

Ohio Basic Standards for Emergency Shelters

Prepared By:

Ohio

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Services Agency**

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A. ADMINISTRATION

1. The shelter shall be operated by a non-profit organization, recognized under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
2. The shelter shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability, age, ancestry, military status, gender identification or sexual orientation. If there are additional local ordinances governing discrimination, the shelter shall comply accordingly. Furthermore, shelters serving families with children shall not discriminate on the basis of the sex or age of the children or the size of the family. Families should be served regardless of how they define their family (e.g., two men with children, two women with children, a grandparent with grandchildren). Provision shall be made in such cases to maintain the family as an intact unit. If the shelter is unable to maintain the family as an intact unit due to its physical design, and there is no other appropriate placement, the shelter must provide a motel voucher. The shelter is not required to provide a motel voucher if the shelter is unable to serve the family because the shelter is fully occupied.
3. The shelter must include on the Board of Directors or some other policy-making entity, one or more members who are either homeless or formerly homeless.
4. The shelter's Board of Directors shall meet at least quarterly and set overall policy for the shelter.
5. The shelter shall develop and implement procedures to ensure the confidentiality of records pertaining to any individuals provided family violence prevention or treatment services.
6. The shelter shall have a policy manual which, at a minimum, includes the shelter's purpose, population served, program description, non-discrimination policy, confidentiality statement and shelter regulations, and rules and procedures.
7. Agencies that receive funding under the Homeless Crisis Response Program are required to participate in their Continuum of Care's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) strongly recommends participation for those shelters that do not receive funding.
8. Agencies that receive ODSA funding are required to regularly participate in local and regional Continuum of Care meetings.
9. The shelter shall have a written policy regarding the possession and use of controlled substances, as well as prescription and over-the-counter medication.
10. The shelter shall have a written policy regarding Universal Precautions to control the spread of infectious diseases.
11. The shelter shall have a written policy regarding the control of weapons.

B. PERSONNEL

1. The shelter shall have a table of organization of all paid staff and regular volunteers* working in the shelter. There shall be written position descriptions for each position type which includes job responsibilities and qualifications.
2. For the safety of the residents, the shelter shall have adequate, trained, on-site staff coverage during operating hours.
4. All shelter staff and regular volunteers* should receive training in at least the following:
 - a. emergency procedures; and
 - b. agency operating procedures
5. All relevant direct service staff shall receive additional training in at least the following:
 - a. non-violent crisis intervention techniques;
 - b. referral procedures to relevant community resources and providers of medical services; and
 - c. first aid procedures.
6. The shelter must conduct criminal background checks at the time of hiring and at regular intervals on all paid staff and regular volunteers*.

C. FACILITY

1. Structure and materials:
 - a. The shelter building shall be structurally sound to protect residents from the elements and not pose any threat to the health and safety of the residents.
 - b. Any renovation (including major rehabilitation and conversion) carried out with Homeless Crisis Response Program assistance shall use Energy Star and Water Sense products and appliances.
2. Access. Where applicable, the shelter shall be accessible in accordance with:
 - a. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794) and implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 8;
 - b. The Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C.3601 et seq.) and implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 100; and
 - c. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.) and 28 CFR part 35.
3. Space and security: Except where the shelter is intended for day use only, the shelter shall provide program participants in the shelter with an acceptable place to sleep and adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings.
4. Interior air quality: Each room or space within the shelter shall have a natural mechanical means of ventilation. The interior air shall be free of pollutants at a level that might threaten or harm the health of residents.
5. Water supply: The shelter's water supply shall be free of contamination.
6. Sanitary facilities: Each program participant in the shelter shall have access to

* A regular volunteer occupies a permanent volunteer position (e.g., a house monitor). This is to be distinguished from a volunteer that comes in to perform a specific task, such as painting.

sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, are private, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.

