

# EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAM

---

**PROGRAM FRAMEWORK**  
**March 2008**



BC Housing



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA  
The Best Place on Earth

© Copyright 2008 by British Columbia Housing Management Commission

**Acknowledgements**

BC Housing acknowledges the support of the consultants at CitySpaces (Gwyn Symmons, Noha Sedky, and Danna Hough) who guided the development of the initial versions of this document. It has since been further developed by BC Housing.

BC Housing would also like to thank the emergency shelter providers across the province who provided feedback on earlier drafts and who will be implementing the program outlined in this document.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
2.0	PROGRAM PRINCIPLES	2
3.0	PROGRAM GOALS	4
4.0	PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	4
5.0	PROGRAM OUTCOMES	5
5.1	Outcomes	5
5.2	Performance Measures	5
6.0	TARGET POPULATIONS, ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPANT SELECTION	6
6.1	Target Populations and Eligibility	6
6.2	Children and Youth Accessing Emergency Shelters	7
7.0	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	8
7.1	BC Housing	8
7.2	Emergency Shelter Providers	8
8.0	OPERATING FUNDING AND AGREEMENTS	10
9.0	CORE SERVICES FOR PARTICIPANTS	10
9.1	Essential Services	10
9.2	Gateway Services	12
9.3	Operational Guidelines	13
9.3.1	Accommodating Different Client Groups	13
9.3.2	Service Delivery Models	14
9.3.3	Staff and Volunteers	15
9.3.4	Partnership and Innovation	16
10.0	FACILITY GUIDELINES	17
10.1	Building Premises	17
10.2	Building Security Measures	18
10.3	Health and Safety	18
11.0	REPORTING AND MONITORING	20
11.1	Data Collection and Statistics	20
11.2	Client Records	20
11.3	Policies and Procedures	21
11.4	Annual Reports and Monitoring	22
12.0	SIGN-OFF	22
13.0	EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL	23
	ATTACHMENT A: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES MATRIX	25
	ATTACHMENT B: PARTNERING AGENCIES	28
	ATTACHMENT C: EXTREME WEATHER RESPONSE POLICY	29
	ATTACHMENT D: GLOSSARY OF TERMS	32



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

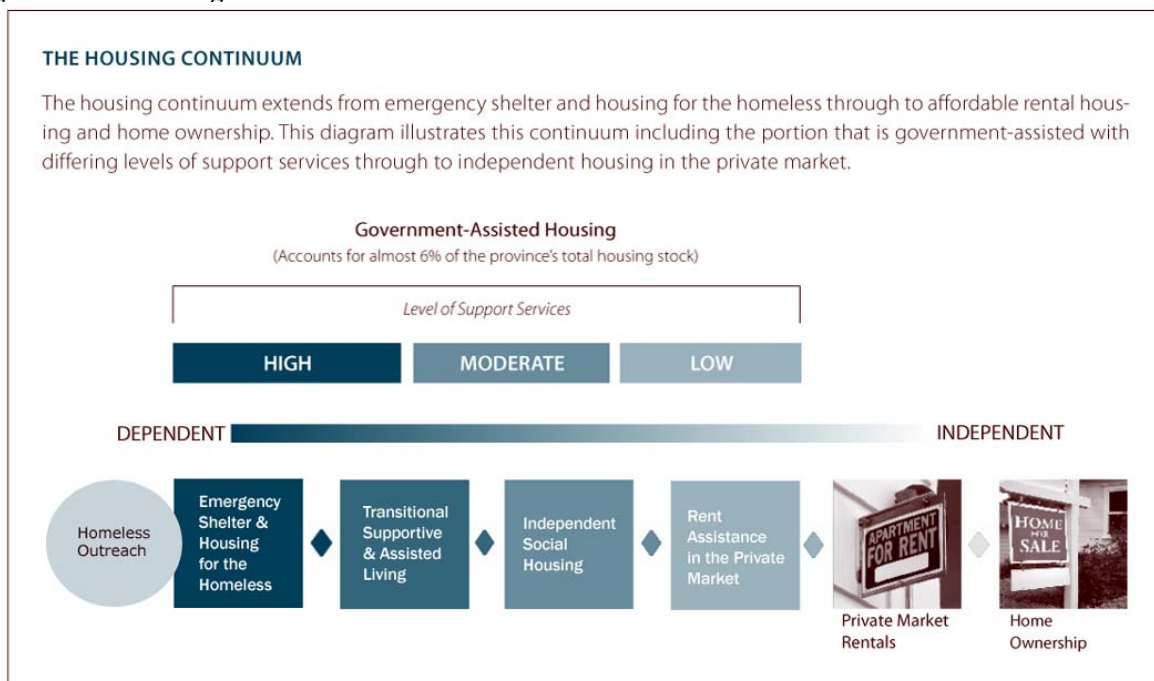
### Background

In 2005, the administration of the Emergency Shelter Program (ESP) in BC was transferred to BC Housing from the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance as part of the Province’s centralization of housing and homelessness services. The Program comprises emergency shelter accommodation, seasonal shelter services, drop-in services, as well as a range of specialized programs.

As the primary function, emergency shelters provide temporary accommodation and essential services designed to meet the essential, immediate needs of the homeless for shelter, food and security. Shelters provide short-term responses to the challenge of homelessness. However, shelters and related service providers are part of the housing and services continuum. Their function in this program is to act as a **gateway** to stable housing and support services. To fulfil this gateway role, emergency shelter providers will need to provide access to on-site support services within the shelter or drop-in facility; external linkages to key services such as health care, addictions treatment, or employment programs will need to be in place. Combined, the essential and gateway services comprise the core service functions of emergency shelters.

As shown in Figure 1, the Emergency Shelter Program is one of a suite of programs that may act as an important step in moving towards independence along the housing continuum. The diagram also illustrates the relationship among housing services and support services along the

**Figure 1 The Housing Continuum**





continuum. Emergency shelters can function as a bridge between the “street” and the opportunity to find long-term or more stable housing options and connections to appropriate support services. It is not assumed, however, that all homeless people will utilize every step in the continuum. A person’s progression through the continuum should be tailored to his or her unique situation.

This program framework outlines the key elements, standards and guidelines of the program, and defines the roles and responsibilities of BC Housing and its partners in the delivery and management of the program. It ensures there are proper procedures and practice, that the program is responsible to the client base, and accountable to the funding agency and the public. BC Housing developed the Emergency Shelter Program Framework in partnership with emergency shelter providers and is working cooperatively with the emergency shelter sector in the implementation of the revised Emergency Shelter Program.

It is recognized that many providers will be required to make adjustments to their policies and service model to reflect the program framework. BC Housing will work with all emergency shelter providers to effect changes during a transition period, minimize impacts to service delivery and provide the support and resources necessary for program implementation as available through current capacity and funding. In addition, BC Housing will work in conjunction with these organizations to strengthen and support the sector in its front line role of responding to homelessness. For issues not fully covered by this framework, emergency shelter providers are expected to exercise reasonable judgment and consult with BC Housing staff where necessary.

## **2.0 PROGRAM PRINCIPLES**

The Emergency Shelter Program in British Columbia will be guided by the following set of four principles. These principles will guide how BC Housing operates the program, and guide our relationships with service providers and with government. They will also guide how emergency shelter providers operate their services and their interactions with their clients, BC Housing and other providers of services for people who are homeless.

### ***Core services that are accessible and client-focused***

- All homeless persons age 19 and over have the right to access shelter services regardless of ethno-cultural background, religious beliefs, physical disability, mental health status, gender identity, and/or sexual orientation.
- Emergency shelter providers will have policies in place regarding spiritual activities that take place within the shelter to ensure that individuals not participating in these activities have equal access to services and accommodation.



