



Title:	Extreme Weather Response Policy		
Policy #:	ES001	Responsible Department or Branch:	Emergency Shelter Program, Operations
Effective Date:	June 1, 2008		

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 the 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) or by fax to 604 439-4722.

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

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

Extreme Weather Response
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: 604 433-1711
Email: homeless@bchousing.org

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

HISTORY

Version #	Policy # and Name	Reason	Date
1	Extreme Weather Response	First Version	September 1, 2006
2	Extreme Weather Response	Revision to contact information and correction to date for final submission of invoices	May 20, 2008

Authorized:



Shayne Ramsay, Chief Executive Officer

Date Approved: By Executive Committee on May 28, 2008