Kitsap County

Severe Weather Shelter

Operations Handbook

Revised 10/15/2026

1/2/2026: Page 9, New criteria added
10/15/2026: Page 12, Activating on non-scheduled days
10/15/2026: Pages 32 and 33, Service animal clarification

Introduction

Welcome, and thank you for your interest in volunteering at a severe weather shelter. Providing a safe and pleasant environment for people who need shelter from the storm can be challenging, but the benefits can be tremendous.

You will be providing a community service in a role that is much needed. Until this program, shelters were not opened simply for snow, rain and/or wind. The Kitsap County Severe Weather Shelters provides places for those who have nowhere else to go when strong weather conditions exist.

The Severe Weather Shelter Program started in 2008 with one shelter location that moved around due to a lack of an available stable location to house the shelter. The program now has 3 regular locations throughout the county.

It is important to remember that this is not a homeless shelter; it is a safe place for all Kitsap residents who need to escape hazardous weather conditions. While it is true that most of the guests that have used the Severe Weather Shelter Program have been people without housing, there are others in the community who also need this service, including people who do not have sufficient heat or those who have lost power at their homes. We do not provide social programs or counseling. **Our goal is to provide a safe place for those who need shelter from the storm.**

This Operations Handbook is your manual and should contain most of the answers to any questions you may have while working in a shelter.

Again, thank you for your interest in helping with this program.

This handbook and other Severe Weather Shelter resources and information are available at the Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division page at http://kcowa.us/kcsws

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Summary of Changes

Severe Weather Shelter Program Administration

A. Shelter Program Structure

Partners: The Kitsap County Severe Weather Shelter Program is a partnership between Kitsap County Human Services Housing and Homelessness Division (KCHHD), Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management (KCDEM) and the organizations that host the shelters.

KCDEM: KCDEM is responsible for registering new volunteers as State Emergency Workers and performing background checks, coordinating with the Housing and Homelessness Division, monitoring National Weather Service forecasts and inform KCHHD if the predefined threshold criteria for opening the shelters is anticipated for the duration of the activation season, securing mission numbers, collecting required post activation paperwork, and issuing shelter activation notices to local organizations and the press.

KCHHD: KCHHD is responsible for overseeing the Severe Weather Shelter Program, providing training on the Operations Handbook to Shelter Site Managers and volunteers, receiving weather forecasts from KCDEM, activating shelter openings when the predefined criteria is met, coordinating with Shelter Site Managers during an activation, organizing meetings of the Severe Weather Shelter Committee, and providing an On-Call Person for emergencies.

Shelter Site Manager: Each shelter location will establish a Shelter Site Manager(s) who will be responsible for all location specific needs such as supplies, coordination with KCDEM and KCHHD, providing any desired training to volunteers beyond the Operations Handbook, and other functions as needed. The Site Manager, or their designated stand-in, shall be responsible for attending the Operations Team Meetings on a regular basis.

Site Volunteer Coordinators: Most sites also opt to have a Site Volunteer Coordinator who works directly with the volunteers to schedule shifts and communicates volunteer coverage to the County on behalf of the site. This role works closely with the Site Manager at each location and typically participates in the Operations Team meetings.

Steering Committee Representatives: Each shelter location will also assign a representative to serve on the Severe Weather Shelter Steering Committee.

Volunteers: Severe Weather Shelter volunteers consist of Kitsap County citizens who wish to contribute to the operation of the program and are registered as Washington State Emergency Service Volunteers through KCDEM. These volunteers are responsible for the operation of the shelters when activated. They may also serve administrative roles as

assigned without staffing a shift at a shelter. Volunteer responsibilities are covered in more detail throughout this handbook.

B. Severe Weather Shelter Meetings

Steering Committee

Overview: The Severe Weather Shelter Steering Committee consists of representatives from the following, at minimum:

- a representative from KCHHD;
- a representative from KCDEM;
- a representative from each shelter location; and
- representatives from other organizations associated with sheltering and homeless issues in the county, as needed.

Steering Committee Meetings: The committee meets when necessary to review data, evaluate the effectiveness of the shelter program, and provide insight into best practices.

Meetings generally occur via Zoom.

The Steering Committee shall meet with the following frequency:

- Autumn, annually: The Steering Committee shall meet in early fall to prepare for the following shelter program activation period;
- Spring, annually: Each spring a session shall be held to debrief on the completed season; and
- Additional meetings may be held as determined by the Committee to assist with planning, projects, and special initiatives.

Operations Team

Overview: The Severe Weather Shelter Operations Team consists of partners who are directly involved with regular operations of the SWS Sites (e.g., Site Managers, Site Volunteer Coordinators, and Kitsap County staff).

Operations Team Meetings: The team meets monthly to discuss routine operations, problem solve collaboratively, and coordinate efforts across sites.

- Members of the Operations Team meet, at minimum, once a month during the months of October through April and are expected to participate in bi-annual Steering Committee Meetings.

Meetings generally occur via Zoom.

C. Volunteers

Volunteer Requirements: Volunteers must submit a **KCDEM Volunteer Application** which includes a background check authorization form. This can be done online or using a paper version of the application. Volunteers must also sign the **Volunteer Code of Conduct** and submit a suitable picture for their KCDEM Volunteer Badge.

Training: Severe Weather Shelter Training includes two components, and volunteers must complete both prior to staffing a shelter shift.

- **Severe Weather Shelter Operation Training**: This component is offered online. The **online training** is a 50-minute video available at https://www.kitsapgov.com/hs/Pages/HH-SWS-Volunteers.aspx. After completing this training online complete the "KCSWS Online Operations Training Affirmation" located below the training video.
- **Site-Specific Training**: The other training component is to receive site-specific training to learn about the particulars of the location(s) you will volunteer to work. This may include how to access the building, where to find supplies, set-up for the night, close the shelter, and other building specific items. These trainings may be offered during an annual new volunteer training, or new volunteers may be permitted to receive "Just in Time" training by a Site Manager at a shelter location.

Insurance: Volunteers registered with the Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management are considered State of Washington Emergency Workers. This provides them some insurance coverage under the State of Washington Emergency Worker program while on duty at a shelter location.

Volunteer Injuries

If an injury should occur to a volunteer during the operation of the Severe Weather Shelter it should be reported to the Shelter Site Manager **IMMEDIATELY.**

The Shelter Site Manager must:

- **Report the injury immediately to** the **KCDEM** Duty Officer at (360) 535-9988**, and**

- Submit a completed Accident Form to MMoen@kitsap.gov and VMcCaslin@kitsap.gov
- If medical care is required, the volunteer should also fill out the Medical Claim Form.

D. Severe Weather Shelter Activation

1. Criteria

The Severe Weather Shelter Steering Committee established criteria for opening a shelter. If any of the criteria are met, the shelter plan will be activated. Activation does not require a site to open.

The criteria are:

- Temperatures expected to be at or below 32 degrees for more than four hours for one or more successive nights and/or;
- Snow accumulation is expected to exceed 1 inch or more in depth for more than two days and/or;
- Two or more successive days of 1 inch or more of rainfall is anticipated, and/or
- 1.5 inches or more of rainfall is anticipated on a single day, and/or
- A High Wind Warning has been issued (these criteria are still being evaluated)
- Activation may also occur when a single day of ineligible criteria is preceded by two or more days of confirmed activation and followed by at least one day of confirmed activation.

KCDEM monitors the weather regularly and attempts to identify possible activation periods as far as possible in advance. KCDEM uses the forecast provided by the National Weather Service (NWS). Kitsap County may determine that it is not possible to open the shelters due to life-threatening hazardous road conditions. This could include, for example, the forecast of freezing rain.

