

Infection Control and Response Policy

New London Homeless Hospitality Center

Purpose: This plan covers steps that NLHHC will implement to attempt to prevent the spread of infections and to respond appropriately to anyone who exhibits symptom including cough, respiratory distress and fever. This plan will be expanded/modified if cases of Covid-19 are identified in the region.

Daytime hospitality center

To reduce crowding, we will begin limiting access to daytime hospitality center to shelter guests. Access by other using HHC supports including case management, rapid rehousing and employment will be managed through a “triage” center set up in the current conference room. Individuals who are not shelter guests but need access to HHC supports, CAN assessments or CHC appointments will be given passes to access the main site or other locations within HHC.

Cleaning:

Careful cleaning of all high-touch areas will be expanded. All cleaning will be done with Lysol using appropriate techniques—leaving disinfectant on surfaces for two minutes and removing in an appropriate way. Bottles of Lysol will be clearly labeled and easily accessible in all parts of the shelter. Paper towels and gloves will be available for use in cleaning.

Responsibility for managing cleaning will be as follows:

8:00 am—Mark P. M-F

12:00 pm— Mark P. M-F, shelter supervisor Saturday and Sunday

3:30 pm M-F and 12:00-3:00 weekends— Kate M-F, shelter supervisor Saturday and Sunday
(Don direct supervisor daily)

9:30 pm—Shelter supervisor daily

Help Center-Ada

Front desk—Kate M-F, shelter supervisor Saturday and Sunday

Mini-bus—Kate M-F, shelter supervisor Saturday and Sunday

Staff assigned are responsible for knowing properly cleaning techniques and for supervising that these procedures are followed. Mark P. will be responsible for delivering training in cleaning approach to each person supervising a cleaning shift.

1. EACH MAJOR CLEANING (M-F 8:00 AM AND 3:30 PM, Weekends 12:00-3:00) WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

Cleaning

- All doorknobs and handles (on every floor)
- Counters at front desk
- Tables and chairs in the all sections of the shelter
- All refrigerators, including handles
- Microwave handles and buttons
- Tops and sides of all trash cans
- Laundry machines
- Copy machines
- Coffee island
- Coffee pot handles
- Handrails outside in the front of the building and all stairwells
- Bathroom sinks and faucets
- Toilet seats and handles
- Showers
- Empty ash trays in smoking area
- Jarrett Center bathroom
- Jarrett Center conference room tables and chairs (8:00 only)
- Jarrett Center first floor doorknobs (8:00 only)

Restocking

- Refill soap and paper towels in bathroom
- Refill hand sanitizer
- Refill toilet paper
- Check that tissues are available
- Protective gloves
- Refill Lysol spray bottles

2. AT 12:00 PM AND AT 9:30 PM THE FOLLOWING SURFACES WILL BE CLEANED

- Bathroom sinks and faucets
- Toilet seats and handles
- All doorknobs and handles (on every floor)
- Tables in all sections of the shelter
- Counters at front desk

- Coffee island
 - Empty ash trays in smoking area
- 3. HELP CENTER WILL CLEAN THE FOLLOWING 3-4 TIMES A DAY**
 - Keyboards and mice
 - All phones available for general use
 - 4. FRONT DESK VOLUNTEERS WILL CLEAN THE FOLLOWING AT EACH CHANGE IN SHIFT**
 - Phones available for general use
 - Front desk phone
 - 5. DRIVERS TO MEAL CENTER WILL CLEAN THE BUS BEFORE EACH SHIFT INCLUDING RAILINGS AND SEATS.**

Hand Washing

Staff and guests will be encouraged to wash their hands frequently. Proper handwashing techniques will be posted in every bathroom. Hand sanitizer will also be available in multiple locations within the shelter. Guests will be asked to utilize a hand washing station and hand sanitizer when entering the shelter for the evening.

Food

Food service will continue but all food will be served by volunteers or staff rather than being left out for self-service. The shelter supervisor should assure that the food serving area is properly cleaned before and after food is served. Eating utensils will be individually wrapped and handed out with food. Eating utensils will not be generally accessible. We will provide disposable stirrers for coffee. Until the risk of infection has passed, we will provide paper cups in the shelter and remove the ceramic mugs. Any uneaten food should be discarded once the serving period has ended.

