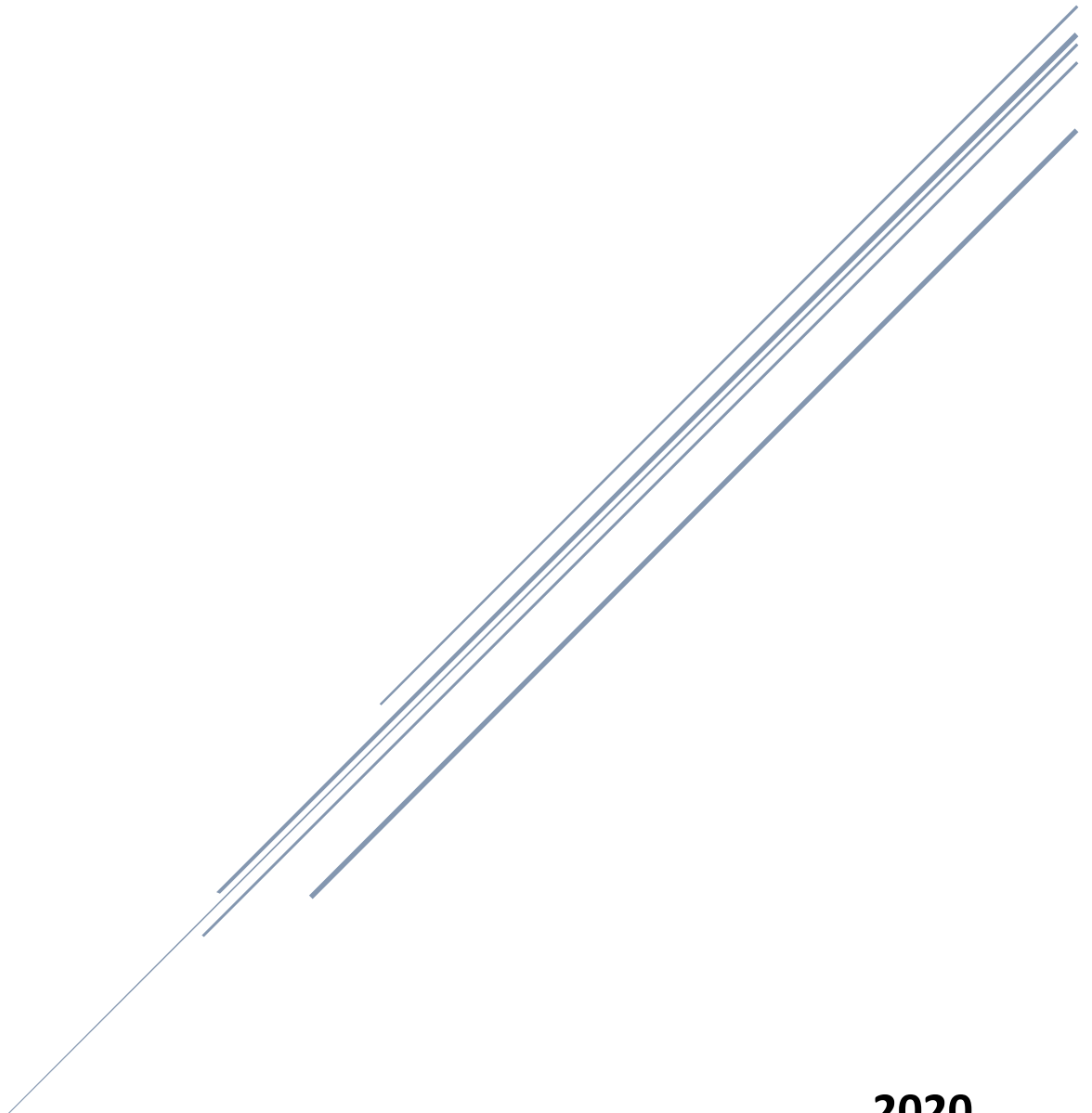


PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR  
HOMELESS AND OTHER CONGREGATE  
SHELTERS COVID-19 RESPONSE

**COVID-19 RESPONSE**



**2020**

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR HOMELESS AND OTHER CONGREGATE SHELTERS COVID-19  
RESPONSE

Contents

**Introduction**..... 3

**Acronyms**..... 3

**Admission** ..... 3

**Orientation** ..... 3

**Isolation and Quarantine** ..... 4

**Release of Isolation or Quarantine** ..... 4

**Transportation**..... 4

**Lodging and Necessities Arrangements**..... 5

**Lodging**..... 5

**Meals** ..... 5

**Testing, Case Management, and Contact Tracing** ..... 5

**Testing** ..... 5

**Case Management**..... 6

**Contact Tracing**..... 6

**Decontamination and Disinfection**..... 6

**Prevention of Infectious Disease Outbreak**..... 7

**Additional Resources for Shelters** ..... 7

**Center for Disease Control and Prevention**..... 7

**World Health Organization** ..... 7

**El Paso Strong** ..... 7

# PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR HOMELESS AND OTHER CONGREGATE SHELTERS COVID-19 RESPONSE

## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for shelters operating during a public health emergency (**COVID-19**). These guidelines are recommendations and should be supplementary to your shelter's standard operating procedures.