2. Initial Activation Actions

Activation: If it appears that the criteria will be met and activation is needed, KCDEM will notify the KCHHD Shelter Coordinator. The KCHHD Shelter Coordinator will then notify Site Managers and Site Volunteer Coordinators via email that the shelter plan is being activated and volunteers are needed. In rare situations, an unexpected escalation of weather conditions may arise on non-scheduled days. When this occurs, KCDEM will contact the KCHHD Program Manager. The KCHHD Program Manager will contact Site Managers via text/phone. Each site is to designate a primary contact for non-scheduled days, and a back up contact.

3. Volunteer Staffing

Site Managers or Site Volunteer Coordinators are responsible for approving volunteer shifts at their location and scheduling volunteers. The KCHHD Shelter Coordinator is responsible for reporting the shelter volunteer status to KCDEM.

Volunteer Notification:

On the day of activation Site Volunteer Coordinators will send out emails notifying volunteers of the need for signing up for shifts.

Volunteers should respond to the email as soon as possible, but **no later than 11:00a.**

To Sign Up for a Shift: Volunteers are encouraged to sign up for a shift as early as possible after the shelters are activated to reduce the workload of Site Volunteer Coordinators and ensure the staffing for the night can be determined in a timely fashion.

IMPORTANT

- Shelters must be staffed by 11:00a on the day of activation.
- If a particular location cannot obtain the volunteers needed to staff the shelter by 11:00a, it will not open that night.

Shifts: Each location must have a minimum of two volunteers per shift to open. Each shift has its own duties and responsibilities, as well as shared duties. These duties are covered later in this handbook. Each location has the option to choose from the following shift schedule models:

Two (2) shifts per night:

- First shift: 5pm until 12:30am.
- Second shift: 12:30am to 8:00am.

Three (3) shifts per night:

- 1st shift 5pm-10pm
- 2nd shift 10pm-3am
- 3rd shift 3am-8am

Kingston - Three (3) shifts per night, plus cleanup shift:

- First shift: 5:30pm-10pm
- Second shift: 10pm-2am
- Third shift: 2am-6:30am
- Cleanup shift: 6am-8am

When shelters have identified that they are staffed and able to open (or at 11:30 AM, whichever comes first), the KCHHD staff will notify KCDEM of the staffing status. KCDEM will then initiate public notification about the opening status.

4. Activation - Public Notification

Flyers: Upon notification that the shelters are ready to open, or not able to open, KCDEM will distribute a flier via email to any contacts who have signed up to be on the shelter notification list. This includes many food banks, churches, private businesses and other partners in the program that help get the word out about shelter activations and which sites will be open.

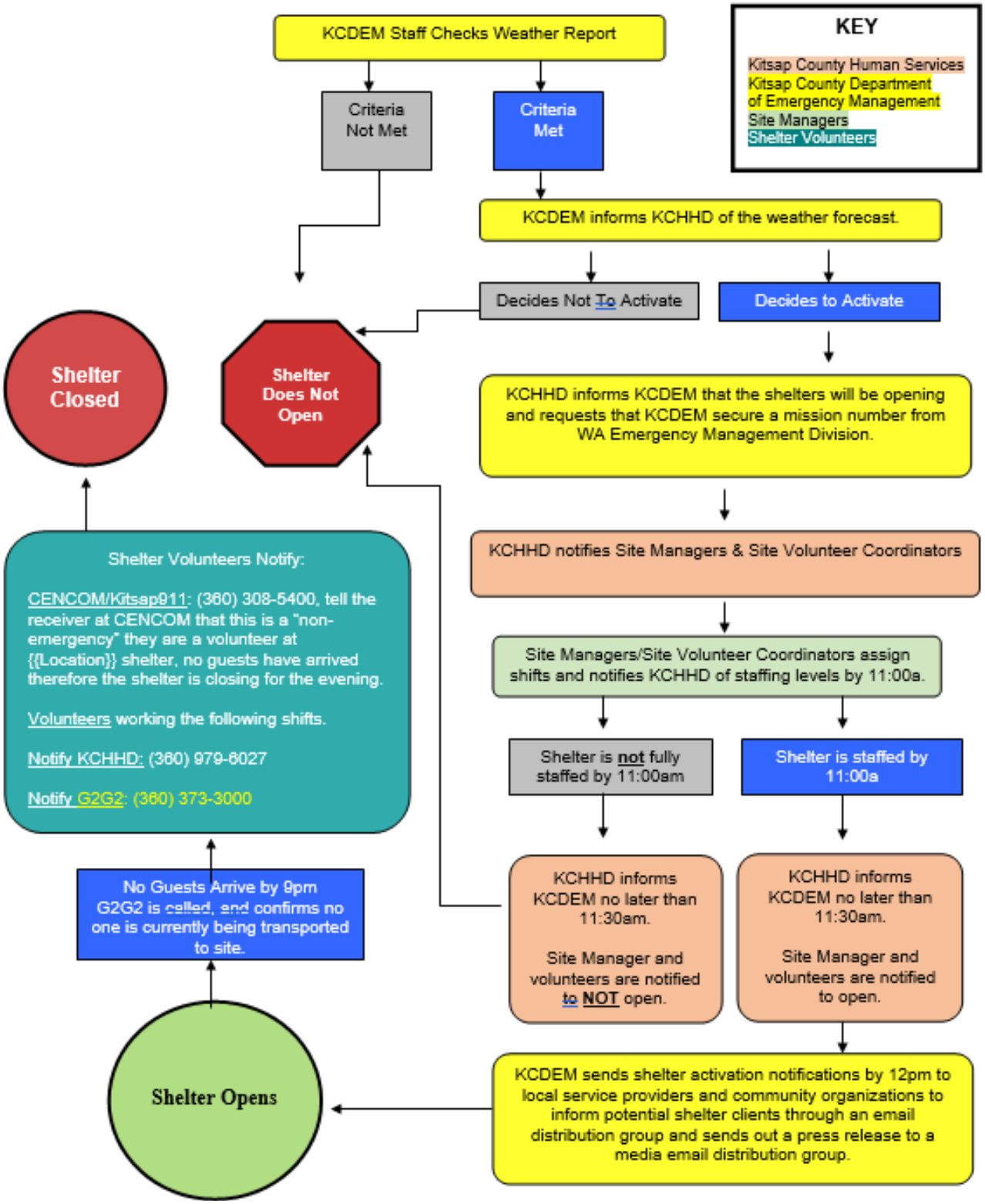
Press Release: KCDEM Public Information Officer will create and distribute a press release to all pertinent media outlets.

Text Alerts: A notification is sent out by text message to public users that have subscribed to text alerts via the KITSAPSWS keyword texted to 211's 898-211 text line.

Emergency Services, Schools, and Providers: A notification goes out to all Kitsap County law enforcement agencies, state patrol, fire agencies and Kitsap 911. All Kitsap County schools, hospitals and most medical facilities also receive the notification that the shelters will be open.

Site Preparation: When the KCDEM public notification is issued, the Shelter Site Managers should begin to organize and prepare the supplies needed for the opening of the shelter.

Severe Weather Shelter Activation Flowchart



I. Volunteer Responsibilities

Once the shelters are staffed, the operation is really in the hands of volunteers. What follows are some general guidelines for operating a Severe Weather Shelter location.

This handbook and training are a combination of research from other shelter operations in the country and our own lessons learned. This handbook will provide tools and resources that will help volunteers navigate situations and issues that may arise when working in a shelter. Volunteers shall stay within the responsibilities outlined within this handbook and the Code of Conduct (see Appendix A).

Volunteers shall refrain from providing assistance outside of the scope of training, for example: giving rides to anyone before/after their shift, writing letters confirming homeless status on behalf of guests, providing counseling, medical assessments/advice, running errands for guests, or other assistance which goes beyond maintaining the safety and security of the shelter and guests.

