FY2019 Winter Plan
Mayor's Office of Human Services

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Summary

The Mayor's Office of Human Services (MOHS) has developed the FY19 Winter Plan to aide in the coordination of efforts between the City of Baltimore and providers within the Continuum of Care (CoC) to provide hypothermia shelter, other protection and vital, life-saving services for Baltimore residents experiencing an episode of homelessness during the winter season.

The purpose of this document is to detail the specific plan and protocols to activate additional shelter and services to serve individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness during inclement winter weather. Traditionally, emergency homeless shelters have only expanded their shelter capacity during the winter season when the temperature with wind chill drops to 13 degrees or below and the Health Department declares a "Code Blue". The City's partnership with CoC providers will expand sheltering capacity when temperatures are forecasted to reach 32F or below (with wind chill). The FY19 Winter Plan covers the period beginning October 15, 2018 and ending on April 1, 2019. MOHS may, as a result of inclement weather (as defined in this document), utilize its discretion to activate the Winter Plan prior to October 15th or beyond April 1st.

Winter Shelter Activation

A Winter Shelter Declaration is made when the temperature is 32 degrees or below, inclusive of wind chill. The Weinberg Housing and Resource Center (WHRC) will serve as the FY19 Winter Plan lead, assuming responsibility for daily declarations and communications with MOHS, nonprofit providers, 211 and 311, and the coordination of bed utilization for participating shelter providers. MOHS will communicate this declaration via email to city government agencies, hospitals, COC membership and the general public via social media and other channels. Partnering shelter providers will increase their capacity to ensure any homeless individual or family seeking shelter is accommodated.

Code Blue Activation

The Health Commissioner declares a Code Blue based on the following criteria. When appropriate, the declaration will specify the risk period as "all day" or "night only" based on forecasted temperatures.

- Temperatures, including wind chill, are expected to be 13°F or below. This threshold can be reached by having a temperature of 20°F or less with 5 mph sustained winds or a temperature of 25°F or less with sustained winds.
- Other conditions (i.e. strong winds, forecasted precipitation for more than two hours, extended period of cold, sudden cold after a warm period) deemed by the Health Commissioner to be severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of vulnerable Baltimore citizens.

If possible, the decision to declare a Code Blue will be made by 5:00 p.m. on the previous business day and by 5:00 p.m. on Friday before the weekend in which extreme cold weather is forecasted.   The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) will send out a press release announcing Code Blue Alert status. BCHD will also notify the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management (MOEM) and other members of the Code Blue Planning Committee (see section 7 for a complete list of participating City agencies).

EMERGENCY SHELTER

The City of Baltimore has a number of shelter resources for homeless individuals and families. The FY19 Winter Plan focuses on those shelters that received funding from the city.

Shelter Access

Weinberg Housing Resource Center (WHRC), located at 620 Fallsway will serve as the transportation HUB for single adults seeking shelter. All single adults seeking shelter should report to WHRC where they will be registered and provided with transportation services to available shelter placement.

For families seeking shelter please contact WHRC at 410-627-4280, referrals and transportation will be provided to the overflow facility located at 1200 N. Fremont Ave by the MOHS Outreach Team. Families will be picked up from the location of the incoming referral.

Name of Shelter	Provider	Populations Served	Winter Shelter Capacity	Original Capacity	Hours of Operation
Maryland Center for Veterans Education and Training	McVets	Single men	60 m	0	**7pm-7am; 7 days a week upon Winter Shelter Declaration**
Monument Street Men's Shelter	VOA	Single Men	11 m	124	**7 pm- 7 am; 7days a week upon Winter Shelter Declaration**
Weinberg Housing Resource Center (WHRC)	Catholic Charities	Single Adults	60 m,w	275	**7 pm – 7 am, 7days a week upon Winter Shelter Declaration**
Overflow Facility-Fremont Ave.	Bridge Haven	Single Individuals/ Families/Men	60 w, 30 m, 15 families	78	**7pm to 7am, 7 days a week upon Winter Shelter Declaration**

Food

Food services for individuals and families are available at each shelter location.

Case Management

Families and individuals placed in winter shelter will be offered case management services in an effort to connect those willing to engage with services based upon their identified need.

Street Outreach Services

The City of Baltimore contracts with a number of agencies to provide outreach services throughout the year.

The outreach agencies provide a vital function in our homeless services system, working to engage vulnerable individuals and connect them to shelter and housing resources. Through this engagement process, the teams provide an array of services, including routine safety checks and the provision of essential survival items (e.g., food, water, blankets, hats, gloves, socks, thermal underwear) for clients that 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 evaluation) are needed to protect individuals from cold weather injury. Requests for outreach services can be made by emailing homelessoutreach@baltimorecity.gov. A member of the outreach team will be dispatched to engage homeless households in an effort to aide them in connecting to available city services.

Mental Health Services

Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) staff will provide outreach workers with orientation, training, and written materials to increase their understanding of psychiatric impairments and how to make an initial determination whether BHSB involvement is needed. The overarching goal is to protect the health and safety of the homeless especially during severe weather conditions.

If clients are experiencing a mental health crisis, need mental health or substance use services, contact the Crisis Information and Referral Line 24 hours a day/7 days a week at (410)433.5175. The referral specialist will speak to the individual or the shelter staff to screen and/or refer the individual to the appropriate services.

Health Services and Detoxification Services

The City of Baltimore Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department should be contacted for persons in need of <u>emergency</u> health care and/or immediate transport to a hospital.   Persons in need of non-emergency medical care or treatment who are able to wait until the clinics open the next day will be referred

to Health Care for the Homeless, 421 Fallsway.   Persons who are transported by EMS for intoxication or overdose may be diverted, if they consent, to the Maryland Crisis Stabilization Center, Tuerk House, 730 Ashburton St., Baltimore, Md where they will be offered peer support and treatment.

The Equal Access Rule

The Equal Access Rule requires equal access to HUD programs without regard to a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. MOHS-HSP requires all grantees, regardless of funding source, to comply with these regulations.

Shelter and housing programs serving families with children and receiving funding through MOHS-HSP may not exclude children from programs on the basis of age or gender.