevent homelessness through the Homeless Prevention Program (HPP), offer year-round access to shelter (which has helped normalize shelter utilization throughout the year), and appropriately fund rapid re-housing resources to help families exit shelter to permanent housing and ensure shorter lengths of stay in the shelter.

However, given the continuing economic crisis, 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 8: Projected Number of Families to be Served by Month, FY23 Hypothermia Season**, DHS assumes a 50% increase in inflow each month above the average from the last three years (beginning in August), resulting in an increase in the census by the end of the season. Since this is a more conservative projection, entry into the family system may not be as high as outlined below.

**Table 7: Average Number of Entries and Exits over the Last Three Fiscal Years**

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
<b>(+) Entries</b>	77	64	72	73	50	61
<b>(-) Exits</b>	76	68	81	68	73	82

**Table 8: Projected Number of Families to be Served by Month, FY23 Hypothermia Season**

	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23
<b>Families in shelter on the last day of the previous month</b>	172	211	239	266	308	311
<b>(+) Estimated Entries (based on 3-year average, plus a 50% surge)</b>	115	96	108	110	76	92
<b>(-) Exits</b>	76	68	81	68	73	82
<b>Total Families</b>	211	239	266	308	311	321

**Table 9: Capacity Retained by Month, FY23 Hypothermia Season**

	Oct. 2022	Nov. 2022	Dec. 2022	Jan. 2023	Feb. 2023	March 2023
Short-Term Family Housing Units <sup>13</sup>	311	311	311	311	311	311
Apt Style Units <sup>14</sup>	86	86	86	86	86	86
<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>

When a family is referred from VWFRC to an 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 by the annual Winter Plan but take 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 overflow shelters for FY23), and senior wellness centers, serving as a temporary respite from the cold. Overnight Warming Sites will be in operation from 7:00 p.m.

<sup>13</sup> Thirty-five units of Short-term Family Housing meet the HSRA definition of “apartment-style.”

<sup>14</sup> This includes the following locations: Hope Apartments (10), Park Road (43), Naylor Road (28) and five (5) single family homes operated by Everyone Home DC.

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 before 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 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 essential resource for those experiencing homelessness, especially during the winter months. During hypothermia season, DHS 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 regardless of the alert status.

### 4.1 COORDINATING TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES AND OUTREACH

UPO personnel conduct outreach, offering safety checks, warming items, and unscheduled transportation to shelters for clients in unsheltered locations. On each shift, at least one of the vans deployed by UPO will be accessible to 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 hotline call center. 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. OSSE Division of Student Transportation will set aside busses and make drivers available to support UPO with the transport of clients from unsheltered locations to shelters. This partnership ensures that UPO has the support required to meet demand, particularly during hypothermia and cold weather alerts. The 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 other medical issues.

Regarding safety checks and the distribution of warming items, UPO vans will focus their outreach efforts on 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 their capacity to shelters with available beds. Outreach and transportation services, as necessary, will also be provided to persons experiencing homelessness who have called an emergency assistance number for service.

In extreme weather when roads are impassable, DHS will coordinate with the HSEMA to provide vital transportation for persons in need.

#### 4.2 SCHEDULED TRANSPORTATION FROM SINGLE ADULT SHELTERS: MORNINGS

In the morning, transportation will be provided for both women and men from various shelter locations. Details are included in the tables below. Note the following limitations when reviewing the schedule:

- All listed times are estimates, subject to change due to traffic conditions and winter weather challenges, including snow emergencies and ice. Safety is the primary concern;
- Destinations for morning transportation are subject to change based on the availability of the site or actual numbers of persons seeking to go to a specific destination;
- Accessible transportation for persons with disabilities is provided upon request; and
- Unscheduled (on-demand) transportation outside the schedule will be offered regardless of the alert status, subject to traffic conditions and winter weather challenges noted above.

