

INCLEMENT WEATHER RESPONSE PLAN

NC 513 Continuum of Care

“Providing temporary emergency shelter and resources to people experiencing homelessness during inclement weather.”

FY 2023-24

INTRODUCTION

This template is designed to provide a model for the NC 513 CoC Inclement Weather Response (IWR) Plan. This plan will be used by our community partners to provide low barrier, temporary, emergency shelter and connections to people experiencing homelessness during inclement and life-threatening weather.

The template may need to be adapted to reflect the amenities of the structure and services available by the community partners, e.g., COVID, shelter site occupancy capacity, hours of intake, etc.

Inclement weather conditions such as rain, wind, and high/low temperatures can have detrimental and life-safety impacts for vulnerable populations with chronic health and disabling conditions, including those experiencing homelessness. This IWR plan focuses on:

- Operating an Orange County inclement weather “Cold Weather Cot” shelter(s) to provide respite from the weather elements;
- Providing expansion of shelter and support operations during inclement weather that may be life-threatening due to the severity of temperatures;
- Ensuring that people served are reflected in community-wide homeless system data gathering; and
- Offering persons served with connections to quickly and permanently address their housing crises.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this IWR plan is to provide information and procedures for use by the Chapel Hill / Orange County Continuum of Care (NC 513), Orange County, Town of Carrboro, Town of Chapel Hill, Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC) and community partners to open and operate “Expanded Cold Weather Cots” emergency temporary shelters for people experiencing homelessness in the event of inclement weather conditions. It describes the underlying goals of the plan, the definition of a severe inclement weather event, the responsibilities of various community and public partners, and coordination activities with other agencies.

DEFINITION OF WEATHER CONDITIONS / INCIDENT

For this document, inclement weather is defined as follows:

Inclement Weather: Harsh weather that is wet and cold where air temperatures reach 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below or windchill is forecasted to be at or below 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Inclement weather that does not meet the above criteria but meets criteria for a community-wide threat to life and property is addressed in the Orange County Emergency Operation Plan for mass care sheltering.

DURATION

The IWR plan is in effect year-round. Staff will monitor National Weather Service reports ongoing to support operation when there is an identified event that meets the above criteria.

RESOURCES:

<https://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lat=35.91489000000007&lon=-79.05676999999997>

WHAT TO LOOK / LISTEN FOR:

The NC 513 Continuum of Care will use the National Weather Service as the source for weather forecasts to determine the need for opening an inclement weather-related event. The National Weather Service issues outlooks, watches, warnings, and advisories for all winter weather hazards. The CoC Inclement Weather Team will utilize the 3-day forecast data provided by Orange County Emergency Management to announce the impending inclement weather event and notify partners of the need to open expanded cold weather cots via social media, public information officers, and OCPEH website. The Partnership will also send out a notification to the CoC providers along with instructions on how to direct those in need to the expanded Cold Weather Cots and their hours of operation.

For updates on Cold Weather Cots 23-24:

Visit: www.ocpehnc.com

Follow: <https://twitter.com/OCPEHNC>

Phone – 919-245-2490

Email: OCPEH email groups

Public Information Officers

Targeted outreach via CH Crisis Unit and SOHRAD

COMPONENTS OF the SHELTER PLAN

Many resources are needed to host a shelter site with suitable amenities for serving people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Every Night Emergency Shelters (November – April):

- **IFC Community House (men):** 1315 M.L.K. Jr Blvd, Chapel Hill
- **IFC Home Start (single women and families):** 2505 Homestead Rd, Chapel Hill

Expanded Cold Weather Cots (When temperatures drop below 33 degrees)

- **Southern Human Services Center:** 2500 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Overnight Coordinators** – Provides overnight coordination and supervision of sleeping space to ensure comfort and safety of guests, including performing Fire Watch functions, and facilitate data collection, and connection to homeless resources. It is anticipated that a pool of six paid staff will be needed, available on a PRN basis.
- **Volunteers** – Teams of two – three people working 5 - 8pm to coordinate room set-up, assist with check-in and site breakdown from 7 – 8:30am
- **CoC Inclement Weather Team** – Meet no less than monthly to review inclement trigger event, utilization of existing emergency shelter resources, and program improvements.
- **Orange County** will alert community collaborators and neighbors about events of expanded CWC, staffing for overnight coordinators; and provide client need support via the SOHRAD program in collaboration with the Chapel Hill Police Crisis Unit. OC will also provide continuous “live” training and materials for volunteers and overnight coordinators; coordinate with the