- While discriminatory criteria for admission are not tolerated, it is recognized that in some situations it is necessary for emergency shelter providers to deny access to individuals. The grounds for service restriction may include severe disruption to services and where clients are considered to represent a danger to themselves, staff, visitors or other residents.
- To increase accessibility and respond to the diverse needs of clients, a range of service approaches from structured and sober facilities to minimal barrier facilities must be available within the shelter system. Service restrictions for particular populations, including those who are using substances, must be based on a clear service mandate and respective policies.
- Emergency shelter providers will provide an atmosphere of dignity, respect and compassion for all clients.
- To meet the immediate and long-term needs of the homeless, both BC Housing and emergency shelter providers will seek enhanced integration of housing and support services.
- Shelters will engage with clients who are willing to assist them in identifying and pursuing their goals towards stability, wellness and self-reliance. This will include providing resources and information to shelter users on housing, treatment, income, and employment services.
- The use of services beyond the provision of shelter is encouraged but is not a requirement as a condition of stay.

***Transparent and accountable operations***

- Emergency shelter providers will maintain reliable and consistent records, fulfil reporting obligations, and develop meaningful policies and procedures.
- BC Housing will develop fair and consistent processes for negotiating operating agreements and funding amounts
- Providers will develop rules and regulations in consultation with shelter users and consistently enforce these rules and regulations.
- Providers will adopt written policies and procedures regarding complaints and appeals and communicate these policies to residents.
- Emergency shelter providers will work towards achieving predetermined goals and targets. BC Housing will conduct reviews and assessments to confirm that services delivered are effective at meeting the program's objectives.
- BC Housing will regularly report to the Provincial Government and the public on the effectiveness of the Emergency Shelter Program.

***Welcoming, safe and secure service environment***

- The health and safety of residents, volunteers, and staff is of the highest importance. Continued development and review of training policies, procedures, and maintenance guidelines are essential to ensure that health and safety standards are met.
- Shelters should be welcoming and positive places that provide opportunities to help people to move forward along the housing and supports continuum towards independence.

***A collaborative and innovative sector environment***

- Partnership and integration across the network of services and agencies is a key principle. Effective service delivery will be achieved through an open and collaborative working relationship between emergency shelter providers, partner agencies and BC Housing.
- A key responsibility is the delivery of programs that are responsive to community needs. The delivery of services and funding must rely in part on the local needs assessments, strategic planning documents, innovation and best practices research, and evidence-based analysis.
- Emergency shelter providers will involve, to the extent practicable, homeless persons or former clients in the operations, governance, or policy development process of the emergency service.

### **3.0 PROGRAM GOALS**

- To accommodate the needs of homeless individuals and families and to facilitate their access to stable housing and integrated support services.
- To respond to gaps in coverage of emergency shelters in British Columbia.

### **4.0 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

- Provide safe, accessible, emergency shelter accommodation services for homeless clients where demand exists throughout the province.
- Facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families through the continuum of housing and support services
- Ensure high quality of client services are provided and that services are accountable, effective, and responsive to client needs
- Support communication, partnerships and innovative initiatives



## 5.0 PROGRAM OUTCOMES

### 5.1 Outcomes

An outcome monitoring and reporting process enables emergency shelter providers and BC Housing to track progress and effectiveness at achieving the program's goals and objectives. It also allows for tracking of factors external to the program (i.e. housing availability and access to services) that influence emergency shelter providers' ability to achieve the outcomes. To assist with this monitoring and reporting, BC Housing is working with emergency shelter providers to develop a database that will capture outcome data. Once this database is fully functional, emergency shelter providers will be accountable for and required to report on the following outcomes:

- Meet the immediate shelter, nutrition and hygiene needs of the homeless population throughout BC
- Clients have stable accommodation<sup>1</sup> with appropriate supports upon discharge;
- Clients develop case plans and achieve personal goals for housing, employment/income, health and well-being;
- Clients have improved access to support services, through information and referrals
- Clients have access to more appropriate referrals.

A detailed program model that includes inputs, outputs, and outcomes is included in Section 13.

### 5.2 Performance Measures

The measurement of the above outcomes will be achieved, in part, by emergency shelter providers striving to achieve specific goals and targets. In 2008/2009 providers will achieve or surpass the following targets:

- number of unique clients sheltered;
- 25% of clients connected with stable accommodation; and
- 60% of clients connected with stable accommodation remain housed at 3 and 6 months.

Throughout 2008/2009, BC Housing, in cooperation with emergency shelter providers, will determine the targets for the following performance measures:

- % clients re-entering the shelter after 3 months, 6 months, 1 year or more than 1 year;
- % clients completing case plans;
- % clients achieving personal goals for housing, employment/income, health and well-being;

---

<sup>1</sup> "Stable Accommodation" is defined as long term housing (designed for tenancy greater than 30 days), a treatment or rehabilitative setting or moving in with a friend or family.



- % of clients reporting satisfaction with emergency shelter services; and
- Number of different services shelter clients were referred to in 12 months.

The following data will be collected for long term planning purposes:

- Number of client bed-nights by client type and occupancy rates
- Number of clients turned away per night by client type and rationale
- Number and nature of client complaints
- Reports from the shelter providers on sector initiatives to improve the quality of service

## 6.0 TARGET POPULATIONS, ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPANT SELECTION

### 6.1 Target Populations and Eligibility

The Absolute Homeless are defined as the primary target population of the Emergency Shelter Program. However, given the diverse nature of the client population accessing emergency shelters across the Province, efforts should be made to accommodate a range of client needs in every region in the Province.

Emergency shelters will be available to all adults (age 19 and older) in need without discrimination on the basis of age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnic or cultural background, mental health status, religious beliefs or physical disability. Due to capacity constraints and service limitations, not all shelters will be able to accommodate all groups equally. Youth, women, and families will generally require separate accommodation from male shelter users. This is discussed further in Section 9.

For the purposes of the Emergency Shelter Program, the following definitions of homelessness have been adopted and can be used by shelters in their consideration of the eligibility of an individual or family for assistance.

- **Absolute Homeless** – Individuals and families who are living in:
  - Public spaces without legal claim (e.g. on the streets, in abandoned buildings, in tent cities);
  - A homeless shelter;
  - A public facility or service (e.g. hospital, care facility, rehabilitation or treatment centre, correctional facility) and can not return to a stable residence; or
  - Individuals and families who are financially, sexually, physically or emotionally exploited to maintain their shelter.

- **Homeless due to crisis** – Individuals and families who are homeless because their previous residence became uninhabitable due to a human caused or natural disaster (e.g. fire, earthquake).
- **Risk of Homeless** – Individuals and families who are living in:
  - Temporary accommodation where they do not have control over the length and conditions of tenure (e.g. couch surfing, name not on lease) and do not have adequate personal space;
  - Time-limited housing designed to help them transition from being homeless to living in a permanent form of housing, e.g. transitional housing or second-stage housing; or
  - Accommodation where tenancy will be terminated within three months of application, (e.g. given notice by landlord or pending release from prison).
- **Hidden Homeless** – Individuals and families who are living in temporary accommodation where they do not have control over the length and conditions of tenure but have adequate personal space.<sup>2</sup>

## 6.2 Children and Youth Accessing Emergency Shelters

People under the age of 19 are not allowed to access emergency shelters funded through the Emergency Shelter Program unless they are accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. If a person under the age of 19 presents themselves to an emergency shelter, the shelter is required to immediately contact the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD) through their local office or, if after regular business hours, the Provincial After-Hours line (1-800-663-9122) to inform them that the child is homeless and request instructions on how to proceed. Emergency shelter providers must document the date and time of their call with MCFD, the name of the worker they spoke to and the instructions received. If the person requesting services is over the age of 16, emergency shelter providers are encouraged to refer the person to a youth safe house or youth emergency shelter in the community if such a resource exists.