**Table 10: Scheduled Transportation from Men Shelters (Morning)**

Pick Up Location	Time	Drop Off Destination(s)
Adams Place Men's Shelter @ 2210 Adams Place NE  <b>Saturday/Sundays ONLY</b>	6:30 am -8:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St NW Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams Pl NE
	9:30 am	Central Union Mission @ 65 Mass Ave Downtown Day Center@ 1313 NY Ave Other Day Programs as available
	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>800 Vermont Ave. NW</b>
801 East Men's Shelter @ 2720 MLK, Jr. Ave SE  <b>Saturday/Sundays ONLY</b>	6:30 am -9:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St NW Adam's Day Center @ 2210 Adams Pl NE Central Union Mission @ 65 Mass Ave NW Downtown Day Center@ 1313 NY Ave NW
	8:30 am (Mon, Wed & Fri only)	Thrive DC @ 1525 Newton St NW Other day programs as available
	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>800 Vermont Ave. NW</b>
New York Ave Men's Shelter @ 1355 New York Ave NE  <b>Saturday/Sundays ONLY</b>	6:30 am -8:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St NW Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams Pl NE
	9:30 am	Central Union Mission @ 65 Mass Ave Downtown Day Center@ 1313 NY Ave
	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>800 Vermont Ave. NW</b>
Pat Handy Legacy @ 810 5th St. NW  <b>Saturday/Sundays ONLY</b>	6:30 am-8:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St, NW Adam's Day Center @ 2210 Adams Pl NE
	9:30 am	Central Union Mission @ 65 Mass Ave NW Downtown Day Center@ 1313 NY Ave NW Adam's Day Center @ 2210 Adams Pl NE Other day programs as available
	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>800 Vermont Ave. NW</b>

**Table 11: Scheduled Transportation from LGBTQ+ and Overflow Shelters (Mornings)**

Pick Up Location	Time	Drop Off Destination(s)
Adams Place Day Center (Women)	6:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St NW
Blair House (Men)	6:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St NW Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE
Living Life Alternatives @400 50th St. SE	6:30 am - 9:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St NW Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE Downtown Day Center@1313 NY Ave NW

**Table 12: Scheduled Transportation from Women Shelters (Morning)**

Pick Up Location(s)	Time	Drop Off Destination(s)
Harriet Tubman @ DCG (Building 27)	6:30 am -9:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE Downtown Day Center@ 1313 NYA
<b>Saturday/Sundays ONLY</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>800 Vermont Ave. NW</b>
Pat Handy (Swing)	6:30 am- 9:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE Downtown Day Center@ 1313 NYA
<b>Saturday/Sundays ONLY</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>800 Vermont Ave. NW</b>
St. Josephine	6:30 am – 9:30 am	SOME @ 71 O St Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE Downtown Day Center@ 1313 NYA
<b>Saturday/Sundays Only</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>800 Vermont Ave. NW</b>



#### 4.3 SCHEDULED TRANSPORTATION TO DAY CENTERS AND SINGLE ADULT SHELTERS: AFTERNOONS & EVENINGS

The women's and men's evening transportation details are included in the table below. When reviewing the schedule, please note the following limitations:

- All listed times are estimates, subject to change due to traffic conditions and winter weather challenges, including snow emergencies and ice. Safety is the primary concern;
- Accessible transportation for persons with disabilities is provided upon request; and
- Unscheduled (on-demand) transportation outside the schedule will be offered regardless of the alert status but subject to traffic conditions and winter weather challenges noted above.

• **Table 13: Scheduled Transportation to Day Centers Serving All Populations (Afternoon)**

Pick Up Location(s)	Time	Drop Off Destination(s)
SOME @ 71 O St NW	2:00 pm	Downtown Day Center @1313 NY Ave NW Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE

**Table 14: Scheduled Transportation to Men (Afternoon & Evening)**

Pick Up Location(s)	Time	Drop Off Destination(s)
Adam's Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE	4:30pm- 8:30pm	New York Ave Men's Shelter 801 East Men's Shelter Pat Handy Legacy @ 810 5 <sup>th</sup> St NW Open Overflow Shelters
North Capitol & Mass Ave NE Covenant House North Cap/NYA NE side	4:30pm- 8:30pm	New York Ave Men's Shelter Adams Place Men's Shelter Pat Handy Legacy @ 810 5 <sup>th</sup> St NW Open Overflow Shelters
Downtown Day Center @ 1313 NY Ave NW	4:30pm- 8:30pm	801 East New York Ave Men's Shelter Adams Place Men's Shelter Pat Handy Legacy @ 810 5 <sup>th</sup> St NW Open Overflow Shelters