A. Values for Shelter Workers

A set of values has been developed that guide conversations and actions as shelter workers. The Severe Weather Shelter Program values are:

- **Ensure that the shelter is a safe place.**
- **Respect clients.**
- **Provide services equally to all clients.**
- **Use resources wisely.**

B. Shelter Rules

Site-specific Rules: In addition to the Basic Shelter Rules outlined below, each shelter may have site-specific rules due to the nature of the facility. Some facilities may have other programs in other parts of the facility happening at the same time as the shelter. Any shelter site-specific rules should be noted in the “Location Specific” plan.

Basic Shelter Rules (all sites): The following Basic Shelter Rules apply to **all** Severe Weather Shelter locations unless otherwise specified:

- **Check-in Time**
  - Guest check-in generally occurs between 6pm-9pm (6:30p-9p at Kingston)
  - Guests are able to check in until 10p if transported by G2G2.
  - Guests may check in any time if escorted by police, fire, or emergency services personnel.
  - The site manager may also approve late arrival (after 9pm) if there is a legitimate reason (*e.g.,* a work shift prevents the guest from arriving before 9pm.)

- **Personal Belongings**
  - Backpacks, purses, and other bags must be checked in (bagged) for the night.
  - Once a guest's personal property bag has been sealed and checked in, it may not be opened until they check out of the shelter.
  - Certain personal items (books, religious items, stuffed animals, cell phones, personal audio devices, computers, etc.) may be kept with the guest after being inspected by a volunteer.
  - Encourage guests to plan ahead for the night before sealing their bag.

- **Remaining On-Site**
  - Guests may not leave the premises after check-in.
    - Exception: Before lights out at 10pm (or after lights on and wake-up call at 6am) guests may leave briefly for smoke breaks in designated areas or to check on a pet staying in a vehicle on the property.
  - If a guest leaves the shelter after 10pm, they will not be allowed to return until the next time the shelter is activated and open.
    - Exception: guests with service animals when the animal needs to be taken out after 10pm.

- **Tobacco, Smoking, and Vapes**
  - Smoking or vaping is not permitted inside any of the shelter facilities.
    - Depending on the facility, tobacco & vape use may be permitted outside in designated smoking areas only.
  - Smoking is not permitted between lights out at 10pm and the wakeup call at 6am.

- **Alcohol and Drugs**
  - Alcohol or drugs are not permitted to be carried on a person while a guest on this property.

- **Weapons**
  - Weapons of any kind are not permitted to be carried on any person while on shelter grounds.

- **Treatment of Others**
  - Fighting, foul language and mistreatment of other guests and volunteers is not tolerated.
  - Guests and volunteers will respect the rights of all others using this facility.

- **Designated Areas**
  - Guests and volunteers are only permitted in the areas designated for shelter use.

- **Asked to Leave**
  - If a person is asked to leave the property they will do so promptly, or law enforcement may be called.

- **Wake-Up and Departure**
  - Wake up time is 6am and guests must depart by 7am unless otherwise stated. (5:30a wake up at Kingston with a 6:30a guest departure)
  - Guests are not permitted to leave any items at the shelter unless otherwise permitted by the shelter location; if the shelter location permits this, the location becomes solely responsible for those items.

***** At 9pm if no guests have arrived and G2G2 does not have clients enroute, the shelter will be closed for the night. The 9pm check-in cut off allows time for first shift volunteers to contact and confirm with G2G2, and to inform the following shifts, CENCOM/Kitsap911, and KCHHD on-call. It also allows the first shift time to clean up and stow supplies.

C. Shift Responsibilities

Each shift has shared responsibilities as well as its own responsibilities.

The primary responsibility of every shift is to make sure that the shelter is a safe place and that rules are followed.

1. Common/Shared Responsibilities

Here are some common responsibilities for all shifts:

- **Shelter Entrance**: There should always be one volunteer at the shelter entrance or within ear shot of the entrance, even after check in. This ensures that the door is

answered if someone needs to be let in, such as the police who may be dropping someone off.

- **Telephone Numbers**: There are a few names and phone numbers that you may need during any shift. The list will vary depending on the shelter site, however there are some that will be consistent.
    - The list of phone numbers needed will be in the shelter manual for that site. Some guests may ask you to call a taxi or Kitsap Transit for them, so those numbers will be in the manual as well.

- **Name Tags**: One of the best ways to make a connection with the guests is to be sure they know your name. This also helps strengthen communication with other volunteers. Name tags will be provided and should be worn at all times.

- **Volunteer Sign In:** The Washington State Emergency Worker Daily Activity Report must be completed accurately. For more information, please see Section 2B.

- **Shelter Log Book:** The Shelter Log Book should be used to note any actions or incidents that happen during your shift.

    - Security patrols, guest incidents and any other activity should be noted in the log with the time of each incident.

    - Vehicles parked in the shelter parking lot should be logged in as well, with details such as color, license plate and type of vehicle.

- **Communication:** Maintain regular communication with the shelter Site Manager. Provide them with shelter information and discuss supply needs, problems, and plans.

- **Inform Shelter Guests:** Ensure that shelter guests are receiving updated information about the weather and resources available to them.

    - Several different services guides are included in the Shelter Administration Kit; these can be provided to shelter guests as needed.

- **Monitor Weather:** Monitor weather and response efforts, and plan for closing of the shelter.

- **Safety:** Routinely inspect the safety and sanitation of the facility, including the kitchen, dormitories, bathrooms, exterior, and registration area and ensure that health standards and guests' needs are being met.

2. First Shift - Opening Responsibilities

The first shift is responsible for setting up and opening the shelter as well as checking in guests.

- **Volunteer Arrival**: Arrive on site at 5pm. (5:30p at Kingston).
- **Outdoor Safety:** Make a visual assessment of the conditions outside the shelter in case any snow needs to be removed, or the walkway is icy.
- **Materials:** Ensure all materials needed are available, i.e. black plastic bags, duct tape and black markers, mats, blankets, cleaning supplies, coffee and supplies, granola bars, etc.
- **Guest Items**: Put on the coffee and hot water and set out any items to offer guests, if available.
- **Check-In Station**: Set up a check-in station with hand sanitizer and masks, if applicable, available for guest use. Wipe down surfaces with bleach or disinfectant wipes.

<u>If guests arrive before 9p</u>:

- **Welcoming Guests**:
    - **Log**: As the guests come in, one volunteer will log them into the shelter. For more information, please see Section 2D.
    - **Belongings:** The second volunteer will have guests place their belongings (except medication, pillow, book, stuffed animal) into a large black plastic bag. The bag will be taped shut with the guest's name written on the tape with a ticket attached.
    - **Orientation:** Orient guests by providing important information about the site.
        - Orientation includes:
            - **Emergency Exits**: Ensure all guests are aware of all emergency exits in building.
            - **Sleeping Area:** Direct the guest to the sleeping area of the facility.
            - Issue blankets and pillow, if available.

- **Shift Change**: Turn over paperwork and keys (if applicable) to second shift volunteers. Brief the second shift on any incidents or special conditions.
- **Lights Out:** Turn off lights and electronics and lock the doors at 10pm.

If there are no guests by 9pm

If the shelter does not have any guests that have arrived by 9pm, the shelter will close for the night.