Occasionally, MCFD will request the child be allowed to remain in the emergency shelter. If the emergency shelter provider is not comfortable with this request they may refuse and insist that MCFD make other arrangements. If the emergency shelter provider agrees to the request, the provider may shelter the child until MCFD is able to make other arrangements as long as the provider can provide a private sleeping space for the child and they have current criminal record checks on file for all staff on-duty while the child is in the shelter. The emergency shelter provider must also have sufficient insurance to cover providing service to minors.

---

<sup>2</sup> Adequate personal space is defined as having freedom from crowding as identified in the Canadian National Occupancy Standards.

## 7.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A number of agencies across the province are currently involved in the provision of emergency shelter and related support services. While the role of each of these agencies can not be underestimated, this section focuses on the roles and responsibilities of BC Housing and the emergency shelter providers (see Attachment B for a description of the roles of other agencies).

### 7.1 BC Housing

BC Housing is responsible for the funding and administration of the Emergency Shelter program. Its role includes:

- Funding community-based service providers by entering into operating agreements for the provision of emergency shelter services
- Developing provincial wide standards and guidelines in partnership with emergency shelter providers
- Ensuring that all emergency services meet program standards and guidelines by regularly monitoring and evaluating services
- Working with and supporting emergency shelter providers by:
  - Providing clear guidelines and expectations for the provision of emergency services;
  - Providing information resources and assistance where appropriate;
  - Supporting capacity development and innovation in service provision through partnership development, best practices dissemination, and service integration;
  - Identifying gaps in service provision and working collaboratively to respond to such gaps;
  - Ensuring the Emergency Shelter Program is transparent, accountable and responsive to local needs.
- In each community, BC Housing will assist and work with agencies to facilitate the provision of adequate support services.

### 7.2 Emergency Shelter Providers

Emergency shelter providers are the primary delivery agent for shelter services. Each agency is responsible for the:

- Delivery of emergency shelter services as outlined in this framework and in accordance with operating agreements;
- Compliance with program standards and a demonstrated effort towards achieving program guidelines;



- Notifying BC Housing of changes to shelter services that could affect the operating agreement;
- Availability and preparedness of staff for a services review;
- Development of a service mandate that outlines how the program will meet the needs of service clients; and
- Identification of trends among the client population and pressures facing local communities.
- Maintenance of adequate and accurate financial data and client service records

Emergency shelters funded under the Emergency Shelter Program are predominantly operated by societies registered as a federal or provincial non-profit agency. All emergency shelter providers that enter into Support Services Agreements with BC Housing will comply with the service standards and are expected to work towards meeting program guidelines.

- Emergency shelter providers are required to notify BC Housing before making any changes that could affect their Support Services Agreement.
- The responsibility to comply with program standards falls with the non-profit Board of Directors or the management team for privately-operated facilities and those run by a national agency such as the Salvation Army. Responsibilities include:
  - Developing and following the organization's service mandate, mission, values and priorities;
  - Ensuring operating policies are in place including a system for review of complaints and conflict resolution;
  - Ensuring the organization meets its contractual conditions and is in compliance with Emergency Shelter Program guidelines;
  - Approving and reviewing annual operating budgets, applications for capital funding and expenditures; and
  - Selection and overseeing the performance of staff operating the shelter and to ensure succession planning for the agency and Board of Directors is in place
  - The Board must have a sufficient number of directors with the range of skills required to fulfil this role. Involvement of former clients in the shelter's governance practices and policy development process is encouraged. The Board must have a succession plan in place for management, key staff, and board members.
  - Emergency shelter providers that enter into a Support Services Agreement with BC Housing will develop a detailed plan to ensure all areas of service are in compliance with the program standards by the end of an agreed upon transition period.



## 8.0 OPERATING FUNDING AND AGREEMENTS

BC Housing funds emergency shelter providers participating in the Emergency Shelter Program. It is moving towards the use of multi-year contracts as the arrangement for service delivery. Service providers participating in the Emergency Shelter Program are required to enter into a Support Services Agreement with BC Housing. Funding will take into account local demand for emergency shelter services and compliance with program guidelines. BC Housing will monitor the program's operations to ensure conformity with these guidelines. In addition to compliance with these guidelines, renewal of Agreements will also be subject to the submission of annual reports, and financial information.

Operating budgets are negotiated for each shelter based on information provided by the emergency shelter provider in BC Housing's Emergency Shelter Program Staff Schedule and Budget Template.

## 9.0 CORE SERVICES FOR PARTICIPANTS

Core program services include those services that a) meet the essential, immediate needs of the homeless by providing safe shelter and nutrition, and b) meeting clients' longer term needs through gateway services such as support services that help individuals to move through the housing and support services continuum.

### 9.1 Essential Services

**OBJECTIVE:** *Provide safe, accessible, emergency shelter accommodation services for homeless clients where demand exists throughout the province*

Emergency shelter providers usually offer shelter services on a year round basis or a combination of shelter and drop-in services depending on the service mandate, resources and local need. This Program Framework primarily addresses permanent emergency shelters and does not apply to extreme weather shelter services in BC.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Access to Emergency Services*

- 24-hour access to emergency services is to be made available where possible. This can take the form of either shelter accommodation and/or drop-in services and does not necessarily have to be located at the same facility. It is recognized that some communities face shelter bed capacity limitations and emergency shelter providers will not be able to provide access to all clients for this reason.

---

<sup>3</sup> *The Extreme Weather Response Program enables communities to temporarily increase the number of emergency shelter beds during extreme weather conditions that threaten the safety and health of homeless individuals and families when the existing emergency shelters beds within the community are overwhelmed. The program only funds time-limited, temporary shelter beds needed during extreme weather conditions. The program is not included within the Emergency Shelter Program and is not subject to the same standards and guidelines.*



- Emergency shelter providers must be able to admit new residents at all times during the day, although access to sleeping areas may be restricted to certain hours according to shelter policies.
- When a shelter is unable to accommodate an individual, staff will assist the individual in locating alternate shelter or support services to the extent possible.
- During extreme weather, all emergency shelter providers are expected to use their discretion in relaxing service restrictions and admission eligibility criteria where possible in order to minimize risk factors to homeless persons. BC Housing's Extreme Weather Response Policy is attached as Attachment C.

### ***Admission and Discharge***

- All shelters will have written policies and procedures for admission eligibility and allowable length of stay.
- Policies and procedures, and the rights and responsibilities of clients accessing services are to be clearly explained to clients upon admission.
- The shelter will have written policies and procedures for expelling individuals that:
  - define reasons or conditions of expulsion;
  - include timely due process provisions;
  - are clear and simple to understand;
  - describe the conditions or process for re-admission to the shelter including the appeal and complaints procedure; and
  - require reasonable efforts be made to provide an appropriate referral.

### ***Accommodation, Nutrition and Hygiene***

- Emergency shelter providers must provide safe, secure and appropriate sleeping accommodation for all clients. Whenever possible, clients must be provided a bed rather than a mat.
- Separate and secure sleeping spaces for men, women, and families are to be provided when shelters serve multiple groups. Where possible, shelters will be designed or improved to include flexible space that can provide safe and secure sleeping accommodation for a variety of client groups.
- Each shelter client will be provided with appropriate bedding and toiletries to ensure hygiene standards are met. This includes clean sheets, pillowcases, bedding and towels on a weekly basis or whenever a new resident occupies the bed. Personal hygiene items provided will include soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, and feminine hygiene products.