**Table 15: Scheduled Transportation to LGBTQ Shelter (Afternoon & Evening)**

Pick Up Location	Time	Drop Off Destination(s)
Downtown Day Center @1313 NY Ave NW Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE 9th & G St NW, & North Cap & Mass Ave NW	4:30pm-8:30pm  <b>Evenings</b>	Living Life Alternatives @400 50th St. SE

**Table 16: Scheduled Transportation to Women Shelters (Afternoon & Evening)**

Pick Up Location(s)	Time	Drop Off Destination(s)
Downtown Day Center @1313 NY Ave NW, 9th & G St NW, & North Cap & Mass Ave NW	4:30pm -8:30pm	Harriet Tubman @ DC General Pat Handy Swing @ 1009 11th St St. Josephine Open Overflow Shelters
North Capitol & Mass Ave. NE Covenant House North Cap/NYA NE side	6:30pm -8:30pm	Harriet Tubman @ DC General Pat Handy Swing @ 1009 11th St St. Josephine Open Overflow Shelters
Adams Day Center @ 2210 Adams PI NE	4:30pm -8:30pm	Harriet Tubman @ DC General St. Josephine Open Overflow Shelters

#### 4.4 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 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 is 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>15</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>15</sup> Sasha Bruce works closely with District Government agencies, including DHS, MPD, and the Child and Family Services Agency (CFS), 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 two meals a day. Information regarding provision of meals and food resources is discussed with families at the time of placement.

For unaccompanied individuals, DHS is establishing its spending plan for FY23. The provision of 24/7 operations, including offering three meals a day, are not baked into DHS' base budget. As such the agency is working to determine whether this is a reasonable expectation for FY23 hypothermia season.

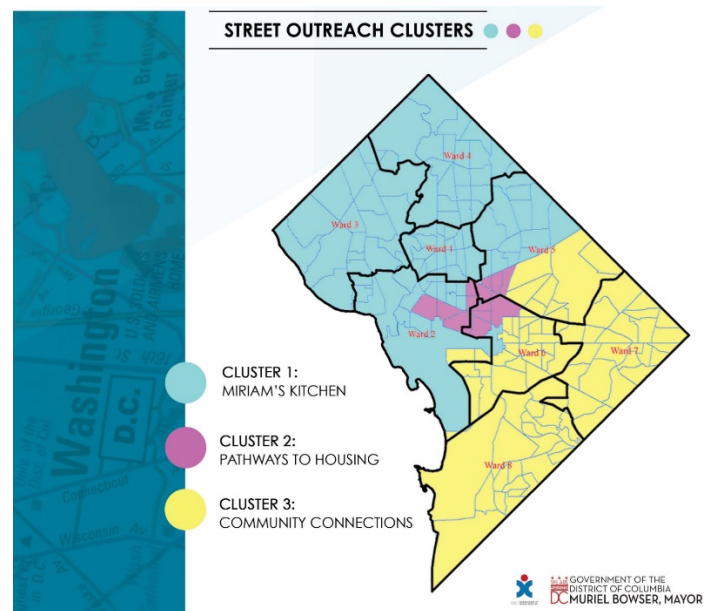
For context, during the pandemic (from spring 2020 through to August 19, 2022) DHS provided three meals a day at all year-round shelters and two meals a day at seasonal and overflow shelters, as they were not open 24/7.

### 5.2 STREET OUTREACH SERVICES

The District government contracts with several agencies to provide outreach services during hypothermia season and extreme weather conditions. The ICH facilitates the ICH Street Outreach Workgroup 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.

