**Dane CoC Written Standards Checklist- Emergency Shelter**

**Agency:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Program(s):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| **Standards** | **Yes** | **No** | **Comments/Plan for Improvement** |
| 1. Shelter staff and volunteers will treat guests with respect and dignity. Shelter policies and procedures will promote a welcoming, safe and non-intimidating environment for shelter guests and staff. These policies and procedures must be explained to applicants prior to entering shelter. In addition, they must be posted in the shelter and on the agency’s website. |  |  |  |
| 1. Shelters must conduct an initial evaluation to determine the eligibility of each household for shelter and the essential services the household needs to regain stability in permanent housing, such as case management, life skills training, child care, mental health services, education services, transportation, employment assistance and job training, legal services and health services. Essential service needs must be regularly reassessed. |  |  |  |
| 1. Shelters must provide risk assessment and safety planning with shelter guests who identify as victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Referrals will be made to domestic violence resources as needed. |  |  |  |
| 1. Supportive services are available to assist persons in obtaining housing either on-site or through a daytime resource center. All shelter guests are notified of the availability of support services and how to access the services. |  |  |  |
| 1. Shelters in the CoC will assess eligibility for mainstream resources and refer guests to applicable resources. Shelters will document referrals using the Dane CoC Mainstream Benefits Checklist and/or case notes. Documentation must be kept in the file for each household. |  |  |  |
| 1. Shelter operates every day of the year. In the event of a temporary shelter closure for rehabilitation or major maintenance work, as much notice as possible should be provided to guests, and efforts should be made to find a short-term replacement facility. |  |  |  |
| 1. Each shelter will have a policy of respect for each individual’s self-identified gender. Guests who request shelter services will be admitted to the shelter operated for the gender to which an individual identifies. Transgender and gender non-conforming guests will be offered the same services and resources as all other guests. While shelter staff will take reasonable steps to accommodate specific needs, it may not be possible to segregate the guest from the rest of the shelter population. Staff will not share or in any way advertise the fact that certain guests may have identified themselves as transgender or gender non-conforming. Staff will not segregate guests in sleeping and restroom spaces unless requested by the guest. |  |  |  |
| 1. All households with children, regardless of age, gender identification, sexual orientation, or marital status who identify as a household will be served as such in family shelter. Households will not be separated when entering family shelter. There can be no inquiry, documentation requirement or “proof” related to family status, gender identification and/ or sexual orientation. The age and/or gender of a child under the age of 18 or, if over 18, enrolled in high school cannot be used as a basis for denying any family’s admission to a program that uses ESG funding or services if those programs serve families with children under age 18.[[1]](#footnote-1) |  |  |  |
| 1. There is no charge to a shelter guest for emergency shelter. |  |  |  |
| 1. Documentation (including Photo ID, birth certificate, etc.) is not a barrier to shelter. |  |  |  |
| 1. The CoC does not prescribe a maximum length of stay. Agencies may establish the maximum length of stay based on project design and resources available. Length of stay polices must be communicated to shelter guests at intake. |  |  |  |
| 1. Guests may be asked to leave for a period of time in the event of serious infraction and only in the most severe cases such as for behavior that is deemed seriously threatening or harmful to other guests and staff. Suspending a shelter guest is allowed only when all other options have been explored and a suspension is necessary to protect the health and safety of staff and guests. All shelter guests will be notified of the agency’s grievance policy. When it is not possible to serve a guest because of the guest’s behavior, efforts will be made by shelter staff to assist the guest in finding alternatives. See Dane County Ordinance 30.04 for details on the procedure for discontinuing shelter services to a guest. |  |  |  |
| 1. Shelters are required to give notice of changes regarding access to the Homeless Services Consortium via [hsc@cityofmadison.com](mailto:hsc@cityofmadison.com). The Homeless Services Consortium’s website will be updated to reflect changes. |  |  |  |
| **Coordinated Entry Section pertaining to Emergency Shelter** |  |  |  |
| 1. All shelters are highly encouraged to assess clients for appropriate permanent housing placement using the VI-SPDAT. |  |  |  |
| 1. If shelters cannot assess clients due to lack of shelter resources, shelters must refer clients to Coordinated Entry System for assessment and explain to clients the process of accessing housing programs. |  |  |  |
| 1. Shelters must participate in Coordinated Entry and notify clients how to access Coordinated Entry |  |  |  |
| 1. Information and forms on how to file a discrimination complaint are available at all Assessment Hubs. |  |  |  |
| 1. Assessment Hubs post information on how/where to file a discrimination complaint. |  |  |  |
| 1. People experiencing chronic homelessness, veterans, families with children, youth and survivors of domestic violence may present at any of the Assessment Hubs for which they qualify as a target population and be assessed for housing. |  |  |  |
| 1. Referrals are made to specific agencies who specialize in serving specific populations. |  |  |  |
| 1. Assessment Hubs are accessible to individuals who use wheelchairs. |  |  |  |
| 1. All CE staff at Assessment Hubs use the VI-SPDAT as the assessment tool. |  |  |  |
| 1. If a household refuses the assessment CES staff will continue to work to engage with them. The household is placed on the priority list even when the assessment isn’t complete. |  |  |  |
| 1. If a household is fleeing domestic violence and enters shelter with a non-victim services provider, staff at the shelter will work on safety planning with the household including ensuring confidentiality and flexibility with regular procedures to ensure safety. |  |  |  |
| 1. Prioritization policies are displayed at assessment hubs. |  |  |  |

Suggested Updates:

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1. From *(24 CFR § 576.102 Prohibition against involuntary family separation) (24 CFR § 5.403 Definitions- Family) (24 CFR §570.3 Definitions - Household) (24 CFR 5.105(a) Nondiscrimination and equal opportunity)* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)