- **Notification of Closure**
    - **Notify the Site Manager** - At 9pm notify the Site Manager that no guests have arrived.
    - **Notify Kitsap911/CENCOM** – Next, call the Kitsap911/CENCOM back line at (360) 308-5400.
        - Tell the receiver that this is a "non-emergency" give the volunteer's name and shelter location.
        - Inform the operator that there are no guests at the {{Location}} shelter and therefore the shelter is closing for the evening.
    - **Notify Other Shift Volunteers** - After contacting Kitsap911/CENCOM, contact volunteers on the following shifts for the night and inform the volunteers that the shelter is closing.
    - **Notify Carl Borg (KCHHD) –** Call Carl Borg at (360) 979-6027 and notify him that the shelter is closing for the evening.
    - **Notify G2G2** – Call Gather Together Grow Together at (360) 373-3000.
    - **Closure** - Close the shelter for the night (see section V. Shelter Shutdown).

3. Last Shift Closing Responsibilities

- **Security:** Ensure shelter security by making rounds throughout the facility.
- **Paperwork:** Ensure that paperwork is complete.
- **6a Wake-Up:** Wake up guests at 6am for a 7am departure. (5:30a wake up for 6:30a departure at Kingston)

- **Guest Belongings**: Return all bagged items to the correct guest by checking names and ticket numbers.
- **Guest Departure:**
    - As each guest departs, they are to sign out on the Shelter Guest Sign-In Sheet.
    - All belongings must leave with the guest. There should not be any bags remaining at the close of the shift.
- **Cleanup:** Ensure building is clean and all trash has been picked up.
    - Clean up the smoking area.
    - Clean and stow all shelter items including mats, snack supplies and any other items.
    - Wipe down commonly used surfaces with disinfectant sprays or wipes.
- **Lock Up:** Ensure doors and windows are locked. Return keys, if necessary, according to shelter location plan.

II. Shelter Operations

A. Shelter Administrative Kit

KCDEM will provide each shelter location with a Shelter Administrative Kit. Inside the Admin Kit, you will find the items needed to operate the shelter.

Items in the kits include:

Information:

- Operations Handbook – Provided to assist with guidance while the shelter is open. In the back of the handbook is contact information that may be needed during operation.

- Shelter location specific instructions – This may be a special section within the provided copy of the handbook with specific instructions or "need to know" items relating to a particular facility such as building layout, maintenance procedures or other information pertaining to that facility.

- Emergency phone numbers – Includes the phone numbers of the KCDEM Shelter Coordinator, KCHHD Shelter Coordinator, and the Site Manager. There may also be pertinent information about social services, taxi service or hospital facilities.

Materials:

- Ink Pens

- Name tags – Should be worn by all volunteers.

- Direction arrows and additional signage

- Log in sheets for guests and volunteers – It is imperative that these two forms be filled out correctly and that the guidelines provided later in this handbook for these forms be followed.

- Flashlights

- Shelter Security Log – This is also a very important part of the shelter record that should be kept according to guidelines provided later in this handbook.

- Claim Tickets – The claim tickets are to ensure that guests receive their items when they check out in the morning. One part of the claim ticket should be given to the guest. The other part should be taped to the bag with the duct tape that has the guests name written on it. The ticket number should also be logged on the Shelter Guest Log-In Sheet next to the guest's name at sign in.

B. Shelter Volunteer Sign-In Sheet

The Washington State Emergency Worker Daily Activity Report is the required form for volunteers to use each night they sign in to work a shelter shift.

- It is important that this form is filled out correctly.
- Please do not fill out any parts of the form that are not mentioned in the instructions.

State of Washington Emergency Worker Daily Activity Report

Volunteers will fill out the report as noted:

1. Emergency Worker Name – Write your name in the box. Do not sign your name here, it must be legible.
2. Card No. – The number shown on the front of your card. This is your emergency worker number.
3. Date – This is the date of the activation. This is the master date for signing in and out. *Volunteers should use a new sign in sheet for each activation date*.
4. In – This is the time that you leave home to head to the shelter. If you are working the third shift, you will still sign in under the activation date of the schedule.
5. Out – This is the time that you arrive home after leaving the shelter. Again, if you are working the second or third shift, you will still sign out under the master date of the activation.
6. Round Trip Miles – This is the number of miles required for your trip to and from the shelter on the night of activation.

Example of form:

STATE OF WASHINGTON
EMERGENCY WORKER DAILY ACTIVITY REPORT

County in which mission/incident took place:	Kitsap	**Mission/Incident Number:**	
Mission/Incident Name:	(SWS Site Name)	**Date From:**	**Date To:**
Unit Name:	Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management (KCDEM)		
Unit Address:	8900 Imperial Way SW Bremerton, WA 98312		

EMERGENCY WORKER NAME	KCDEM ID#	TIME IN	TIME *OUT	TOTAL HOURS	ROUND TRIP MILES (DRIVER)
1. Jane Smith	KC-2025-	1700	2200		12
2. John Ross	KC-2025-	2200	0300		30
3. Barry Stone	KC-2025-	0300	0800		16
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					

* The time a person could reasonably have expected to reach home without stopping enroute.

TOTAL PERSONNEL:	TOTAL HOURS:	TOTAL MILEAGE:

THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR/COORDINATOR OR SHERIFF'S DEPUTY.

By my signature below, I certify that these persons did participate in this mission/incident:

Print Name and Title	Signature

EMD - 078 (02/00)

C. Volunteer No-Shows

It is important that volunteers who register for a shift arrive at the shelter on time and ready to work the shelter. It is understood that emergencies, illnesses, and other events do happen which would make it impossible or hazardous to work a shift.

If a volunteer does not show up for their scheduled shift, or the volunteer knows in advance that they will not be able to make their shift, contact the Site Manager. A list of Site Manager and their contact information are in the back of this handbook.

D. Shelter Guest Log-In Sheet

The Shelter Guest Log-In Sheet serves many purposes:

- Allows for a quick count of guests that are in the shelter.
- Keeps track of times guests arrive and leave.
- Ensures that guests understand the basic rules of the shelter.
- Serves as the sign out sheet to record that a guest has retaken possession of their belongings.
- Verifies the number on the guest's items for the morning shifts.

Procedures for filling out the Guest Log-In Sheet:

1. As guests enter the facility, a volunteer will read the rules listed on the Shelter Log aloud to the guest. Some people have literacy problems and may not be able or willing to tell you about it.
2. Once the rules have been read, the volunteer will write the guests name under the "IN" section of the form. No identification is necessary.
3. Note the time and then initial the form in the proper place.
4. You may ask the person if they would like to give their age and sex. It is not required.
5. Give the guest their part of the claim ticket. Make sure to write the ticket number down on the sign in form.

If a guest refuses to sign in or out, simply note it on the sheet and in the Security Log. Some guests will not stay all night for a variety of reasons and many times they will not want to sign out. Write the time they left, whether they took their personal items, and the circumstances in the Security Log.

E. Operating the Shelter

When a volunteer arrives for the first shift, they should familiarize themselves with the building. Note where all fire extinguishers and fire exits are located. Once familiarized, begin setting up the shelter. Post supplied signs outside to direct guests to the main entrance if not already posted.

Once the shelter is set up volunteers should help guests check-in and get settled. Most guest are very self-sufficient. Volunteers may have time to talk to some of them, play cards with them or just sit and have a cup of coffee with them. For many guests, companionship and a friendly ear to listen goes a long way towards making their day better.

1. Sign In/Out and Intake

When setting up the sign in area, remember to designate a space for personal item intake. Allow enough room so guests can form a line without waiting outside. This makes it easier to monitor those coming in to the shelter and prevents guests from standing in the bad weather.

Belongings: Have the guest place their personal belongings in a large plastic bag. The bag should then be taped up and the guests' name written in black pen on a piece of tape.

- Claim Ticket: The claim ticket should be attached to the bag. Give the guest one side of the check ticket and tape the other side to the bag without covering the number on the ticket.
- Once the bag is sealed it may not be opened until the guest takes possession of his/her property at check out the next morning unless there is a circumstance requiring another item to be placed into the bag. This situation would arise if a guest is not following the rules and an item needs to be bagged.