Currently, DHS-funded outreach providers cover the entire District through three geographical clusters. While not explicitly detailed, Miriam's Kitchen covers Wards 1, 3, and 4 completely, much of Ward 2, and north of Rhode Island Avenue in Ward 5. Pathways to Housing serves a smaller but densely populated portion of Wards 2, 5, and 6. Finally, Community Connections serves all of Wards 7 and 8, much of Ward 6, and south of Rhode Island Avenue in Ward 5. All providers engage individuals from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. throughout the year; however, during hypothermia season, when a hypothermia alert or emergency is issued, teams extend their engagement to 11 p.m.

**Figure 1: Catchment Areas for DHS Funded Outreach Providers**



The DHS-funded outreach providers play a vital role in our homeless services system, working to engage vulnerable individuals and connect them to shelter and housing resources. The outreach providers do much of this work proactively, meaning they engage and offer these resources prior to the onset of severe weather. Severe weather, most often snowfall or the accumulation of ice, makes access and engagement difficult. For this reason, sharing information about impending weather, shelter and housing options, the distribution of survival items, as well as the work of identifying particularly vulnerable individuals to partners (UPO, MPD, etc.) prior to the impact of the cold weather event is critical. Through this proactive 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 the 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 Access Help Line at 1(888)7WE-HELP or 1-888-793-4357. This 24-hour, seven-day-a-week telephone line is staffed by behavioral health professionals who can refer a caller to immediate help or ongoing care. The Access Helpline can activate mobile crisis teams to respond to adults and children who are experiencing a psychiatric or emotional crisis and are unable or unwilling to travel to receive behavioral health services. When called, the mobile crisis teams 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.

Members of the public attempting to seek assistance for an unsheltered individual experiencing a psychiatric crisis should always contact the Access Help Line at 1(888)7WE-HELP or 1-888-793-4357.

### **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 can 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 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/>.

Additionally, the District is excited to operate Living Life Alternatives, the first low barrier shelter program for unaccompanied individuals that is focused on appropriately supporting LGBTQ+ residents experiencing homelessness.

#### 5.7 SERVICES FOR THE LATINX COMMUNITY

Printed materials will be provided in Spanish for distribution to organizations that primarily serve the LatinX 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 Access 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 Access 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 their 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 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 coordinate these donations and activities better. The District welcomes the partnership and wants to ensure that groups are coordinating 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 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 FY20 and FY21 budgets allowed us to create additional shelter beds needed to ensure a more immediate connection for youth seeking a safe place to sleep, expand and extend transitional housing capacity for young adults experiencing homelessness, and increase housing options for LGBTQ+ identifying young adults. Much work remains to implement Solid Foundations DC fully. The strategies identified in the plan call for more program interventions within the District's homeless services system to stabilize and assist young people experiencing a housing crisis and ensure that 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 FY23 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. 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 lasting 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. The 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. The current capacity for unaccompanied minor children is 15<sup>16</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 of beds earmarked for minors.<sup>17</sup> The ICH monitors bed utilization over the hypothermia seasons to ensure the District is deploying resources as strategically as possible.

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<sup>16</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>17</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.

While the STEP Program targets 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 who encounters 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

Since the launch of Solid Foundations DC, several shelter programs and beds have come 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 helps us reserve emergency beds for young people with no safe alternatives. See **Table 17: System Capacity Overview, Unaccompanied Transition Age Youth (18 – 24)** and **Table 18: System Capacity Overview, Minor Children** included below for additional details.

***Table 17: System Capacity Overview, Unaccompanied Transition Age Youth (18 – 24)***

Name of Facility	Provider	Year-Round Beds	Overflow	Total
Philip Reid’s House	Sasha Bruce Youthwork	14		
Safe Haven	Covenant House	30		
Shine	Covenant House	24		
The Sanctuary	Covenant House	20	6	
<b>TAY Capacity</b>		<b>88</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>94</b>

***Table 18: System Capacity Overview, Minor Children***

Name of Facility	Provider	Year-Round Beds	Overflow	Total
BCP Shelter (12-17-year-olds)	Latin American Youth Center (LAYC)	4		
Bruce House	Sasha Bruce Youthwork	15		
<b>Minor Capacity</b>		<b>19</b>		<b>19</b>

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 develop and 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 and overflow facilities. In cases where a youth has entered an adult shelter but prefers placement in a youth-specific facility, they will be transferred to a dedicated TAY resource as it becomes available.