- All shelters must make laundry facilities accessible to clients, either on-site or off-site and at no cost to the client.
- Emergency shelter providers must provide three meals per day according to Canada's Food Guide. A meal is comprised of food from at least three food groups. Meals must be of size, quality, variety and nutritional value to meet the recommended daily intake based on Canada's Food Guide. In situations where shelters do not have facilities for meal production on site, meal services may be provided through other arrangements convenient to the shelter.
- Meal plans will be based a rotating menu and will be reviewed by a dietician.

## 9.2 Gateway Services

***OBJECTIVE: Facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families through the housing continuum***

In recognition of the complexity of client needs, a core function of emergency services is the provision of on-site support services or direct linkages and referrals to off-site support services provided by local and regional agencies. Emergency shelter providers are not responsible for the delivery of all the support services along the continuum; however, they are required to provide assistance and facilitate access to housing, medical services, mental health and addictions treatment and employment and lifeskills training. The ability of emergency shelter providers to make referrals to other support agencies largely depends on the availability of these services.

### ***On-Site Support Services***

- For emergency shelter providers able to deliver on-site support services, case planning and management services must be offered consistently to all interested clients accessing overnight services as well as those accessing drop-in services (if available). It is recognized that in larger shelters on any given day, it may be possible to provide this service only to a portion of clients.
- Case planning and management involves developing a personal service plan to assist the client to reintegrate into the community. Case planning will include an assessment of the persons current situation; explore available options and how the emergency shelter provider can support the client to achieve desired outcomes; and the benefits, alternatives, and consequences of planned services. The types of services include:
  - assessment and goal setting;
  - referrals to appropriate services or resources including medical services, mental health services, alcohol and drug treatment services, employment programs and lifeskills training;
  - assistance and referral to obtaining appropriate housing;

- assistance in accessing Income Assistance, Pension Benefits, Disability Benefits, obtaining a BC Identification Card and/or a bank account; and
- advocacy and legal services support.

### ***Linkages and Referrals to Off-Site Support Services***

Due to capacity constraints or the potential of service duplication, some emergency shelter providers will choose not to provide on-site support services. Instead, these providers will assist clients through referrals and linkages to off-site service agencies. Shelters are not responsible for the delivery of all services along the support services continuum. The role of shelters is to liaise and coordinate access to these services as much as they are locally available.

- The coordination of service links and referrals will be client-focused and tailored to meet the needs of the individual.
- To establish a well-integrated network of support services to shelter clients, emergency shelter providers, with the assistance of BC Housing, must develop and maintain relationships with their local health authority and other agencies providing support services in their community. As part of their annual reporting, shelters will be required to document their formal and informal arrangements with other agencies.
- Off-site support services may include:
  - Income Assistance and employment training;
  - transitional and supportive housing;
  - mental health and addictions services; and
  - primary health care

## **9.3 Operational Guidelines**

***OBJECTIVE:*** *Ensure a high quality of client service is achieved and that services are accountable, effective and responsive to client needs*

### **9.3.1 Accommodating Different Client Groups**

In recognition that there is a need for a variety of shelter types to meet the diverse service needs across the province, the Emergency Shelter Program supports the delivery of services that target specific client groups. BC Housing will work with emergency shelter providers to ensure communities are able to appropriately accommodate a range of client needs through shelter services.

#### ***Service Restrictions***

- Emergency Shelter providers must have clearly written criteria and policies that outline the rationale and mandate for providing services to selected client groups, including policies for situations where services are restricted for safety reasons. Providers must

submit these policies for approval to BC Housing when they are initially developed and when they are changed.

- Eligibility requirements may be temporarily amended to accommodate a population in need due to weather or crisis, but must always ensure the safety of other clients.

### ***Women, Children and Families***

- In order to provide safe accommodation for women, young adults and families with children, separate sleeping accommodations, and safe access to washroom facilities are required. If a shelter is not able to safely accommodate women, children and families, referrals to other shelters or alternative support services must occur if such services exist in the community.
- Shelters must have policies regarding child minding if this service is provided.
- Staff must be aware of, and make referrals to, resources and support services for families and youth available in the community.
- In addition to meeting the staff training standards, shelter staff working with families and youth must have additional experience in the following areas: youth-centred service delivery, solution-focussed conflict/issue resolution for working with families, and familiarity with the Child Family and Community Service Act.

### ***Transgendered Clients***

- Emergency shelter providers will work toward improving access to transgendered and transsexual clients. For shelters not yet able to accommodate transgendered and transsexual clients, staff will assist with referrals and linkages to programs that are able to meet these clients' needs.

### **9.3.2 Service Delivery Models**

- There are a variety of service delivery models currently in use across the province. Service models are based on a number of factors such as service mandate, needs and characteristics of local clients, and additional support services available in the community. Emergency shelter providers must have clearly written criteria and policies that outline the service delivery model and rationale for providing particular services.
- In recognition of the range of situations that lead to homelessness and the complex needs of the homeless, BC Housing will strive to maintain the availability of a variety of service models across the province and ensure emergency shelter services are accessible to all homeless individuals in need.
- The most common service models are based on substance use or approach to service delivery in the shelter. Emergency shelter providers must communicate their policy on substance use to residents upon admission.

### 9.3.3 Staff and Volunteers

Emergency shelters must have policies on staffing models, remuneration, relevant experience and competencies, as well as training objectives and requirements. This requirement may be met through a combination of human resources policies and, for unionized environments, the collective agreement.

- All new shelter staff – full time and part time – must receive a minimum level of training. Areas of mandatory training include:
  - orientation on emergency shelter standards, including health and safety procedures. These will include information on and procedures to deal with prevention of infections, infectious diseases, exposure to blood and body fluids, and the safe handling of needles;
  - food safety and nutritional standards for staff and volunteers handling food in accordance with Provincial Regulations;
  - crisis prevention and/or de-escalation training, non-violent intervention; and
  - Standard First Aid and CPR. Shelters must ensure that at least one staff member certified in Standard First Aid and CPR Level C is on at all times.
- It is recommended that full time and part time staff receive training, or are competent, in the following areas:
  - supervisory skills for management staff;
  - crisis prevention and verbal de-escalation;
  - anti-racism/anti-oppression and non-violence;
  - aboriginal community needs;
  - case management for staff providing counselling or case management supports;
  - substance use and harm reduction;
  - working with abused women and children;
  - working with clients with mental health issues;
  - meeting the needs of transgendered/transsexuals residents;
  - understanding of cultural issues and backgrounds;
  - chronic disease management; and
  - data entry and documentation.
- All staff and volunteers are required to undergo a criminal records check in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.



- Staff are encouraged to receive basic health inoculations including influenza, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis C and Tuberculosis.
- It is recognized that volunteers play an important role in service delivery in the not-for-profit sector and can contribute in a variety of capacities in emergency shelters and drop-in facilities. The role and the extent to which volunteers play in service provision remains at the discretion of the emergency shelter provider. However, services must be delivered in accordance with the guidelines established in this program at all times. Volunteers working in the shelter are required to have the appropriate skills and qualifications for the tasks that they are fulfilling.

### 9.3.4 Partnership and Innovation

***OBJECTIVE: Support communication, partnerships and innovative initiatives***

Ongoing research and evaluation is necessary for the sector to gain a more complete understanding of the client population and the underlying causes and trends of homelessness. Effective strategies and solutions will require a partnership approach to research and program implementation. These guidelines emphasize the role for partnership, collaboration, ethical research and innovation.

