

# **Temporary Shelter FAQs**

Revised: August 14, 2015

## **Where is the shelter?**

The temporary shelter for the homeless will be located on a vacant parcel owned by the County of Santa Clara that is bordered by Fair Oaks Avenue, California Avenue, and Central Expressway.

## **How many beds does the shelter have?**

The shelter will house a total of 100 persons; male, female and at times families. Each population will have a separate section in the shelter, with on-site security for the safety of all present in the shelter.

## **What are the hours of operation?**

The shelter will run from November 30, 2015 through March 31, 2016, with open hours from 5:00 p.m. until 8:30 a.m. Quiet hours will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. The Shelter is closed to clients between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Staff will be on site from 4:00 p.m. to 9:30 a.m. Clients will be able to come on site beginning at 4:00 p.m.

## **Where do shelter clients go during the day?**

Some shelter clients have employment and they go to work during the day. Others are looking for work or are training for new jobs, while others go to parks or ride public transportation. As clients leave, a dedicated staff person will monitor their leaving behavior. If he/she becomes aware of any problem, he/she will address it appropriately. Another staff person will patrol the neighborhood to prevent any clients from staying in the area. If this staff person views any inappropriate behavior, he/she will act appropriately.

## **How long are people allowed to stay at the Shelter?**

Clients who are referred to the shelter and follow shelter rules may stay for the entire 4-month season. At least 50% of the beds will be reserved; the rest will be filled on a first-come/first-served basis. Those consistently staying at the shelter can either leave their belongings at the site or take them with them when they leave for the day.

## **What are the requirements for being referred to and staying at the Shelter?**

Men and women wishing to stay at the Shelter must be homeless; 18 years or older (or accompanied by a parent or legal guardian); claim residency in one of the following areas/ jurisdictions: Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto or Sunnyvale; willing to abide by basic rules of the shelter; and must obtain a referral from one of the various outreach/case management programs. If occupancy permits, residents from other areas in the County can be accepted. *(Please refer to the attached Eligibility Criteria and Referral Process for more information.)*

## **Is there a fee to stay at the Shelter?**

There is no fee charged for staying at the shelter.

## **What agency will be managing the Shelter and providing services there?**

HomeFirst Services of Santa Clara County will be operating the Shelter and they will coordinate services being provided by other agencies, community groups, church groups, and volunteers. Among the services that will be provided are: breakfast and dinner, TB testing and other medical/dental services, limited case management, and

information and referral services. The shelter operator will inform the City Housing Division and the City Department of Public Safety in advance about the types of ancillary services planned for provision on the site.

**What types of measures will be taken to prevent loitering and/or trespassing on private properties in the vicinity?**

On-site staff will oversee the clients as they arrive and leave the Shelter. If necessary, the Department of Public Safety will be contacted to address any problems. A dedicated staff person will patrol the neighborhood to monitor and prevent clients from staying in the area and acting inappropriately. If he/she views any inappropriate behavior, he/she will address it appropriately.

**What types of public safety measures will be taken to prevent crimes (theft, drug use/sales, harassment, violence, etc.) from occurring in surrounding neighborhoods/parks?**

On-site staff will oversee the clients as they arrive and leave the Shelter. If necessary, the Department of Public Safety will be contacted to address any problems. Also, the service collaboration that is a part of the Cold Weather Shelter Program includes outreach work being done by Valley Health Care for the Homeless Project, HomeFirst and the Downtown Streets Team.

**Will the onsite parking be adequate for shelter staff and volunteers plus those shelter clients who have cars? Yes**

**How many spaces will be provided? 30**

**How many staff and volunteers are expected on a daily basis? 15**

**What type of environmental review is the County completing on this project?**

The County is currently completing a CEQA study to determine the applicable level of CEQA review of this project.

**Will there be any public hearing regarding any planning/zoning permits required for this project?**

No public hearing is required by the County for planning/zoning permits, however, depending on the results of the CEQA study, a hearing may be required for the County to make the appropriate CEQA findings. The County will also present information on this program to the City Council on August 25<sup>th</sup> and all are invited to participate. The County Board of Supervisors will be considering the funding for the build out of the proposed CWSP shelter on the County-owned parcel at Fair Oaks Avenue and California Avenue on August 25<sup>th</sup>. The Board will also consider the service contract for HomeFirst for the program services at this site on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

**What is the relationship between the City of Sunnyvale and the County on this project? Does the City decide if this is approved or can the County take action on its own?**

This is the County's project and, although it is located within the Sunnyvale city limits, because it is a public facility located on County property, it is exempt from City land use permitting authority, therefore City approval is not required. However, the County has requested City support of the project, and the Sunnyvale City Council will consider that request on August 25 following a public hearing on the proposal.

**Who can neighbors call 24/7 if there are urgent concerns or problems regarding the facility and/or its clients?**

When site work begins, the County will provide a phone number for the public to report any issues related to the construction work. At completion of the construction of the facility, the County will provide a phone number for reporting any issues related to the operation of the facility.

**How will overflow demand be managed (i.e., if people show up without a referral and refuse to leave and/or begin camping in the vicinity)?**

If a referred client does not show up by 7:00 p.m. on a given day, the bed that was to be occupied will be declared “open” and can be filled by another referred client. Public Safety and Emergency Medical Services can refer individuals and bring them to the site. When referred individuals are confirmed by HomeFirst staff, they will be allowed to enter the shelter. Non-referred clientele will have to wait to see if there are beds available that evening. At least 50% of the beds will be reserved; the rest will be filled on a first-come/first served basis. If no beds are available, individuals will be transported to another shelter or given a bus token. No camping in the vicinity will be allowed. Individuals refused entry will be given a bus token and their departure will be monitored by the staff.

**What type of traffic safety measures/controls will be provided to avoid vehicle/pedestrian conflicts during peak hours of client arrival/departure?**

On-site staff will oversee the clients as they arrive and leave the Shelter. Staff will prevent clients’ walking along California Avenue toward Central Expressway. Staff will monitor client behavior at the bus stops. If there are any behavioral issues, staff will address it and if necessary contact VTA officials. Staff will also patrol the nearby neighborhood to ensure that clients do not remain in the area and monitor them for any inappropriate behavior.

**Although the use of the shelter is temporary each year (4 months out of the year) the structures do not appear to be easily removable. Will the structures be left on the site year-round even after the cold weather season ends?**

The Shelter will be removed after the CWSP season.

**Will other services/vehicles, like the County mobile health unit (dental van) and/or any mobile shower and mobile laundry trucks be coming to the site?**

No, Shower facilities will be provided in a modular building on the site, so a mobile shower truck is not needed. The County mobile medical van and mobile dental van will make periodic/weekly visits to the site. The shelter occupants will launder their clothes at public laundry facilities.

**What will happen during Inclement Weather periods?**

When an inclement weather period is declared, clients will be able to stay in the shelter during the day. The shelter capacity will increase to 125. Special outreach activities will occur in order to encourage the homeless to seek appropriate shelter and receive services.

**Will information be available on a dedicated Website?**

All program information will be posted on the Office of Supportive Housing website.