

Shelter Programs

BC Housing supports three types of emergency shelters across the Province. These include: Extreme Weather Response, Temporary Shelters, and Permanent Shelters.

EWR Shelters

- Operational October 15 to April 15.
- Community-led.
- Often consists of sleeping mats and/or cots.
- Only open during evenings of extreme weather conditions.
- Food, snacks, warm drinks, washroom access.

Temporary Shelters

- Most sites open every night from October 1 to April 30.
- 24/7 or night only.
- Increase shelter capacity during colder months.
- Often consists of sleeping mats, cots, or beds. Hygiene services, meals, laundry access.
- Referrals to other services.

Permanent Shelters

- Year-round.
- Open 24/7.
- Often consists of sleeping mats, cots or beds, hygiene services, meals, and laundry access.
- Referrals to other services.
- Access to a case worker, health, social, and housing services.

Extreme Weather Response (EWR) Shelters

The EWR program is enabled under the Assistance to Shelter Act, established in 2009. This legislation provides for the creation of Extreme Weather Response Plans and the framework for the plans.

EWR shelters open when an EWR Alert is issued by the community lead. EWR Alerts occur when weather conditions align with the alert criteria approved in the EWR Plan, determined by community partners.

Warming Centres

An emergency warming centre is typically a daytime warming space with no overnight accommodation. Warming Centres are not funded or managed by BC Housing. Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) supports eligible reimbursement to communities.

For more information about BC Housing's shelter programs, visit: <https://www.bchousing.org/housing-assistance/homelessness-services/emergency-shelter-program>