Information for shelter guests and daytime visitors

A summary of basic precautions will be provided to all guests and daytime visitors to the Hospitality Center.

As you have heard, a serious virus (Covid-19) is spreading across the country.

***While for most people this virus will be only an inconvenience,
it can be deadly to others.***

We are working to prevent the spread of illness in the shelter.

You can help by doing a few simple things:

- The most important infection prevention action any person can take is to wash his/her hands often and thoroughly (scrubbing them for at least 20 seconds). Instructions on proper hand washing are posted in every bathroom.
- Cover your cough – cough or sneeze into a tissue or if necessary, the crook of your arm.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not immediately available.
- Consider avoiding shaking hands with people. Some people use a “elbow bump” to minimize touching others.
- Do not share cigarettes, food, utensils or other personal items with others
- If you have a fever, a cough, or have trouble breathing let staff know.
- To reduce overcrowding, people with housing will not be able to use the daytime drop-in center until the current health crisis is over. If you have an appointment with staff, with CHC or have other specific business at HHC we will, however, be setting up a process for you to get access to those services.

If you are not feeling well, let a staff member know. If you are experiencing symptoms that might be a virus (coughing, shortness of breath) we will ask to check your temperature. If you have a fever, we will provide you with access to a shelter alternative which will minimize the chance that you will impact others. You will also need to link with health care providers who can evaluate your situation.

Our volunteers who bring in food at night may not be able to come as concerns about the virus grow. Please be sure to go to the Meal Center for meals as we might not have food at HHC in the evenings.

If you have questions, please check with a shelter supervisor.

Information for staff

All staff will receive guidance on general precautions including direction to stay home if he/she is sick or has been exposed to a person who is quarantined. Staff will also be briefed on identifying people with symptoms and on additional safety precautions to take when cleaning or interacting with guests who are symptomatic.

Staff will be expected to use sick time and/or vacation time if they stay home sick. If an individual staff member is required to remain at home by public health officials, HHC will work with that staff member to facilitate work from home or other accommodations.

Information for volunteers

All volunteers will receive guidance on general precautions including direction to stay home if he/she is sick or has been exposed to a person who is quarantined. Any volunteer who is concerned will be encouraged to stay home and let us know that they cannot come in.

Isolation

Identification

“Social distancing”—reducing close contact between people who are sick and those who are not—is a key strategy in containing an infection outbreak. Staff are our front line in identifying people who might be sick. All staff should let a supervisor (Kate, Mark P. or on-duty shelter supervisor over the weekend) know if they hear of or observe guests or visitors who appear ill—especially those with cough and/or shortness of breath. Individuals could be identified from their symptoms (i.e. coughing) or in conversation (“I don’t feel well”). Our goal here is to help people who are sick develop a plan that will limit their contact with others while the nature of their illness is being determined.

Investigation

Not everyone who exhibits some symptoms of illness will require special action. Once staff or the individual identifies the possibility of a virus infection, the next step will be to determine if further action is required. One primary tool in making this decision is the presence of fever. Any guests who reports or exhibit symptoms including cough and shortness of breath will, therefore, need to be screened for a fever by a shelter supervisor (Mark P, Kate, or weekend shelter supervisor) in a private location. Thermometers are kept in Kate’s office in the bin marked Isolation Supplies. Shelter supervisors should report anyone screened to Dana.

We want to keep track of everyone screened for fever. There is a clip board with a “Potential Isolation Log” hanging in Kate’s office. As you identify someone who needs to be screened for fever, enter his/her name on the log. Also enter his/her cell phone number if available. After you take the temperature, note the reading and the time on the log. (People with close to fever temperatures will be screened again to check if the fever has increased. If

anyone is being actively monitored, next steps should be communicated to the shelter supervisor at shift change.)

If a fever of above 100.4 degrees is identified, the individual will be subject to isolation until a review of his/her symptoms can be completed by a medical professional. If you are moving someone to isolation, note this on the "Potential Isolation Log".

Isolation (for those with symptoms and fever above 100.4)

For shelter guests, isolation space will be provided in respite. Dana will be alerted whenever a shelter guests is identified as in need of isolation and will designate the appropriate room in respite. The transfer to isolation should happen immediately upon finding of fever and respiratory symptoms.