- Partnerships between local agencies and emergency shelter providers are encouraged. This could include such areas as the development and implementation of joint protocols for interagency work that leads to improved integration of housing and services for homeless individuals and families. A list of agencies involved in service provision to people who are homeless is included in Attachment B.
- Coordination and information sharing at a local, regional and provincial level is encouraged.
- Client-focused research, local needs assessments, best practices research, and strategic planning efforts are encouraged. Research must be conducted according to ethical research standards.
- Pilot initiatives and programs will be based on evidence-based research and analysis that demonstrate the need for and rationale for new models of service. Innovation and improvements to service delivery are encouraged and will also benefit from such research and studies.
- BC Housing will cooperate and support emergency shelter providers in their activities in research and innovation that benefits the sector as a whole.
- All partnerships and initiatives must be done within the bounds of the Protection of Private Information Act and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act as applicable.



## 10.0 FACILITY GUIDELINES

**OBJECTIVE:** *Provide a welcoming, safe, secure service environment that promotes client engagement*

### 10.1 Building Premises

- Emergency shelter providers must ensure the physical building is clean, sanitary, safe and free from hazards.
- Separate and secure sleeping spaces for men, women, and families are to be provided when shelters serve multiple groups. Where possible shelters will be designed or improved to include flexible space that can provide safe and secure sleeping accommodation for different client groups.
- Each resident must have adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings.
- Each resident will be offered a bed with a mattress, pillow and necessary bedding. Temporary beds such as cots and mats should be used only in exceptional circumstances.
- Building mechanical systems must be able to provide sufficient hot water, heating and ventilation for the occupancy levels accommodated in the shelter.
- Emergency shelter providers will develop policies regarding the storage of residents' personal belongings if the provider allows residents to bring their belongings into the shelter.
- Shelters will be welcoming and positive places that provide opportunities to help people to move forward along the housing and support services continuum. Shelters are encouraged to make their best effort to ensure the emergency shelter and/or drop-in facility is welcoming and accessible by individuals with mobility limitations. Key elements that contribute to a welcoming atmosphere are:
  - a welcoming reception that is both open and safe;
  - non-institutional décor;
  - plenty of natural light and air;
  - integrated activity spaces and if possible space and facilities to share with the local community; and
  - office space for one-on-one meetings.
- Emergency shelter providers undertaking new construction (including extensions, substantial alterations, change of occupancy, and/or upgrading of buildings to remove an unacceptable hazard) must maintain their program facility at minimum standards of health, safety, accessibility, fire and structural protection as stipulated by the National Building Code of Canada.

## 10.2 Building Security Measures

- Emergency shelter providers must work to minimize security risks to both clients and staff. Where possible additional security measures should be focused on points of entrance and exit, stairwells and reception areas.
- Shelters must have written procedures for ensuring the safety and security of staff working in the shelter. If at any time staff must work alone, appropriate safety and security measures must be in place. Procedures must be in accordance with current Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.
- Shelters may utilize security cameras at entrance and other areas involving security risk in accordance with provincial and federal legislation.
- Shelters will have written policies in place on the possession of weapons and violent behaviour in the shelter.

## 10.3 Health and Safety

### *Safety Regulations*

- Emergency shelter providers are required to provide a safe and secure shelter environment in order to minimize risks to both clients and staff.
- The emergency shelter and/or drop-in facility monitors the safety and security of its facilities and takes appropriate measures to protect the safety of all individuals in its facilities or on its grounds. Emergency shelter providers establish safety protocols and trains staff on potential risks and self-protection techniques as necessary.
- Shelters must comply with the direction of the local fire authorities as they interpret the BC Fire Code. Emergency shelter providers must have established proper fire evacuation procedures and an emergency preparedness plan covering medical emergencies, natural disasters, labour disruptions and other causes of loss of essential services. A copy of the policy/procedures must be available in a location that is readily available to clients, staff and volunteers.
- Emergency shelter providers must ensure that the shelter building is clean, sanitary, safe, free of hazards and accessible.
- All shelters will have policies in place regarding the use of hazardous cleaning materials that are in accordance with Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) guidelines.
- All emergency shelter providers must provide BC Housing with documentation verifying that they meet all current health, fire, building and zoning regulations.
- Shelters will have a pest control inspection and treatment plan in place to deal with any outbreaks of pests. In addition, shelters must ensure that all individual cases, or



outbreaks, of infectious diseases are prevented, handled, and reported as per the most up-to-date recommendations by the BC Centre for Disease Control.

- Shelters and other service providers funded by the Emergency Shelter Program must notify BC Housing in a timely manner when there is an outbreak that affects the operations and level of service delivery.
- Shelters will develop procedures around client death and timely notification of BC Housing of such incidents.

### ***Staffing Levels and Training***

Staffing levels and ratios will vary according to shelter size, services offered and the population served.

- For the safety of both staff and clients, two staff must be on at all times in emergency shelters with 10 or more funded beds.
- Emergency shelter providers will have policies on staffing ratios, remuneration and training. Shelters must maintain adequate staffing levels to provide services consistent with program guidelines and to ensure the safety and security of staff and clients. Shelters, in consultation with BC Housing, will be expected to provide a rationale for the staffing ratios and levels provided in their applications for funding.
- All new shelter staff – full time and part time staff working directly with clients – must receive a minimum level of training as outlined in section 9.3.3.

### ***Food Safety***

- All food handling, preparation, serving and storage must be in accordance with the Food Premises Regulation of the Health Act.
- Kitchen facilities must be in compliance with Food Premises Regulations of the Health Act.
- All shelters serving food must comply with the Food Safety Act and provide documentation of annual Food Inspections carried out by the Regional Health Authority.
- At least one staff member with a FOODSAFE (Level II) Certificate must be on duty at all times during food preparation, in accordance with the Food Premises Regulation of the Health Act.
- All employees or volunteers serving food must hold a FOODSAFE (Level 1) Certificate

### ***Medication Handling***

- Emergency shelter providers that store client medication must have written policies and procedures regarding the handling of client medication including: the storage of medication, the provision (or withholding) of assistance with medication, and the disposal of medication.



- Shelters must maintain a consistent method of documenting medication.
- Medication must be securely stored and inaccessible to other residents. Unclaimed medication is to be disposed of according to safe medical practices.

## 11.0 REPORTING AND MONITORING

Given the diverse nature of client needs, monitoring and reporting will enable the Emergency Shelter Program to better match services to client needs and to support service improvements. Emergency shelter providers will be required to report on a number of outputs and outcomes that directly relate to activities and services provided to clients as outlined in section 5 and the Logic Model in section 13.

### 11.1 Data Collection and Statistics

BC Housing, in consultation with emergency shelter providers, is developing a database to assist providers with the day to day work of shelters and minimize the work involved in meeting the reporting requirements of BC Housing and other funders. Shelters will be required to keep information in the database up-to-date. In extraordinary circumstances where the emergency shelter provider is unable to enter the information daily, they will ensure all information is up-to-date no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> business day of the following month.

### 11.2 Client Records

- Shelter clients will participate in an intake assessment within 24 – 48 hours of admission that includes: referral source, basic demographic information, and where possible additional health and housing status information. Client disclosure of personal information is voluntary and will not be used as a condition of stay.
- Consent forms for data collection will be provided by BC Housing. It is the responsibility of the emergency shelter provider to obtain written consent from clients. If a client declines to sign the consent form, this will not be a barrier to receiving services.
- The database will outline the minimum content for each client's record. Shelter providers may exceed the minimum content as long as they work within the requirements of the Protection of Private Information Act.
- Staff and volunteers must respect the privacy and confidentiality of clients' personal information. Emergency shelter providers are to develop policies for staff and volunteers regarding client confidentiality and must comply with the Protection of Personal Information Act.
- Within the bounds of client confidentiality and respect for privacy, the sharing of client information between agencies is supported when used towards facilitating connection to external services. Wholesale sharing of bed lists or other information, however, is contrary to expectations of respect for the privacy and confidentiality of client's personal information.