## Acronyms

- **ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act
- **CDC** – Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- **CE** – Coordinated Entry System
- **CoC** – El Paso Continuum of Care
- **DCHD** – Department of Community and Human Development
- **EOC** – El Paso City/County Emergency Operation Center
- **HMIS** – Homeless Management Information System
- **HUD** – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- **OEM** – El Paso City/County Office of Emergency Management
- **RMOC** – Regional Medical Operations Center

## Admission

The following admission process is followed for all clients:

1. Provide mask for symptomatic clients and isolate immediately (*see Isolation and Quarantine section of this document*)
2. Ask clients to identify themselves and provide date of birth
3. Determine if the person is barred
4. Ask if the person has any weapons or medication to turn in
5. Check all personal belongings
6. Administer screening questionnaire and client intake forms
7. Present the Charter of Rights and Responsibilities
8. Assign sleeping area and offer shower

## Orientation

1. Identification of the shelter staff and their roles
2. Provide client information regarding current local emergency orders
3. Provide client information about how shelter operates under local emergency orders
4. Mission, program, and services of the shelter
5. Clear communication regarding client's rights and responsibilities
6. Provide information regarding complaint procedure
7. Provide client information on how to prevent spread of infectious disease outside of shelter

# PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR HOMELESS AND OTHER CONGREGATE SHELTERS COVID-19 RESPONSE

## Isolation and Quarantine

1. If symptoms are observed or reported, the client should be immediately isolated and scheduled for testing (*see Testing Section of this document*)
2. Symptomatic individuals should be immediately isolated in a separate room
3. If test results are positive, client will be quarantined by the El Paso Office of Emergency Management (OEM) for at least 10 days
4. Individuals awaiting testing should remain isolated in separate rooms
5. Designate a washroom for isolated client (*see Decontamination and Disinfection Section of this document*)

## Release of Isolation or Quarantine

Clients will be released from quarantine after testing negative and have completed at least 10 days of quarantine with three consecutive days free of symptoms.

The shelter will be responsible for checking client out of hotel and arrange transportation for their client (*see Transportation section of this document*).

Upon notification of client release from hotel, the EOC Planning staff will contact the Salvation Army to cancel the meals for that client.

## Transportation

Endeavors will be responsible for coordinating transportation with shelters. Endeavors will provide transportation services to eligible clients to and from lodging and testing sites (*See Testing Section of this document for guidance on how to request transportation for testing*). Endeavors will ensure that proper social distancing is being practiced during transport, and proper sanitation is conducted before and after all transports in accordance with local health orders and CDC guidelines.

The following are guidelines to request transportation:

1. Gather the following client information:
  - a. First and last name
  - b. Gender
  - c. Full Social Security Number
  - d. Date of Birth
2. Contact Endeavors:
  - a. Primary: Email the information to Justin Rotti at [jrotti@endeavors.org](mailto:jrotti@endeavors.org)
  - b. Secondary: Phone call to Justin Rotti at 210-552-2744
  - c. Tertiary: Call the transport driver at 210-425-21133. Endeavors will acknowledge receipt of the information.
4. Endeavors will notify the shelter of their client's pick-up time.
5. Clients must have their Homeless Verification Letter a pick-up: if they do not, they will not be transported.

## Lodging and Necessities Arrangements

### Lodging

The El Paso Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has entered into an agreement with local hotels for coordinated lodging of individuals, who need lodging assistance for isolation or quarantine. Upon receipt of a request from an individual, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Planning Section staff will notify the designated hotel of the assigned Client ID number to protect the individual's privacy. Payment for costs incurred for lodging services will be coordinated through EOC logistics.

### Meals

OEM is responsible in providing daily meals for individuals through coordination with the Salvation Army. EOC Planning staff will coordinate three meals delivered to designated hotels twice a day (8am and 5pm). The meals will be placed outside an individual's hotel room door to minimize staff contact and exposure. OEM will ensure that proper social distancing and sanitation is being practiced in accordance to local health orders and CDC guidelines when delivering meals.