OC Health Department to provide COVID tests, OC AMS places air scrubbers, OC Emergency Services provides cots, water, onsite storage space via parking lot trailer

- **Inter-Fath Council** (for a multi-day event) will provide hot lunch and dinner at Community Kitchen Monday through Friday; hot lunch will be provided on Saturday and Sunday; for overnight accommodations, IFC will provide snacks, some blankets if available & administering volunteers.
- **Town of Chapel Hill** will provide client need support via the Police Crisis Unit in collaboration with SOHRAD and connections to Chapel Hill Transit for neighbors needing transit between IFC Commons and overflow CWC location.
- **Town of Carrboro** will provide client need support including the dissemination of expanded cold weather cot offerings, coordination with IFC Commons staff, SOHRAD and transit as needed to ensure safe transit for unsheltered neighbors
- **Orange County Sheriff's Office** is available for program operation support, including check-ins, supportive supply delivery, and transportation

ALL STAFF/VOLUNTEERS/CLIENTS WEAR MASKS, no exceptions

Set Up:

5pm - Open up Expanded Cold Weather Cot shelter – staffed by SOHRAD, CH Crisis Unit, and volunteers (5-8pm)

- Turn on lights in all rooms and hallways
- Turn on outside lights
- Turn on Air Cleaning Systems in each area
- Set up hospitality area (snacks, blankets, etc)
- Verify bathrooms are stocked and ready for use
- Set out Cold Weather Cots signage directing to entrance
- Get front desk area(s) ready for sign in

6pm – Check-in begins

- COVID Rapid Test
- Sign in each client on check-in sheet (name, DOB, check-in time, bed assignment)
- Review Shelter Guidelines if client is new
- Review whether newly identified guests would like to talk further about housing and supports

8pm – CWC overnight coordinators arrive

9pm – SOHRAD goes off shift

10pm – quiet time, devices off, no further outside visits

11pm – Chapel Hill Police Crisis Unit goes off shift

- Overnight Coordinator monitors guests to ensure safety and well being
- Overnight Coordinator completes shift report and confirms accurate guest log

Breakdown:

7am – Chapel Hill Crisis Unit goes on shift and Volunteers arrive

- Overnight Coordinator begins wake up
- Overnight Coordinator contact CH Transit with number of riders
- Volunteers assist with gathering items, break down and storage of cots, blankets
- CH Transit arrives (7:45am)

8am – SOHRAD goes on shift (M-F)

8am – CWC shelter closed, overnight coordinator leaves

8:30am – Volunteers and SOHRAD complete clean up and breakdown

Additional logistics and policy & procedures:

Meals

No meals will be provided onsite, but snacks and water will be available. Guests can go to Community Kitchen as needed

Building/Facility Amenities

As part of the development of a shelter plan, Orange County may assess the availability of space, amenities, and liability assumed under this program.

Transportation

Guests may walk up to the emergency shelter location via self-referral. Additional transportation may be provided by Town of Chapel Hill Transit, Orange County Public Transit, Inter-Faith Council for Social Services, Street Outreach Harm Reduction and Deflection, and area law enforcement agencies.

Meeting / Pick Up Locations

IFC Commons

Other community locations as needed

Maximum Number of Occupants Allowed

The maximum number of allowable temporary shelter occupants shall be determined in partnership with the local Fire Marshall.

Fire Safety and Evacuation Emergency Evacuation Plan

The local Fire Marshal and the Building Official, or their designees, shall inspect with the site coordinator present before commencement of work in preparation for operation of the temporary shelter. The inspection shall determine if the building or area is appropriate for the temporary shelter and identify what work needs to be completed before operation.

Donations

Donations can be provided to IFC for collection and dissemination.