### 11.3 Policies and Procedures

- To ensure that emergency shelter providers are able to provide consistent and reliable services to homeless individuals and families, BC Housing reviews financial information on an annual basis. This includes detailed financial statements and operating budgets. BC Housing will also monitor and evaluate service performance based on monthly and annual reports as well as emergency shelter provider surveys, periodic assessments and site visits.
- Emergency providers must establish written policies and procedures to include the following:
  - eligibility criteria, rationale and mandate for providing services to select client groups, admission and discharge practices, permitted length of stay and acceptable reasons for extensions;
  - service restrictions including reasons or conditions for expulsion, process for appeal, conditions and process for re-admission, and required effort to refer to another service provider;
  - description of spiritual activities that occur in the emergency shelter and assurance that individuals not participating have equal access to services and accommodation;
  - a policy and process for dealing with client complaints which, at minimum includes a system for the review of complaints, how formal complaints and the resolution are recorded, and provision for how the complaints and appeals procedures are made available and clearly communicated to clients;
  - workplace safety including requirements that the use of hazardous cleaning materials be in accordance with Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHIMIS) guidelines, and requirements for staff safety including staff working alone;
  - critical incident responses which, at a minimum will include plans and procedures for: fire and other emergency evacuation (e.g. earthquake), loss of essential services, business continuity, medical emergencies, client deaths and the notification of BC Housing, threat and assault to shelter staff and clients, outbreaks of infectious disease, and pest control and treatment plan;
  - policies for staff and volunteers regarding client confidentiality;
  - employment and training including policies and practices regarding staffing ratios, remuneration, relevant experience and competencies, and training practices;
  - building maintenance; and

- if applicable, policies and procedures regarding: storage of clients' personal belongings and money; handling of client medication including storage, the provision (or withholding) of assistance with medication, and the disposal of medication; child minding

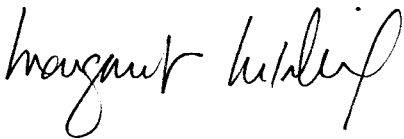
## 11.4 Annual Reports and Monitoring

BC Housing will work with service providers to ensure continual service improvement and to ensure conformity and compliance with the terms and standards outlined in the Support Services Agreement. Specific elements of this process, including frequency, format and structure, are currently under development.

In addition, emergency shelter providers will be expected to report on a set of outcome-based indicators that measure the effectiveness of program activities and service components. A logic model that details the program areas, activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators is included in Section 13.

## 12.0 SIGN-OFF

The Program Framework requires final sign-off by the BC Housing Vice-President of Operations.



---

Vice President, Operations  
BC Housing

### 13.0 EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes	Reporting Variables & Other Indicators
1	<p><b>ESSENTIAL SERVICES</b></p> <p>Provide safe, accessible, emergency shelter accommodation services for homeless clients where demand exists throughout the province</p>	<p>Safe and clean building, beds, linens, blankets, towels, food</p> <p>Secured operating funding</p>	<p>Provide safe and appropriate sleeping accommodation and access to meals, laundry and shower facilities</p>	<p>Number of unique individuals accessing the system</p> <p>Number of clients turned away per night, by client type</p>	<p>Immediate shelter, nutrition and hygiene needs of the homeless population throughout BC are met</p>		<p>Number of client bed-nights by client type and occupancy rates</p> <p>Number of clients turned away per night by client type and rationale</p>
2	<p><b>GATEWAY SERVICES</b></p> <p>Facilitate the movement of homeless clients through the continuum of housing and support services</p>	<p>Trained provider staff</p>	<p>Provide access to long term housing options through referrals and advocacy</p>	<p>Number of clients who move to stable accommodation with appropriate supports upon discharge</p>	<p>Homeless clients have stable accommodation with appropriate supports upon discharge</p>	<p>Repeat homelessness is reduced</p>	<p>Number and percentage of clients who move to stable accommodation</p> <p>Repeat client rates</p>
		<p>Trained provider staff, case planning tool and process, database to track plans and achievements</p>	<p>Provide on-site case management and support services (or linkages and referrals to off-site services)</p>	<p>Number of clients who take part in case planning</p>	<p>Homeless clients develop case management plans and work towards meeting personal goals for housing, employment/income, health, and well-being.</p> <p>Homeless clients have improved access to information and referrals</p> <p>Homeless clients achieve personal goals for</p>		<p>Number and percentage of clients who participate in case planning</p> <p>Number and percentage of clients who achieve personal goals for housing, employment/income, health and well being</p>



	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes	Reporting Variables & Other Indicators
					housing, employment/ income, health and well-being.		
3	<b>FACILITIES &amp; OPERATIONS</b>  Ensure a high quality of client services is provided and that services are accountable, effective, and responsive to client needs  Provide a welcoming, safe, secure, service environment that promotes client engagement	Monitoring and reporting process, provider staff, BC Housing staff	Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are put in place	Program is monitored and evaluated in a consistent manner	Transparent and accountable service environment achieved	Service delivery approaches are improved and services are matched to client needs	Reported levels of client satisfaction  Number and nature of client complaints
		Database, database training, IT support, trained provider staff	Data collected for client population and services accessed	Number of client records in database	Comprehensive data sets and client information maintained	Enhanced understanding of client population and service requirements	Number and percentage of emergency shelter providers that keep the shelter data-base up to date
4	<b>PARTNERSHIP &amp; INNOVATION</b>  Support communication, partnerships, and innovative initiatives	Regional meetings, provider staff, BC Housing staff,	Promote innovative solutions and dissemination of information on best practices and build service delivery partnerships	Service delivery partnerships are created or strengthened	Clients have access to more appropriate referrals.	Services to clients are improved	Number of different community services shelter clients were referred to, in 12 months.  Reports from the shelter providers on sector initiatives to improve the quality of service

## ATTACHMENT A: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES MATRIX

RESPONSIBILITY	BC HOUSING ROLE	NON-PROFIT SOCIETY ROLE	FRAMEWORK SECTION
<p>Operating Funding Existing Providers</p> <p>New Providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPM receives and reviews staff schedule and budget and redirects to Regional Director and Manager, ESP as required</li> <li>• Development Services reviews proposals and selects successful applicants, Manager, ESP in consultation with regional staff develops operating budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit annual staff schedule and budget</li> <li>• Submit proposal in response to RFP for new supply of emergency shelters</li> </ul>	Section 8 Operating Funding & Agreements
Operating Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supply Chain Mgmt &amp; Procurement develop Support Services Agreement (operating agreement)</li> <li>• Manager, ESP approves content</li> <li>• PPMs negotiate shelter contracts</li> </ul>	Compliance with program standards	Section 8 Operating Funding & Agreements
Financial Reporting	Program Operations - Complete financial review and directs results to RD, PPM and Manager, ESP as appropriate	Submission of annual audited financial statements	Section 7 Roles & Responsibilities



RESPONSIBILITY	BC HOUSING ROLE	NON-PROFIT SOCIETY ROLE	FRAMEWORK SECTION
Delivery of Essential and Gateway Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, ESP – Support and capacity building, establishes standards, performance metrics and key indicators</li> <li>• PPMs – Ensure compliance with core service and facility standards and guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary delivery agent for emergency shelter services</li> <li>• Maintain facility at or above standards</li> </ul>	<p>Section 9 Core Services</p> <p>Section 10 Facility Guidelines</p>
Reporting/Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT – provides database</li> <li>• Business Support Manager – provides technical support</li> <li>• PPMs – collect annual reports, and review for completeness and redirect to RD and Manager, ESP as appropriate</li> <li>• Planning &amp; Research – analyze data for regional &amp; provincial trends &amp; outcome achievement</li> </ul>	Non-profit society submits reports to PPMs	Section 11 Reporting & Monitoring
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be determined in 08/09 year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be determined in 08/09</li> </ul>	Section 11 Reporting & Monitoring



RESPONSIBILITY	BC HOUSING ROLE	NON-PROFIT SOCIETY ROLE	FRAMEWORK SECTION
Communication, partnership and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build partnerships with provincial and federal Ministries to improve services to the homeless</li> <li>• Initiate communication with service providers at least twice a year.</li> <li>• Provide regional service provider meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build partnership with local and regional social service agencies and government offices to improve services to their clients</li> <li>• Inform BC Housing of all changes to services and of incidents serious enough to impact service or attract media attention</li> <li>• Attend regional service provider meetings</li> </ul>	Section 9 Core Services

## ATTACHMENT B: PARTNERING AGENCIES

A number of federal, provincial and local agencies continue to manage or deliver services to the homeless population and the population at risk of homelessness. They are essential for emergency shelter providers to perform the gateway role identified in this Program. The agencies are listed here for contextual purposes.

