



Department of Housing

CITY COUNCIL

**STATUS OF THE BAD WEATHER SHELTER AND
ALTERNATIVE SHELTER AND COLD WEATHER
HOMELESS SERVICES**

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December 14, 2020





BACKGROUND

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- In March 2020, the Department of Housing issued a Request for Applications (RFA) announcing the availability of federal Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding to provide specific homeless services activities, including emergency shelter, street outreach and homelessness prevention.
 - > Friends In Deed was awarded \$25,000 in funding to operate the Bad Weather Shelter during the 2020-2021 winter season.
 - Original intended dates of operation: Dec 1, 2020 - March 2021
- **Current Determination:** The Bad Weather Shelter will not be providing services during this winter season due to safety concerns arising from program operations in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.



IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON THE BAD WEATHER SHELTER

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- Primary factors impacting decision:

1.

Alternative Location

2.

Staffing Capacity

3.

Enhanced COVID-19 Safety
Protocols

4.

Shelter Program Model



ALTERNATIVE LOCATION

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- After three decades of serving as the host congregation, Pasadena Covenant Church decided to discontinue hosting the Bad Weather Shelter this winter season.
- Following Friends In Deed's multi-month effort to locate a suitable alternative location, the Housing Department was able to refer them to a church that had the physical space and was willing to host the shelter.
- **Important note:** Currently congregate shelter in converted spaces such as churches is not considered a best practice by HUD, which instead recommends non-congregate shelter in motel rooms as a best practice.



STAFFING CAPACITY

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Primary Concerns

- 1. Need for additional staff** to implement and enforce safety protocols
 - > Almost 95% of Friends In Deed's shelter staff had indicated that they were unable or unwilling to work this season
- 2. Management capacity** for hiring, onboarding and oversight of staff
 - > It is not practical nor prudent to rely on volunteers absent an experienced service provider to carry out these operations
- 3. Increased exposure and quarantine risk** for key management staff
- 4. Handling of an outbreak** and related quarantine procedures

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ENHANCED COVID-19 SAFETY PROTOCOLS

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1. Significantly reduced shelter capacity to accommodate physical distancing protocols
2. Implementation and enforcement of mask wearing and social distancing among overnight guests
3. Enhanced cleaning regimens in frequency and intensity
4. Procurement of both medical grade and non-medical grade personal protective equipment for staff and participants
5. Installation of Plexiglas barriers to allow proper sanitization and infection control

Important note: East San Gabriel Valley Coalition for the Homeless' rotating winter shelter will not be moving forward with operating this year due to the pandemic and related safety concerns



SHELTER PROGRAM MODEL

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- In contrast to the Bad Weather Shelter's model of operation, all of the LAHSA-funded winter shelters operating across the County have moved to a 24 hour-a-day operation plan and have transformed their spaces to meet COVID-19 related guidelines, including limited coming and going.
 - > Shift in operations was deemed necessary in an effort to keep all clients accessing this service healthy and safe indoors:
 - Daily temperature checks and COVID-19 screening questionnaires/testing
 - Reduces the number of new people who are potentially accessing the site on any given day, creating a cohort of participants, and thus reduces transmission risk
 - Move quickly to lock down and quarantine the whole site for a minimum of 14 days if necessary pending a positive test result or cluster outbreak



SHELTER PROGRAM MODEL

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- **The weather-activated, night-by-night, low-barrier shelter model would prevent the implementation of the many safety measures necessary for safe operations during the pandemic crisis this season.**
 - > Allowing a shelter to operate on a drop-in basis without consistent monitoring of overnight guests for potential exposure during the daytime hours would introduce increased health risks for both clients and staff due to the roster of clients continually rotating and the inconsistent capacity to implement proactive COVID-19 related precautions.

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HEIGHTENED RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION FOR SHELTER PARTICIPANTS

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- A large majority of the population served by the Bad Weather Shelter are highly vulnerable to serious illness and death from COVID-19 due to age and the presence of underlying chronic health conditions.
 - > Overall there are lower COVID-19 positivity rates among people experiencing homelessness compared to the general public.
 - > Potential of putting overnight guests, who are already particularly vulnerable to severe illness or death if they were to contract the virus, in a situation that introduces higher risk rather than promotes health and well-being.