This is done for a few reasons:

- Security of the shelter guests and volunteers
- Disease control
- To assist in ensuring shelter rules are followed

Guests may not keep their purses, back packs, luggage or other non-essential items with them. They are permitted to keep personal items (Bible or religious items, cell phone, personal audio device, stuffed animal, prescribed medications, etc.). If personal audio devices are not kept at acceptable audible levels, they should be bagged up until morning.

Note: YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO PHYSICALLY TOUCH A GUEST'S BELONGINGS UNLESS A GUEST REQUESTS ASSISTANCE.

We are not a law enforcement agency and have no rights to search people or their belongings.

When guests check out of shelter, they must initial the Sign-In Sheet to acknowledge that they have received their items. They must turn in their claim ticket and write the time out. If they cannot do this, the volunteer will write the information in for the guest. If a guest claims to have lost their ticket, they will have to wait until all other guests have left to see if there are any leftover bags.

No guests are allowed to leave any items in the shelter after they leave. Items left in the shelter will be disposed of during clean-up.

Reservations cannot be made for space in the shelter.

2. Lounge Area

If space permits and a space is offered for a lounge area, make sure that the lounge area is spacious enough to accommodate chairs and tables. Set up a table with a coffee pot and snacks with enough space to accommodate those guests that may have mobility problems. It is also important that any spills be cleaned up immediately after they happen to avoid accidents.

There may be some foods that require hot water, such as Cup O Noodle's or hot chocolate. If there are two coffee pots make sure that one is designated for hot water only. There may also be a microwave provided for guest use. Most guests are very self-sufficient and may be able to help with making coffee or setting out snacks.

The shelter may be able to supply snack foods, but not actual meals. Not all shelter locations are able to provide a lounge area or snacks.

3. Dormitory and General Areas

If cots or mats are not already set up, volunteers will need to set up the sleeping area. Consider creating privately blocked off areas for families if space allows. Volunteers should allow enough room in between cots for the guests to move freely without disturbing other guests.

You may have more than one group of people to shelter in the same facility, which means separating them within the space available. Ensure that you plan for movement within the building for persons with disabilities and other forms of support for people with particular needs.

Once the sleeping area has been arranged, make sure that the bathrooms are stocked and ready for guests to use. Disinfect surfaces. Throughout a shift volunteers should, check the bathrooms to ensure that they are stocked with paper goods as needed. Check for guests who may have sought to sneak a cigarette or other things in the bathroom. Check the overall cleanliness and sanitation.

If a spill occurs anywhere in the building, clean it up right away. Spills can be dangerous. It only takes a little spill of water to cause someone to slip and get injured.

4. Lights Out

Lights out is at 10pm. Most shelter guests will be ready for bed by this time. If a television or radio has been provided, these should be turned off at this time also if they cannot be operated in a separate area at a volume level that does not disturb other guests. Guests may have personal radios or televisions, if headphones are used these items can stay turned on.

Remember, this is not "bed time." It is simply a set time to turn off the lights and noise, so people have a chance to sleep. It allows for a full 8 hours of sleep opportunity.

Guests are not allowed out of the facility after lights out. This is for both the volunteer's safety and the safety of guests. If a guest leaves the shelter after lights out, they are not permitted back in until 6pm the following day if the shelter is still active. Special circumstances may be considered, and exceptions may be made depending on the situation.

When the lights go out, the doors get locked. Again, no guest may check in after 9pm unless escorted by G2G2 (10p), by police, fire, or emergency services personnel (anytime), or as specified by the Site Manager as an exception. All local police departments will have prior knowledge of the shelter and will provide added drive by checks to ensure shelter safety. While they may not stop and come into the shelter, rest assured that they are patrolling in the area to help keep an eye on things.

Be sure to make security rounds through the shelter. Look through the windows at the outside area. You should at least be able to check the area by the main entrance.

5. After Hours Security/Security Log

Once lights are out and doors are locked, it is important to continue to provide proper security to the facility. Volunteers should make hourly rounds throughout the building to ensure the safety of the guests and volunteers.

The Shelter Security Log is used to track incidents in the shelter. It is also used to log in rounds made by volunteers, equipment failures, vehicles in the parking lot and other things. Anything that happens in the shelter should be noted in the security log.

Anything that happens at the shelter should be noted in the logbook. This is an important record of events that is required. Here are a couple of examples of how to fill out the logbook:

- 11/13/21 9:25PM - Shelter power went out, generator started. All emergency lights worked properly.
- 11/13/21 10:25 PM - Lights came back on.
- 11/13/21 10:05PM - Made security rounds
- 11/13/21 11:35PM - Two cars in parking area: Blue Chevy Truck, License ABC 321. Unknown if the car belongs to a guest in shelter. The other vehicle is a Green Ford F-150, that belongs to a volunteer.
- 11/14/21 12:10AM - Blue Thunderbird belonging to guest no longer in parking lot.
- 12/20/2021 3:00AM - Guest, Chris, decided to leave shelter because we would not allow him to go outside to smoke. Received personal items bag but did not want to sign out on sheet.

6. Service Animals

As defined by RCW 70.84.021, "service animal" means an animal that is trained for the purposes of assisting or accommodating a disabled person's sensory, mental, or physical disability. **Service animals are welcome at the shelter.**

The Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD) clearly defines a service animal as being “trained”. Training itself is not defined, and there is no requirement that the animal have a certain type of training, that the animal be certified, or that it be trained by a particular person or by a person having certification. Court cases have determined that the training needs to be more than obedience training or positive reinforcement that are given to family pets. A service animal must have training that sets it apart from a family pet; the service animal must be trained to engage in specific actions or tasks to assist its handler with a disability. (Washington State Human Rights Commission, 2013)

This training requirement often eliminates “emotional support animals”, “therapy dogs”, and “comfort animals” from the definition of service animal. Before determining that an animal falls into one of these categories and excluding the animal, an inquiry should be made into what the animal is trained to do.

Questions you may ask:

- Is the animal a pet? If the animal is a pet, the business can exclude the animal. If the handler answers that the animal is a service animal, the business can proceed to a second question.

- “What is this animal trained to do for you?” The answer to this question will determine if the business needs to allow the animal or if it can exclude the animal.

- If the handler refuses to answer, the animal should be excluded.

- If the handler discloses their disability but refuses to disclose what the animal is trained to do for them, the animal can be excluded.

  If the handler provides documentation or certification that the animal is a service animal, but neither the documentation nor the handler can explain what the animal is trained to do, the business can exclude the animal. (There is no state or federal service animal registry or certification process, so such documentation has no legal meaning and is often purchased on the Internet.) (Washington State Human Rights Commission, 2013)

- If the handler answers only that the animal can sit, stay, lie down, come when called, or do something else related to obedience and good manners, this does not indicate the animal is trained to provide services for a disability, and the animal can be excluded.

- If the handler answers that the animal makes them feel better, helps them calm down, eases their depression, or something similar, this would indicate that it is the animal’s presence alone that helps the handler, and that the animal is not trained to do a task or provide a service. Because the animal does not meet the training requirement, the business can exclude the animal.

- If the handler answers that the animal is trained to guide them, help with balance or mobility, alert them to a condition (either physical or situational), pick up or carry items, remind them to take medication, get help, stabilize them during a seizure, redirect their attention from a trigger, or do some other task or

provide some service that the person is unable to do themselves or helps with a disability, then the animal is a trained service and must be allowed. (Washington State Human Rights Commission, 2013)

Things to remember:

- Service animals are not limited to large dogs; small dogs and miniature horses often work as service animals.

- Service animals will often be identified with a harness or vest, but there is no requirement that the service animal have any identification.

