Standards for Emergency Shelters

Performance Goals and Indicators

- ✓ **Standardized Access:** At least 90% of new clients complete intake paperwork within 24 hours of program acceptance; within two weeks, a full assessment is completed with an individual and a housing-based service plan is developed based on the unique needs of the individual.
- ✓ **Prioritization:** Shelter will be prioritized for vulnerable individuals based on acuity and residing in unsafe circumstances (such as the streets, parks, with an abuser, etc.).
- ✓ **Permanent Housing:** The HEART Group will have data from Community Information and Referral by November 2015 to accurately report an exit rate.
- ✓ **Client Safety:** At least 80% of those who complete satisfaction surveys indicate that shelter provided a safe environment for them.
- ✓ **Returns to Homelessness:** This measure will be based on households exiting the homeless system and then returning to shelter within a specified time period.
- ✓ **Permanent Housing Retention:** We are awaiting HUD guidance on measuring returns to homelessness. This measure will be based on households exiting the homeless system for permanent housing and then returning to shelter within a specified time period. ***revisit data in one year to provide a baseline. Aspirational 5% decrease per year.**

Operating Standards

- ✓ **Coordination:** Where funder allows, each agency will provide 10 % of their beds for bridging through Coordinated Access.
- ✓ **Assessment:** All guests should be screened for diversion, given an orientation, and complete a basic intake within 24 hours.
- ✓ **Eligibility:** Clients cannot be required to be clean and sober, have completed treatment, be employed (or at a prescribed income level), or be med- compliant to enter shelter. When possible, shelters may make accommodations for people who may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol but are of no imminent danger to self or others. Clients cannot bring drugs or alcohol to the ES.
- ✓ **Staffing:** As community, complete basic safety protocol. Caseloads and services will be based on need. Agency maintains a ratio of a maximum of 1 case manager/housing specialist to 30 guests.
- ✓ **Alumni-Involvement & Governance:** Avenues exist for alumni involvement, employment opportunities, and peer support, in the delivery of supportive services for current participants. Agencies may seek input from formerly homeless individuals, and at least one individual will be invited to participate in governance activities.
- ✓ **Safety:** The safety of clients, volunteers, and staff will be prioritized
- ✓ **Involuntary Exits**: ES will reserve right for the involuntary exit of a clients for dire situations such as: putting themselves and/or others at risk, blatant disregard of client's right and responsibilities, and theft.
- ✓ **Compliance:** Shelters are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and Fair-Housing compliant or reasonable accommodations are made.
- ✓ **Food Safety**: Staff who will prepare & serve meals must have a valid food handler card/certificate issued by any county in the State of Arizona, or have a valid card/certificate issued by an American National Standards Institute accredited food handler training program.
- ✓ **Documentation of Stay**: Shelter will maintain documentation of every client's shelter stay in order to provide homeless certification when needed through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- ✓ **Data:** will be confidentially shared upon client consent.
- ✓ Data collaboration with the appropriate tools shall be used for information tracking.

- ✓ **Grievance:** Every guest is given protocols for expressing client rights during shelter stay.
- ✓ **Length of Stay**: Individualized Housing & Service Plans are designed to meet the unique needs of each individual housed and facilitate the shortest possible shelter stay.
- ✓ **HMIS Use**: Provider has fully implemented the program in local HMIS and actively participates in it.
- ✓ **Income**: All clients are assisted in receiving all eligible public benefits (cash & non- cash) and/or achieving earned income.
- ✓ **Mandatory Reporting**: All staff are mandatory reporters of suspected abuse or neglect and comply with mandatory reporting statutes.
- ✓ **Identification**: All clients are assisted with obtaining all paperwork needed to access permanent housing. (ie. Social security cards, divorce decrees, DD214s, income or disability verification, etc.)
- ✓ Adopt a client-centered, strengths-based approach to case management (e.g., motivational interviewing).

<u>Suggested Practices</u>

Approaches

- ✓ Safety training for staff and clients should focus in the areas listed below.
  - ✓ De-escalation
  - ✓ Substance abuse and signs
  - ✓ Symptoms of overdose
  - ✓ What to do in emergency situations
  - ✓ Emergency health response
  - ✓ Mental health first aid
  - ✓ Trauma informed care
  - ✓ Motivational interviewing
  - ✓ Harm reduction
  - ✓ Secondary trauma
  - ✓ CPR
  - ✓ Conflict resolution
  - ✓ Communicable diseases
  - ✓ Crisis Intervention
  - ✓ Cultural, gender ,and sexual minority competency

- ✓ Policies should be in place for staff to connect clients to care. Services that should be offered are Detox, and/or substance abuse treatment.
- ✓ Create policies and procedures that connect and improve client services/interactions related to disciplinary actions.
- ✓ When possible, establish a warm hand-off.
- ✓ When exiting client households to permanent housing, provide orientation to the neighborhood and ensure connections with local resources.
- ✓ Plan meals that adhere to or exceed USDA's Dietary Guidelines.

Staffing

- ✓ Employ multilingual staff.
- ✓ Employ multi-disciplinary team or partnership, including housing specialists who locate housing & navigate application processes.
- ✓ Train on emergency health response, Traumatic Brain Injuries, secondary trauma, CPR, & communicable diseases.

- ✓ Test for TB annually & on occasions of exposure.
- ✓ Base case management ratio on acuity level.

Systems Recommendations for Individuals

Data

- ✓ Utilize standardized assessment to determine acuity levels of client households and inform the housing-based service plans.
- ✓ Use community data to inform community decisions.
- ✓ Establish protocols for standardized data sharing.

Resources

- ✓ Fund housing locators & navigators to allow for more seamless connections between shelters & permanent housing.
- ✓ Assist with transit and costs of moving.
- ✓ Establish a furniture bank with hot boxes for permanent housing move-ins.
- ✓ Develop a regional Emergency Shelter staff training program.

Processes

- ✓ Create a system of coordinated entry to quickly connect persons in shelter to next-step housing.
- ✓ Improve benefits application & receipt processes, including SSI processes connect & SOAR Coordination.
- ✓ Reduce processing time at housing authorities.
- ✓ Improve the identification and collection of “unknown client exits”.