If a person in need of transfer to respite occurs during normal working hours, staff should alert Dana for assistance in managing the transition. If the need to transfer occurs in the evening or on the weekend the shelter supervisor should:

1. Ask the person to wear a mask and avoid close contact with staff or other guests.
2. Staff working with the guest should follow the precautions below.
3. Call Dana and Kate to let them know you have a person who needs isolation.
4. Assign the affected guest to room #10 in respite.
5. Issue the person bedding and a mask. Masks can be reused—please tell the participant to keep the mask for reuse.
6. Explain isolation protocols handouts.
7. Determine if the person has a cell phone. If so, note their phone number in the Potential Isolation Log. If not, issue them a prepaid phone and note that number in on the Potential Isolation Log.
8. Inform others in respite of the option to move to the regular shelter and facilitate the transfer if they wish to move.
9. Post sign on the current men's restroom that says "Isolation Bathroom Only". Post sign on the current women's restroom that says "Men/Women".
10. Anyone in isolation should be contacted by phone every few hours by the shelter supervisors on duty to check that they are OK.

Review the Isolation Instructions handout with the guest.

Supplies for use in implementing the transition to isolation are all located in a bin in Kate's office labeled Isolation Supplies.



Isolation Instructions

You have symptoms that could mean that you have an infection that could impact other people. We will work as quickly as possible to help find out if you can safely be around other people. Until we have that information, you will need to stay separate from other people. If you want to stay in shelter, you will need to observe these rules until we get medical clearance.

- You will have your own room in our respite section.
- You must stay in your room with the door closed unless you need to use the bathroom or get approval to leave your room from an HHC supervisor.
- If you leave your room you must wear a mask.
- We will ask you for a phone number where we and medical staff can reach you. If you need anything, you can call the HHC front desk at 860-439-1573 and let the person who answers know what you need.
- One bathroom on the respite level has been designated for the use of guests in isolation. Please use only this bathroom.
- Meals will be delivered to your room and you should eat them in the room.
- Staff will supply nicotine patches if you would like them.
- We have internet access that you can use. If you want to borrow a computer, let us know and we will get you one.

If you do not wish to remain in our isolation section, you are of course free to leave. You will not, however, be allowed back in the shelter, or anywhere on HHC grounds, for at least two weeks.

If we need to transfer an individual to respite for isolation, other respite guests will be given the option of moving to the main floor. Staff will be relocated from the lower level of the shelter if they wish. CAN assessments will be moved from the lower level to the Help Center or HHC conference room if we have a person in isolation in respite.

Staff protection when working with people in isolation

The first line of protection is to assure that the person who is ill wears a mask. Staff should try to remain at least six feet away from a person who is ill.

Staff should also wear gloves and a mask when working with a person who is in need of isolation. Masks can be reused and should be retained by staff for future use. Staff should

thoroughly wash his/her hands with soap for at least 20 seconds when they have finished working with the person who is sick.

Connection to medical care

Connection to medical advice will begin immediately once a fever is identified or if requested by a guest or visitor. If CHC or VNA staff are on site, Dana will coordinate a meeting with the guest and health care provider according to whatever protocols they suggest. If CHC or VNA staff is not on site, Dana (or shelter supervisor if over the weekend) will call Yale New Haven system covid-19 hotline (1-203-688-1700) for phone screening and direction.

If a participant is directed to an off-site testing site, Dana will coordinate transportation and other logistics. If a person does not meet criteria for Covid-19 testing, he/she should still remain in isolation until Dana can complete consultation with on-site medical staff to determine next steps.

People who are “cleared” by medical staff must return to regular shelter routine. Until cleared, however, guests with symptoms must comply with isolation procedures. Dana will work with health care professionals to determine follow up for individuals who no longer need to stay in isolation. Guests who fail to follow isolation procedures, will be barred from the shelter. If someone with symptoms is barred from the shelter or leaves because they do not want to follow isolation protocols Dana or Kate will notify appropriate emergency personnel.

Dana Dixon will have primary responsibility for managing guests in isolation. If we have someone in isolation, we will let volunteers and staff know.