- The business cannot ask the customer about his or her disability, as this is private information, and the business cannot ask for proof of disability or a medical note.

- If an animal is identified as a service animal, the business must allow the animal into all public parts of the business, including where food is sold and eaten. The business cannot segregate the service animal and its handler to a particular part of the place of public accommodation.

- A service animal must be under the control of its handler. Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless the individual's disability prevents using these devices or these devices interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of tasks. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

- It is reasonable to expect that the service animal should remain in physical or voice control of its handler at all times, that the animal not defecate or urinate inside, and that the animal not bark excessively, be disruptive, run to people or jump on them, or act aggressively toward people. Keep in mind, however, that sometimes it is a service animal's job to warn its handler of surroundings or impending events, and it might do so with a bark or a growl.

- The service animal is there to provide a service; it is working. Therefore, it should not be wandering around, socializing, eating at the table, or being fed by other guests. It this type of behavior occurs, the business can ask that it stop, and if the behavior continues, the business can ask that the animal leave.

- Service animals are highly trained, and the majority of service animal handlers will be very conscientious about their animal's behavior and would not allow it to engage it inappropriate or disruptive behavior.

- Do not pet or speak to the service animal unless invited to do so by its handler. The animal is working and should not be disturbed.

- You are not permitted to ask a person what kind of disability they may have. (Washington State Human Rights Commission, 2013)

Shelter workers should allow the service animals to remain with its owner at all times.

Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. It is important for workers to consider, however, that animal dander may cause respiratory or allergy problems for other shelter residents.

For clients with service animals, offer a sleeping space in a separate room or a room with fewer people in it. You are not allowed to force a person with a service animal to be segregated from the general population. People with allergies or a fear of animals should be directed to space away from the service animal.

The service animal and the person with the animal must be allowed to go into any spaces that other guests are allowed to be in as well.

7. Donations

Donations are always appreciated. However, when a shelter is open, the community tends to look at the shelter as a "drop off all the stuff we don't want anymore" facility. This can cause a few problems in the shelter, the biggest being space. Donations may also present problems with sanitation and health issues.

There may be certain items that you can use at the time and it is acceptable to accept those donations at the shelter (toilet paper, snacks, personal hygiene products, etc). Other donations should be set up through the Shelter Site Manager during normal business hours unless a donation plan has already been put in place by the facility. The County does not store donated items for the shelters.

Cash donations cannot be accepted at the shelter by volunteers! Those wishing to make cash donations should contact the Shelter Site Manager during normal business hours.

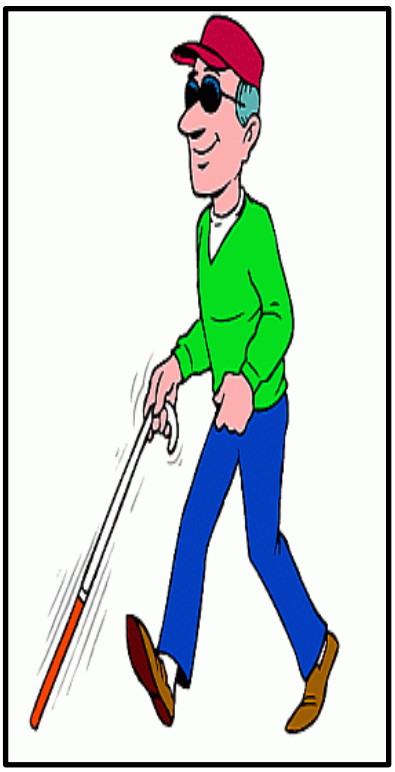
8. Working with Special Needs Guests and Addictions

When people with disabilities seek shelter, it is important to work with them individually to assess their needs and to determine the best way to meet those needs without seeming condescending. Many individuals find shelters difficult, being separated from their personal items and familiar surroundings. This can be more difficult and often frustrating, for an individual with a disability.

Remember to allow room for persons with mobility issues to move around the facility. When setting up cots or tables, be sure to leave a wide space in case it is needed. There should be a clear and open path to the restrooms and any exits.

Excessive snow, rain or debris may make it difficult for guests with mobility challenges to get out of the building in the morning. Remember when making your security rounds to note the conditions outside. You should ensure that walkways and wheelchair ramps stay snow and ice free.

For a person who is blind or has a visual impairment, a shelter can pose several challenges. Often cots, tables, and chairs are moved during the day which can interfere with landmarks for navigating through the shelter. The shelter environment may also contain communication barriers. We often use visual means such as signs, posters, and information sheets to convey information.



Remember, a person with a visual impairment has the same needs for information as a person who is sighted. Suggestions include the following:

• Depending on need, provide a verbal orientation to the shelter facility.

• Provide assistance with equipment such as phones.

• Offer assistance when going through feeding lines.

• Assign a cot space in an area with a permanent fixture, such as a wall or column, and where access to other facilities like eating areas and restrooms does not take the individual through an obstructed area.

• Post general information in large print.

• Offer to read information aloud.

Hearing impairments may also vary widely, from hard of hearing to profoundly deaf. However, as with sight impairments, a hearing impaired person has the same needs for information as a hearing person. Discuss with the person the level of assistance needed to communicate.

If the client communicates through American Sign Language (ASL), ask if there are any workers or other clients who know ASL. It may be helpful to assign a companion to the person who is deaf, or another client may volunteer to assist.

Here are some suggestions:

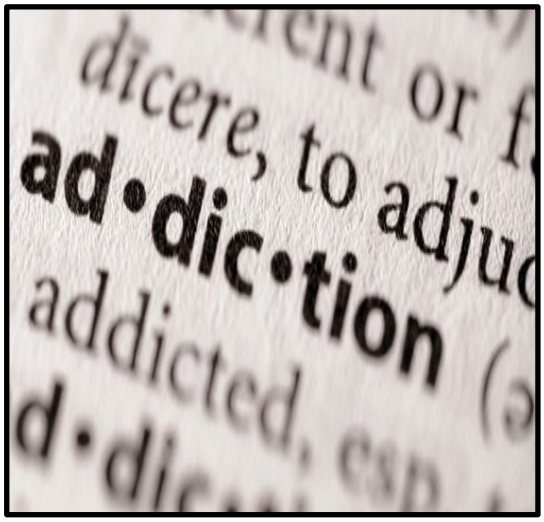
• If the client is hard of hearing, but can hear to some extent, try to separate the client from a noisy and distracting environment.

• If the information to be provided the individual is lengthy, offer it in a written format. If there are numerous questions to be asked, write them out with space for the client to complete them.

• Post general information in numerous locations.

• Provide access to closed captioned televisions.

• Have workers carry paper and pens and provide them to other clients who may be communicating with the client who is hearing impaired.



When it comes to addictions, while you may be able to offer valuable support to someone who wants to overcome their problem, bear in mind that not all people will readily accept help or even admit to having a problem. You are not expected to be a substance abuse counselor. Do not assume that someone has a drug or alcohol problem just because they may look that way.

Sometimes people can behave unpredictably when they drink or take drugs. Their moods and actions can become erratic, which at best can be embarrassing or frustrating for friends and family, but at worst can be-come aggressive or violent. Don't tolerate abuse of any nature, whether physical or emotional - you have the right to put your own safety and well-being first. If a guest becomes violent for any reason, call 911 immediately.

If a person wants to openly talk to you about their problem, lend an ear and support. Resort to your resources guide to find phone numbers that may help them. Lending an ear can be a great comfort to people.

Remember, even if you have addiction counseling training, you are not in a counselor capacity at the shelter and while you may be able to share some personal stories, they need professional help and guidance outside of the shelter setting.