- **Service Canada** funds a number of employment, housing, and research initiatives that may directly or indirectly impact the homeless and population at risk of homelessness.
- The **Ministry of Community Services (MCS)** funds transition houses and safe houses for women and their children who have experienced domestic violence.
- The **Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)** provides services and programs to help meet the needs of homeless and at-risk youth.
- The **Ministry of Employment and Income Services (MEIA)** is responsible for the delivery of income assistance and employment services for low income households and homeless individuals and families.
- The **BC Corrections Branch** supports the operations of community correctional facilities and halfway houses for criminal offenders, including treatment and training programs.
- The **regional health authorities** provide funding to primary health, mental health, and drug and alcohol treatment services in BC. Access to services is available on-site or outside the emergency shelter environment.
- A variety of **homelessness networks and coalition groups** have been established in communities and regions around the province.
- **Local municipalities** have two main roles with respect to emergency shelter services. They perform a regulatory role including zoning and the issuance of building permits and business licenses, but they may also provide direct support to shelters. Supporting emergency shelter services is a discretionary role, which may include the provision of land, contributions to capital or operating costs, and waiving fees or taxes.
- The role and function of an **Umbrella Organization** in supporting and working with emergency shelters in BC is being reviewed through a joint project between BC Housing and Shelter Net BC Society.

## ATTACHMENT C: EXTREME WEATHER RESPONSE POLICY

---

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Extreme Weather Response Policy</b>		
<b>Policy #:</b>	ES001	<b>Responsible Department or Branch:</b>	Emergency Shelter Program, Operations
<b>Effective Date:</b>	April 1, 2008		

---

**Please note:** This policy is included here for information only and may be changed at any time without notice. Please see BC Housing's website ([www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org)) for the latest version of this policy.

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Extreme Weather Response Program funds community based services to provide extra emergency shelter beds for people who are homeless during periods of weather that threaten the health and safety of homeless individuals and families in communities where there is not sufficient emergency shelter bed capacity. The program is designed to fund time-limited, temporary shelter beds. It will not provide funding for shelter beds outside of weather related emergencies.

### REASON FOR POLICY

This policy clearly outlines BC Housing's role in funding extreme weather responses so that both the communities organizing extreme weather responses and BC Housing will be prepared to respond during weather emergencies.

### WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY

This policy must be understood by communities offering extreme weather responses. In addition, regional and programs operations staff need to be familiar with the policy.

### POLICY STATEMENT

BC Housing must be able to verify that invoices submitted for payment under the Extreme Weather Response are consistent with the community plan to provide services in times of extreme weather. BC Housing must also ensure that there is a continued need for such services. The rest of this policy outlines what is required of community groups to ensure this level of accountability.

### COMMUNITY PLAN REQUIRED

Each community participating in the Extreme Weather Response program must submit annually an updated version of their Extreme Weather Response Plan. At a minimum, the Plan must include:

- Name of the community and the geographic area covered by the plan
- Name of the lead contact for the community plan (i.e. who would BC Housing phone if they had questions about the plan before and during an extreme weather event)
- Evidence that an extreme weather response is required (i.e. there are frequent turn-aways during extreme weather season(s))
- Definition of Extreme Weather
- Procedure for activating an Extreme Weather Response (must include a process to check with regular shelters in your community to ensure they are at or very near to capacity).
- Procedure for notifying community agencies and services that work with people who are homeless of the location and hours of operation of the Extreme Weather Shelters
- Procedure for informing BC Housing's Regional Office that an Extreme Weather Response has been activated
- Name and address of each Extreme Weather Shelter



- Name and business address of the organization that will be submitting invoices for each Extreme Weather Shelter
- Hours of operation for each Extreme Weather Shelter (BC Housing strongly encourages Extreme Weather Shelters to be open long enough for clients to obtain at least 8 hours of sleep per night)
- Capacity of each Extreme Weather Shelter
- Communication procedures between providers during an Extreme Weather Response
- Procedure for de-activating the Extreme Weather Response

Communities may also want to include the following in their Extreme Weather Response Plan:

- Procedure for dealing with media inquiries
- Plan for outreach to people who are homeless and do not regularly access services

Each community's Plan must be developed and adopted by a community based committee or coalition that consists of representatives from a broad range of services for people who are homeless (and others who the community deems important to be included). **The Plan must be updated annually and submitted to the community's Regional Office of BC Housing no later than October 31.** BC Housing may post these plans on our website.

BC Housing will review the plan to ensure it meets these requirements and is reasonable given the resources in the community and the intent of the Extreme Weather Response program. If necessary, BC Housing will meet with the community based committee or coalition to discuss their plan.

### **FUNDING ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for funding under this program, an Extreme Weather Shelter must be included in their community's Extreme Weather Response Plan and have submitted and have received prior approval from BC Housing's Regional Office for their ***Extreme Weather Shelter Nightly Budget***. In addition, the community planning group must submit an updated version of their Extreme Weather Response Plan to BC Housing by October 31. Extreme Weather Shelters are strongly encouraged to submit their budget with the annual submission of their community's Plan.

Once the Nightly Budget is received, BC Housing will contact the Extreme Weather Shelter to ensure they are able to provide safe accommodation for clients. At minimum, this will include an examination of the staff to client ratio and evidence that the municipality has approved the building for use as a shelter in an Extreme Weather Response.

### **ALLOWABLE EXPENSES**

BC Housing will pay the following costs according to the Extreme Weather Shelter's approved budget only if: 1) they were incurred due to an Extreme Weather Response, 2) they would not have otherwise been incurred, and 3) are identified in their approved Nightly Budget:

- Shelter staff costs (salaries and benefits. This includes reasonable volunteer recognition (i.e. small token item, coffee gift card, etc.) if shelter staff includes volunteers)
- Food costs for an evening snack and light breakfast
- Cleaning and laundry costs
- Client transportation to and from Extreme Weather Shelters

BC Housing will not pay for any capital expenses. Communities are expected to fundraise to cover the costs of mats, blankets and any other capital equipment required to operate the Response. Where at all possible, facility costs (excluding extra cleaning costs) are expected to be an in-kind contribution from the community.



**REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT STATISTICS AND EXPENSE CLAIMS**

Due to the sensitive nature of Extreme Weather Responses, communities are required to submit the occupancy and turn-away statistics of their Extreme Weather Shelters no later than 11:00 am everyday of the response (excluding the day the Extreme Weather Response Plan is activated). Ideally the statistics will be submitted on the *Extreme Weather Shelter Nightly Occupancy Form*. If a community designs their own form, it must contain, at a minimum, the same data as the Nightly Occupancy Form. The Nightly Occupancy Forms may be submitted electronically ([homeless@bchousing.org](mailto:homeless@bchousing.org)) or by fax 604 439-4722 attention Research and Planning.