7. Thermal environment: The shelter shall have any necessary heating/cooling facilities in proper operating condition.
8. Illumination and electricity:
 - a. The shelter shall have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and support health and safety.
 - b. There shall be sufficient electrical sources to permit the safe use of electrical appliances in the shelter.
9. Food preparation: Food preparation areas, if any, shall contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a safe and sanitary manner. If the shelter is providing food service to infants, young children and mothers, it shall make provisions to meet their nutritional needs. If the shelter does not provide food service, it should arrange for food services to clients or make known the available services nearby.
10. Sanitary conditions: The shelter shall be maintained in a sanitary condition.
11. Fire safety:
 - a. There shall be a posted evacuation plan.
 - b. There shall be regular fire drills.
 - c. There shall be at least one working smoke detector in each occupied unit of the shelter. Where possible, smoke detectors are located near sleeping areas.
 - d. All public areas of the shelter shall have at least one working smoke detector.
 - e. The fire alarm system shall be designed for hearing-impaired residents.
 - f. There shall be a second means of exiting the building in the event of fire or other emergency.
 - g. There shall be adequate emergency lighting.
12. If Homeless Crisis Response Program funds were used for renovation or conversion, the shelter shall meet state or local government safety and sanitation standards, as applicable.
13. The shelter shall meet additional recipient/sub-recipient standards, if any.
14. The shelter shall have reasonable access to transportation.
15. The shelter shall provide private space to meet with clients.
16. The shelter shall have laundry facilities available to clients or a system available for like services.
17. The shelter shall have available at all times first aid equipment and supplies in case of emergency.
18. All staff on duty shall have access to a telephone. Emergency telephone numbers shall be posted conspicuously near the telephone.
19. The shelter shall provide a locked place for the storage of medications.

20. The shelter shall provide a locked place for storage of confidential documents.

D. FISCAL MANAGEMENT

1. There shall be an accounting system which is maintained in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The accounting records must segregate grant revenue and expenses.
2. The shelter shall have a record of accountability for clients' funds or valuables the shelter is holding.
3. A shelter receiving a grant of more than \$100,000 must submit a single audit, regular audit or program specific audit to ODSA in accordance with the *Grant Agreement* and *2 CFR 200, Subpart F*.
4. The shelter must have adequate internal controls over public funds. These internal controls should be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.
5. The shelter must have written procurement standards that are in compliance with *24 CFR 84* and *2 CFR 200* Minimally, these standards must ensure there will be no conflicts of interest, allow for open competition, define types of procurements (micro-purchase, small purchase, sealed bids, competitive proposals) and take steps to assure participation by small and minority businesses, women-owned businesses and entities in labor surplus areas.
6. In accordance with OCD policies and/or *2 CFR 200*, all charges to grants must be reasonable, allowable, adequately documented and determined in accordance with GAAP. This includes costs claimed as cost sharing or matching.
7. Adequate documentation for salaries/wages charged to federal and state grants should include activity reports signed by the employee or a supervisor with firsthand knowledge of the employee's activities.

E. OPERATIONS

1. The shelter shall have written policies for intake of clients and criteria for admitting people to the shelter. The shelter's intake policy should be available for the client's review.
2. The shelter shall be involved with coordinated assessment and diversion.
3. The shelter shall maintain an attendance list which includes, at least, the name and sex of each person residing in the shelter.
4. The shelter shall post and read, or otherwise make known, the rules, regulations and procedures of the shelter.
5. The shelter shall post and read, or otherwise make known, the rights and

responsibilities of shelter clients that shall include a grievance procedure for addressing potential violations of their rights. Each shelter's grievance policy must address the following:

- a. a process for initiating a grievance,
 - b. timeframes for grieving and making the final decision,
 - c. a designation for who makes the initial decision and who makes the final unappealable decision,
 - d. an appeals process, and
 - e. consequences for a client when he/she unsuccessfully grieves.
6. The shelter shall report child abuse and endangerment as required by law.
 7. The shelter shall only require clients to perform duties directly related to daily living activities within the shelter. Accommodations must be provided for those with a disability commensurate with their ability to perform work.
 8. The shelter shall provide access to a public or private telephone for use by shelter clients to make and receive calls.
 9. The shelter shall encourage the involvement of clients in the decision-making processes of the shelter.
 10. The shelter shall allow current clients to use the shelter as a legal residence for the purpose of voter registration and the receipt of public benefits.
 11. The shelter shall maintain an incident log to record daily unusual or significant incidents.
 12. The shelter shall have written policies for consensual searches.
 13. The shelter shall not require clients to participate in religious services or other forms of religious expression.

F. SERVICES

1. The shelter shall provide case management and referral services that are designed to get clients into permanent housing.
2. The shelter shall maintain records to document services provided to each client, including keeping progress notes on specific services provided.