9. Working with the Media

It is always important to maintain a good relationship with the media. The press can help us get the story out by telling people where the shelter is open and where it is located. It is not the role of the staff at a shelter to actively seek out the media for interviews. (In general, all media outreach should be coordinated in advance)

However, shelter staff may encounter the media while at the shelter. As far as the media is concerned, anyone volunteering at the shelter may be perceived as a shelter spokesperson, so the media are apt to seek information from anyone wearing KCDEM identification.

When approached by the media:

- Respond courteously and cooperate, if possible.
- Get the reporter's name, station or newspaper, phone number, their requests for information and any deadline. Give this information to the shelter site manager immediately.
- Respond to questions in a positive fashion, commenting only on the activities related to the shelter and available services.
- Speak only to the facts that you know. Refer questions about the overall operation to Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division.
- Be clear. Use non-technical language that is easy to understand.
- Think carefully before you answer. Remember that any statement made may be used out of context.
- Do not give out any information on a particular client. Remember, we must respect our guest's privacy.

Media crews may ask to take pictures inside the shelter. Our first obligation is to the privacy of shelter residents; however, it is usually possible to assist with the story.
Explain this to the crew, and offer possible alternatives, such as the following:
You should clear any press actions inside the shelter with the Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division (KCHHD) before it is allowed. The KCHHD and the KCDEM offices do have Public Information Officers and those phone numbers are listed in the back of this handbook.

Ask one or two clients if they might be willing to talk with the media. If so, select an area for the interview that will not impose on other clients' privacy. If the shelter has only a few residents, you could select a small area of the shelter, announce to all residents that the media is going to be conducting a short interview in that area, and ask anyone who does not want to be in the video to step away for just a few moments.

If you have a surprise visit by the media, please call KCDEM Public Information Officer Dave Rasmussen. He is available to support you and the volunteer team at your site. He can be reached on his cell phone at 360-204-6704.

10. Weapons, Drugs and Alcohol

Weapons, drugs, and alcohol are not allowed to be carried by anybody in the shelter. If a volunteer notices that a guest has a prohibited item tell the guest that those items are not permitted. They may put the item in their personal belongings bag where it will stay locked up until morning checkout. If they refuse or become belligerent, ask the guest to leave. If you have further problems, call 911.

Remember, we are not a law enforcement agency, so you do not have the right to try and confiscate a weapon. Trying to take a weapon from a guest could put you in serious danger.

Here is a list of just some of the items that are considered weapons:

- Ammunition, Bullets and Bullet Clips
- Baseball Bats, Clubs and Batons
- Chains
- Brass knuckles
- Guns or Knives of any type
- Hatchets
- Martial Arts Devices - Throwing Stars, Swords, etc.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO CARY FIREARMS, OR ANY WEAPON WHILE AT THE SHELTER, EVEN IF YOU HAVE A PERMIT TO DO SO OUTSIDE OF THE SHELTER!

(Kitsap County Human Resources, 2000)

11. Altercations

While most of our guests will just be glad to be out of the cold, tempers can flare, and disagreements can happen. It is human nature to try and stop a fight once it begins. Try to diffuse the situation before it becomes physical. You should stay out of any physical altercations between guests. This could lead to harm to you and damage the trust you have built with the other guests. If a physical altercation happens, call 911.

12. Snowed-in or Blizzard Conditions

In the event of serious winter conditions at the closing time for the shelter, which make leaving the shelter impossible or hazardous, the Site Manager should contact the DEM Director (or Duty Officer if Director is unavailable) to discuss extending shelter hours. If an extension in hours of operation is granted the Site Manager will contact the KCHHD On-Call and volunteers to notify of the change. Volunteers should be prepared for the possibility that they will need to stay and continue monitoring the shelter until advised by the Site Manager to close the shelter.

13. Complaint/Feedback Form

Guests at severe weather shelters should have reasonable expectations to be treated with dignity, respect, and a safe place to stay overnight during shelter operational hours. Guests that notice or are experiencing issues will look to the volunteers working the shift for assistance.

If a guest has a complaint or issue within your training, the rules, and your ability to address please assist the guest. If guests have complaints that you cannot address or is outside of the scope of your role as a shelter volunteer, you may offer the guest a complaint/feedback form.

Blank forms are kept inside the Shelter Admin Kit. When a completed form is received, the forms will be provided to a Site Manager to review. If a guest would like to receive a follow-up the guest may leave their contact information, or a guest may also choose to submit a complaint anonymously. An electronic complaint form is also available on the Kitsap County Severe Weather Shelter page at http://kcowa.us/kcsws/.

III. Building Safety

A. Power Outages

In the event of a power outage, if guests need to move around the shelter, a volunteer should get a flashlight and go with them. Shelter sites should be equipped with generators, but this is not always the case. Check to see if your building has a generator and make sure you know how to contact the Shelter Site Manager if there is a generator issue.

B. Earthquakes

If a serious earthquake occurs while the shelter is opened please follow these steps:

1. If the guests are awake, drop and cover! This is for the safety of guests and volunteers!
2. When the ground stops shaking, exit the building. Before you exit, assign volunteers to check exit routes for safety. Have guests and volunteers take all belongings! The Shelter now is closed (before a shelter can be opened an official must inspect the site. This will take hours!). Do not remove shelter supplies.
3. Take roll call. Contact the DEM Operations Coordinator and the KCHHC Shelter Coordinator immediately.

In the event of a minor quake, with no obvious building damage, you may re-enter the shelter and resume shelter operations as normal. You must still call the DEM Operations Coordinator to get clearance to resume operations.

C. Fire Safety

Fire safety is perhaps the most important safety step you can practice. Be aware of fire hazards, such as heaters or people who may sneak a cigarette inside. Always know where the fire exits are in the building and make sure that they are accessible. Do not set up any tables or cots that may block the fire exits.

While most buildings are equipped with automatic fire safety devices (smoke detectors, sprinklers, etc.) you are the most important and effective fire safety device. Here are some basic fire safety procedures and tips. Remember, these are only guidelines. Approved training is best before using a fire extinguisher. In case of a fire, before you do anything else…CALL 911!!!

Fire extinguishers are labeled according to the type of fire on which they may be used. Using one type of extinguisher on the wrong type of fire could be dangerous and make matters even worse.

The important thing to remember is to stay calm. Always call 911 before trying to extinguish the fire. Assess the situation to determine if it is safe to try to put the fire out. If there is any possibility that the fire is too big for the extinguisher, stop and get out of the building immediately.

Always ensure that you have an escape route before trying to use an extinguisher on a fire. Most fire extinguishers only last 10-15 seconds so it is important to use them efficiently.

Class of Fire	Type of Fire	Type of Extinguisher	Extinguisher Identification	Symbol
A	Ordinary combustibles: wood, paper, rubber, fabrics, and many plastics	Water, Dry Powder, Halon		
B	Flammable Liquids and Gases: gasoline, oils, paint, lacquer, and tar	Carbon Dioxide, Dry Powder Halon		
C	Fires involving Live Electrical Equipment	Carbon Dioxide, Dry Powder Halon		
D	Combustible Metals or Combustible Metal Alloys	Special Agents		
K	Fires in Cooking Appliances that involve Combustible Cooking Media: Vegetable or Animal Oils and Fats			

This chart shows you the markings on the side of most fire extinguishers.

The fire type that the extinguisher can be used can be noted by letters, colors and in some cases through symbols.

The National Fire Protection Association has devised an acronym to help you remember how to use a fire extinguisher: PASS.

PASS stands for Pull, Aim, Squeeze, and Sweep.

Be sure to point the nozzle at the base of the fire. If you aim at the flames, the extinguishing agent will likely pass through the flames and be ineffective.

Be aware of smoke. Seven out of ten fire deaths occur from breathing poisonous gases produced by the fire. Stand several feet away, advancing only when the fire starts to diminish.