*Extreme Weather Response Shelter Invoice Forms* (or a suitable agency invoice) must be submitted to the community’s Regional Office of BC Housing within two weeks of the extreme weather event ending or by March 25 (which ever is sooner). If additional time is required to submit the claims, Extreme Weather Shelter operators must contact their Regional Office of BC Housing and request an extension. To ensure accurate financial reporting and protect the integrity of the budget for future years, extensions will not be granted past the end of BC Housing’s fiscal year (March 31).

**LIABILITY**

Each community and each Extreme Weather Shelter provider is responsible to analyze and mitigate potential liabilities related to offering the services outlined by their plan. Each organization involved in the response must ensure that their insurance policy will cover them during the Extreme Weather Response.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Extreme Weather Response Nightly Expense Budget Template
- Extreme Weather Nightly Occupancy Form
- Extreme Weather Response Invoice Form

**CONTACTS**

Regional Office Contacts

Extreme Weather  
Vancouver Island Region  
301-3440 Douglas St.  
Victoria, BC V8Z 3L5  
Phone: 250 978-2917

Extreme Weather  
Interior Region  
290 Nanaimo Ave. West  
Penticton, BC V2A 1N5  
Phone: 250 487-2530

Extreme Weather  
Vancouver Coastal Region  
1296 Station St.  
Vancouver, BC V6A 2X3  
Phone: 604-694-2600

Extreme Weather  
Northern Region  
1538 – 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Prince George, BC V2L 3S6  
Phone: 250 649-2158

Extreme Weather  
Fraser Valley Region  
800-5945 Kathleen Ave.  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4J7  
Phone: 604 519-2310

Provincial Contacts

Manager, Emergency Shelter Program  
1701-4555 Kingsway  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4V8  
Phone: 604 439-8595  
Email: [homeless@bchousing.org](mailto:homeless@bchousing.org)

Research Services (Statistics)  
1701-4555 Kingsway  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4V8  
Phone: 604 433-1711  
Email:  
[homeless@bchousing.org](mailto:homeless@bchousing.org)  
Fax: 604 439-4722



## **ATTACHMENT D: GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### ***Absolute Homeless***

Individuals and families who are living in public spaces without legal claim (e.g. on the streets, in abandoned buildings, in tent cities); a homeless shelter; a public facility or service (e.g. hospital, care facility, rehabilitation or treatment centre, correctional facility) and can not return to a stable residence; or individuals and families who are financially, sexually, physically or emotionally exploited to maintain their shelter.

### ***Adequate Personal Space***

Adequate Personal Space is defined as having freedom from crowding as identified in the Canadian National Occupancy Standards.

### ***Clients***

Individuals who access or attempt to access services provided as part of the Emergency Shelter Program.

### ***Damp Shelter***

See *Minimal Barrier Shelter*.

### ***Disability***

Includes any degree of physical disability, cognitive impairment or developmental disability, learning disability and/or mental illness.

### ***Drop-in Centre***

A facility that provides access to meals and amenities that address immediate needs such as showers, laundry, telephone, among others. They often offer a safe gathering place with access to information resources and other support services. Drop-in Centres do not provide sleeping accommodations.

### ***Emergency Shelter***

A facility that provides core services that include a) essential services such as temporary overnight shelter accommodation, food and other services to meet the basic nutritional and hygiene needs of people who are homeless, and b) gateway services in the form of stable housing and key support services.

### ***Emergency Shelter Program***

The Emergency Shelter Program provides funding to homeless shelters and drop-in centres in British Columbia. Management of the program was transferred to BC Housing from the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance (MEIA) in October 2005.

### ***Gateway Services***

Services that facilitate the movement of shelter clients along the housing continuum and act as a bridge to more stable housing and support services. Gateway services include assessment, case planning, information and referrals that assist clients to access key support services in the



community. Such support services may include employment and lifeskills programs, medical services, addictions treatment, or mental health services among other services. While support services can be made available directly on-site, they are more typically provided by other agencies outside the emergency shelter. Gateway Services are sometimes referred to as ‘Inreach Services’ to distinguish them from Outreach Services.

### ***Hidden Homeless***

Individuals and families who are living in temporary accommodation where they do not have control over the length and conditions of tenure but have adequate personal space.

### ***High Barrier Shelter***

An Emergency Shelter that has a number of requirements for entry into the shelter. High Barrier Shelters generally require clients to be sober (and some require sobriety for a minimum period of time) to gain entry into the shelter. High Barrier Shelters may have other requirements for access such as having valid identification or committing to a treatment plan. High Barrier Shelters are sometimes referred to as ‘Dry Shelters’.

### ***Homeless due to crisis***

Individuals and families who are homeless because their previous residence became uninhabitable due to a human caused or natural disaster (e.g. fire, earthquake).

### ***Housing Continuum***

Describes a housing spectrum that is bound by street homelessness on one end and private market housing on the other end. The continuum inherently infers that individuals are able to move along this housing pathway gaining additional stability and independence at each stage. Elements or stages of the continuum are: living on the streets, emergency shelters, transitional or supportive housing, independent non-market housing or rent assistance in the private market, and private housing market in the form of both rental and ownership.

### ***Inreach Services***

Inreach Services refer to services either offered in the emergency shelter or in one of the emergency shelter provider’s offices. These services may be offered directly by the emergency shelter provider or by a third party service provider (i.e. Health Authority, Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance, or a different non-profit society). While these services may be targeted at people who are sleeping outdoors or in shelters, what distinguishes them from Outreach Services, is that they require clients to come to the office or shelter where the service is offered in order to access the services.

### ***Minimal Barrier Shelter***

An Emergency Shelter that has few requirements for entry into the shelter. Minimal Barrier Shelters will generally accept people with mental illnesses or who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Minimum Shelter Barriers also strive to be accessible to people with varying levels of physical ability. In Minimal Barrier Shelters, a client’s ability to remain in the shelter is



generally determined by their behaviour towards other clients and staff. Minimal Barrier Shelters differ in the levels of disruptive behaviour they will tolerate. Minimal Barrier Shelters are sometimes referred to as ‘Damp Shelters’. Consuming alcohol or drugs on the premises or in the shelter is not allowed.

### ***Outreach Services***

Outreach services are services directed at homeless people who are not currently accessing an emergency shelter. These services are usually targeted at people who are sleeping outdoors, who are couch surfing or in some other form of housing but are at immediate risk of absolute homelessness. Outreach services meet homeless people where they are at, rather than bringing them into an emergency shelter or other pre-determined physical location.

### ***Risk of Homeless***

Individuals and families who are living in: temporary accommodation where they do not have control over the length and conditions of tenure (e.g. couch surfing, name not on lease) and do not have adequate personal space; time-limited housing designed to help them transition from being homeless to living in a permanent form of housing, e.g. transitional housing or second-stage housing; or accommodation where tenancy will be terminated within three months of application, (e.g. given notice by landlord or pending release from prison).

### ***Stable Accommodation***

Stable Accommodation is defined as long term housing (designed for tenancy of greater than 30 days), a treatment or rehabilitative setting or moving in with a friend or family.

### ***Turnaway***

Occurs when an emergency shelter provider is unable or unwilling to provide emergency shelter services to a person who would otherwise qualify for the provider’s services, and the provider is unable to secure other appropriate accommodations or assistance for the client.

### ***Wet Shelter***

There are no BC Housing funded wet shelters. A wet shelter, however, is an emergency shelter that generally has few requirements for entry into the shelter and that, through a controlled program, allows clients to consume alcohol inside the shelter.