### 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, street outreach organizations 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 4.4 to connect youth on the street to shelter or services.

Ongoing data tracking in the ICH Youth Committee shows us that we continue to have a 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, we want to ensure that 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 served well and to note any corrective actions that must be taken. When corrective measures 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: SHELTER LOCATIONS – SINGLE ADULTS

Appendix A outlines locations that will be used to provide shelter for single adults during the FY23 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.

Individuals 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 shelter location with availability.

**Table 19: Shelter Sites**

Name of Shelter	Location
<b>LGBTQ+ Sites</b>	
Living Life Alternatives	400 50th Street SE
<b>Men's Shelter Sites</b>	
801 East Shelter	2720 Martin Luther King Ave., SE
Adams Place Shelter	2210 Adams Place, NE #1
Blair	635 I Street, NE
Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV)	425 Second Street, NW
New York Avenue Shelter	1355-57 New York Avenue, NE
Patricia Handy Legacy Site	810 5 <sup>th</sup> St, NW
801 East Day Center (Overflow)	2720 Martin Luther King Ave., SE
<b>Women's Shelter Sites</b>	
Harriet Tubman, D.C. General Building 27	1910 Massachusetts Avenue, SE #27
Saint Josephine Bakhita Women's Shelter (formerly Nativity Shelter)	6010 Georgia Avenue, NW
Patricia Handy Swing Space	1009 11 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW
Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV)	425 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street, NW
Adams Place Day Center (Overflow)	2210 Adams Place

## 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 FY23 hypothermia season.

**Table 20: Youth Shelter Sites**

Name of Shelter	Provider	Location
<b>Minor Children</b>		
Bruce House	Sasha Bruce Youthwork	1022 Maryland Ave, NE
BCP Shelter	Latin American Youth Center (LAYC)	Not applicable. These are placements with host families.
Families headed by a Youth Aged 16 – 21		
Muriel's House	Healthy Babies	Location not public - contact: 202-696-0043 for more information
<b>Unaccompanied Youth Aged 18 to 24</b>		
Phillip Reid's Home	Sasha Bruce Youthwork	1814 Rhode Island Ave, NE
Safe Haven	Covenant House	4900 Quarles Street, SE
SHINE (LGBTQ safe space, open to all youth 18-24)	Covenant House	4904 Quarles St, NE
The Sanctuary	Covenant House	511 Mellon Street, SE

**Table 21: Youth Drop-In Centers**

All drop-in centers listed below serve unaccompanied youth aged 18 – 24.

Youth Drop-In Centers	Location
LAYC's DC Safe Housing Drop-In Center	1419 Columbia Rd, NW
Sasha Bruce Youthwork's Barracks Row Drop-In Center	741 8th St, SE
DC Doors' Zoe's Doors Drop-In Center	900 Rhode Island Ave, NE
Covenant House Service Center	2001 Mississippi Ave, SE

**Table 22: Youth Street Outreach Teams**

All the street outreach teams listed below target and serve unaccompanied youth under 25.

Youth Street Outreach Teams	Contact Information
Friendship Place	202-364-8907
Sasha Bruce Youthwork	202-506-7264
HERS Resiliency	202-643-7831



## APPENDIX C: WINTER PLAN PHONE NUMBERS

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

**Table 23: 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.
Sasha Bruce Youthwork 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 Access Help Line: 1-800-453-7777 or 202-673-7777	This 24-hour, seven-day-a-week telephone line is staffed by behavioral health professionals who can refer a caller to immediate help or ongoing care.  Call the Access Helpline to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get emergency psychiatric care</li> <li>• Help with problem solving</li> <li>• Determine whether to seek ongoing mental health services or other types of services</li> <li>• Find out what services are available</li> </ul>
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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