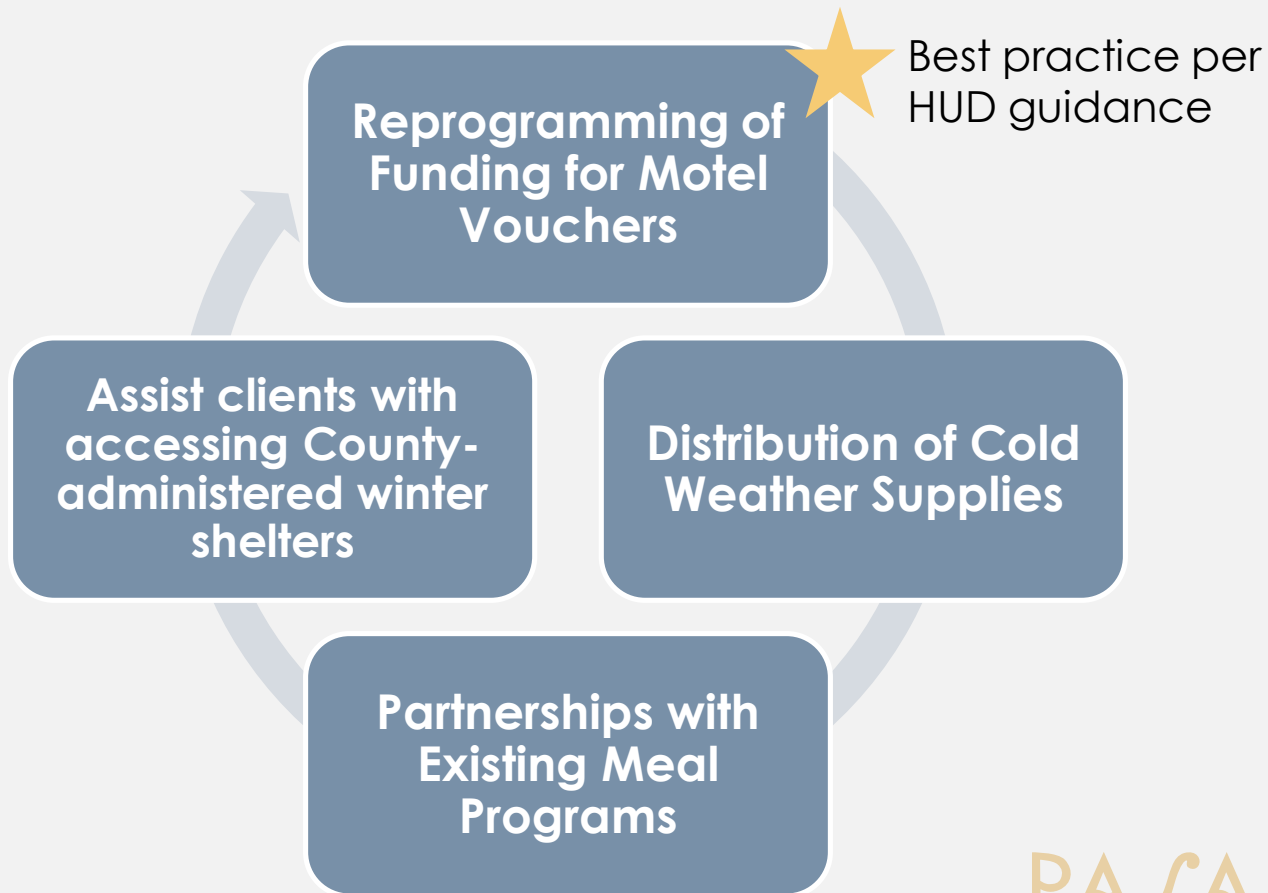
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ALTERNATIVE SHELTER AND COLD WEATHER SERVICES

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- Multi-pronged approach in collaboration with our partner agencies



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THANK YOU

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Questions?