### Other Necessities

The EOC will coordinate with local community organizations for the provision of other necessities, such as clothing, toiletries, baby items, female products, and personal hygiene.

## Testing, Case Management, and Contact Tracing

### Testing

Endeavors will coordinate with the El Paso County Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for testing. Endeavors will submit test order form to the EOC. Once the order has been created, Endeavors will notify the shelter of their client's pick-up time. The following are steps to schedule testing:

1. Once a resident is deemed to be symptomatic, isolate within your shelter. Gather the following information.
  - a. First and Last Name
  - b. Gender
  - c. Full Social Security Number
  - d. Date of Birth
2. Contact Endeavors at the Delta Welcome Center. Order and method of contact are as follows.
  - a. Primary: Email the information to Justin Rotti at [jrotti@endeavors.org](mailto:jrotti@endeavors.org)
  - b. Secondary: Call Justin Rotti at 210-552-2744
  - c. Tertiary: Call the transport driver at 210-425-2113
3. Endeavors staff will acknowledge the receipt of the information and schedule testing. If the information is received before 12:30pm, testing will be the following day. If the information is received after 12:30pm, testing will be scheduled within two (2) days' time. There is no testing on Sunday.

## PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR HOMELESS AND OTHER CONGREGATE SHELTERS COVID-19 RESPONSE

4. Endeavors staff will notify the shelter of their client's pick-up time the morning of their testing day. Clients must have their Homeless Verification Letter at pick-up. Clients without their verification letter will not be transported.

5. Endeavors staff will check test results the day after testing.

a. If results are negative: shelters will be notified and told a drop-off time.

b. If positive: the client must remain in isolation for a minimum of 10 days or until they do not present symptoms. Their release will be at the discretion of the El Paso Department of Public Health.

### Case Management

The shelter shall be notified of the client's positive test result. The case investigator/contact tracer must contact the shelter to identify the positive individual's whereabouts and at that point the shelter can establish communication with the client.

### Contact Tracing

Contact tracing are fundamental activities that involve working with a patient (symptomatic and asymptomatic) who has been diagnosed with an infectious disease to identify and provide support to people (contacts) who may have been infected through exposure to the patient. This process prevents further transmission of disease by separating people who have (or may have) an infectious disease from people who do not. It is a core disease control measure that has been employed by public health agency personnel for decades. Case investigation and contact tracing are most effective when part of a multifaceted response to an outbreak (CDC).

A case investigator/contact tracer will contact the individual and/or the shelter to identify the positive individual's whereabouts and to identify their close contacts. When conducting contact tracing, it is important to engage with shelter caseworkers, case managers, and counselors who have the trust of shelter residents to assist and identify client whereabouts. Clients with mental health issues including trust issues may not reveal information to strangers. Caseworkers, case managers, and counselors may be able to obtain sensitive information from clients regarding their whereabouts days prior to contracting the virus.

### Decontamination and Disinfection

To prevent the spread of infectious disease, shelters should be hyper-sanitized on a 24-hour basis. While performing hyper-sanitization or interacting with clients and their personnel effects, all employees will utilize the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

The following will be completed at least twice per 12-hour shift:

1. Sweeping all main areas
2. Mopping all main areas
3. Trash taken out
4. Washing all kitchen items used during meal delivery
5. Cleaning all glass and doorways
6. Restrooms fully cleaned

## PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR HOMELESS AND OTHER CONGREGATE SHELTERS COVID-19 RESPONSE

The following is considered hyper-sanitization and will be completed continuously throughout the day. No less than twice an hour unless otherwise stated.

1. Door handles
2. Counters, tabletops, and chairs
3. Coordinated Entry Stations after each use
4. Phones after each use
5. Water fountains after each use
6. Isolation restroom after each use
7. The kitchen will be sanitized before and after each meal is served
8. Staff will ensure all soap and hand sanitizer stations are full and operational every hour
9. For recommend disinfectants approved by CDC please visit the following website:  
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>

### Prevention of Infectious Disease Outbreak

Shelters are responsible for protecting clients from any infectious disease. Shelters are to be diligent in observing visible symptoms of infections and/or diseases and asking questions to identify whether individuals may have infections or other communicable diseases.

Shelters will proceed with caution and take preventative actions if a person's condition is questionable. Where the infection and/ or disease is a potential, shelters are to provide clear instructions to the individual about restrictions that will be implemented to reduce the spread of disease.

*At no point should shelters put any individual (including employees) at risk by placing a person with an infection or communicable disease in the general population. Shelters are to make sure that all symptoms and actions are clearly documented.*

### Additional Resources for Shelters

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/>

World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

El Paso Strong

<http://www.epstrong.org/>