IV. Shelter Shutdown

The shelter will close daily at 7AM with few exceptions. You will be notified in advance if the shelter will be staying open during the day. Some shelters may have different closing times due to other building operations, but this is discouraged in order to try and ensure continuity in the program.

- Wake up guests at 6am for a 7am departure. (5:30a wake up for 6:30a departure at Kingston)

- If there is a coffee pot, make sure it is rinsed out and returned to its bin, along with all other supplies/materials. Ensure coffee pot is turned off, as well as any other electrical items in the shelter.

- Ensure that lounge, restroom and sleeping areas are clean, use disinfectant spray or wipes to clean commonly touched surfaces.

- If instructions and supplies are available, clean and disinfect cots or pads.

- Ensure guests deposit blankets and pillows (if necessary) into the dirty clothes bin.

- Complete paperwork.

- As each guest departs, they are to sign off out on the Shelter Guest Sign-In Sheet form. Notate whether or not they left with their bag of belongings. Even if they are returning for a second night, all belongings must leave with the guest. There should not be any bags remaining at the close of the shift.

- Be sure to check the smoking area to assure we do not leave a mess for the building residents.

- No later than 8am, lock doors and stow keys according to the instructions in the Locations Specific Instructions if applicable.

- Organize all paperwork, including Volunteer Sign-In Sheets, Security Log, Guest Sign In/Out Log, Shift Reports and any other paperwork that needs to be returned to the KCDEM via the KCHHD Shelter Coordinator.

Remember, we want to leave the shelter facility in the same state as when we opened the shelter.

References

Kitsap County Human Resources. (2000, October). Kitsap County Personnel Manual - Annex L. Port Orchard, WA, USA.

Washington State Human Rights Commission. (2013, October). *Guide to Service Animals and The Washington State Law Against Discrimination.* Olympia: Washington State Human Rights Commission. Retrieved from Washington State Human Rights Commission.

APPENDIX A: Emergency Worker/Volunteer

Code of Conduct

I. Introduction

In an effort to maintain the highest standards of conduct expected and deserved by the citizens of Kitsap County and to enable Kitsap County agencies to continue to offer services required by those in need, volunteers registered as State Emergency Workers through Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management will provide services under the following code of conduct:

II. Code of Conduct

a. No volunteer shall authorize the use of or use for the benefit or advantage of any person, the name, emblem, endorsement, services, or property of the Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division (KCHHD), Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management (KCDEM) or any other county government entity.

b. Volunteers will not accept or seek on behalf of themselves or any other person, any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value that may be offered because of the volunteer's affiliation with the Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division (KCHHD), Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management (KCDEM) or any other county government entity.

c. No volunteer shall publicly utilize any KCDEM or KCHHD affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue not in conformity with the official positions of the Department or volunteer group(s).

d. Volunteers shall not disclose any confidential information that is available solely as a result of the volunteer's service to any person not authorized to receive such information, or use to the disadvantage of Kitsap County any such confidential information, without written authorization of the Director(s) of Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division (KCHHD) or Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management (KCDEM).

e. No volunteer shall knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the Volunteer Group in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation.

f. Volunteers should operate or act only in a manner that is in the best interests of the Kitsap County.

g. Possession or use of a firearm or other weapons while serving in a Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management volunteer role is **prohibited by Kitsap County Resolution 143-1998**. Possession of a valid concealed weapons permit is not an exception under this policy.

h. Volunteers should not operate any motor vehicle while on duty unless it is their personal vehicle or they are authorized to use a response vehicle.

i. Volunteers will not use alcohol or drugs of any kind while on assignment as a Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management volunteer, nor should any member report for duty if they are under the influence of such substances.

j. Volunteers will not engage in inappropriate behavior that would jeopardize the program effectiveness and sustainability to include using profane language, public criticism of a fellow team member or the program that the volunteer is assigned.

k. Purposely jeopardizing another team member's safety is strictly prohibited.

l. Self-responding to events such as fires, accidents, etc. is strictly prohibited. County Shelter Management Training or acting as a Shelter Volunteer does not give a citizen the same rights or responsibilities as a firefighter, law enforcement officer or a medical professional and does not give a citizen the right or duty to respond as a first responder professional.

m. No volunteer member has a legal duty to act and is not required to respond to incidents in their immediate area nor to calls for team activation. However, once responded, volunteers must follow safe and effective practices at all times. Volunteers who abandon their duty assignment, act outside their training or responsibility, or otherwise violate policies or codes of conduct are subject to termination.

n. Many volunteers have skills beyond what is taught through a specific volunteer program (for example, medical and health professionals, operating heavy equipment, etc.) While these skills may be helpful during an emergency or disaster, and can be utilized in other programs, they may be outside of the scope of volunteering with KCDEM and are considered unauthorized activities. Volunteers must stay within the documented scope of the training they have received through the County Shelter Management Training.

o. Under WAC 118-04 governing State Emergency Workers, Volunteers (registered Emergency Workers), when called for a mission, training or exercises in the performance of duty are subject to the liability legislation of the State of Washington. No liability protection exists for negligence or wanton disregard. Volunteers should always remain within their scope of training, assigned responsibilities, and act as any other reasonable person would act in similar circumstances.

p. Volunteers shall report all unsafe situations, activities or practices immediately and take appropriate protective action for themselves and bystanders.

q. Volunteers will bring or wear appropriate personal safety equipment: helmet, vest, dust mask, goggles, gloves (rubber/latex and leather), sturdy shoes, long pants, flashlight (with extra batteries), bottled water, non-perishable food, etc. **Absolutely no shorts, sandals or open-toed shoes are allowed when responding to an incident or during training events!!**

r. Volunteers will confine their actions to their physical and resource limitations. Such limitations may be determined by, but not limited to, equipment availability, physical abilities, knowledge, authority and hazards.

s. In the event that the volunteer's obligation to operate in the best interests of their volunteer group conflicts with the interests of any organization in which the individual has a financial interest of an affiliation, the individual shall disclose such conflict to the Director of Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management.

III. Performance

Volunteers are expected to comply with the policies, procedures, and standards of their volunteer program as explained at the beginning of their assignment, during volunteer orientation and/or in a volunteer group handbook.

If a supervisor is dissatisfied with a volunteer's performance, the first course of action is to communicate that concern to the volunteer. If they are unable to reach an understanding, the director will resolve the matter. In most cases, a volunteer will be given sufficient time to respond affirmatively or request reassignment to a more suitable placement. In some cases, however, immediate action may be required depending upon the severity of the issue.

IV. Commitment to Diversity

Kitsap County is committed to being a diverse organization. It seeks to recognize value and incorporate diversity in its services, policies and operations, service recipients, and paid and volunteer workforce. Diversity includes differences such as age, belief, citizenship, culture, economic level, ethnicity, gender, language, national origin, and philosophy of life, physical ability, physical appearance, race, religion, and sexual orientation. Volunteers will adhere to these same standards in the course of their duties.

APPENDIX B: Verbal De-Escalation Techniques

When working with any group of people, you may encounter someone who is angry or upset. The following verbal de-escalation techniques may help you to calm the person down.

THERE ARE 3 PARTS TO BE MASTERED IN VERBAL DE-ESCALATION

A. Be in Control of Yourself

1. Appear calm, centered, and self-assured even if you don't feel it. Relax facial muscles and look confident. Your anxiety can make the person feel anxious and unsafe and that can escalate aggression.
2. Use a modulated, low monotonous tone of voice (our normal tendency is to have a high pitched, tight voice when upset, scared or nervous).
3. Do not be defensive-even if the comments or insults are directed at you, they are not about you. Do not defend yourself or anyone else from insults, curses or misconceptions about their roles.
4. Be aware of any resources available for back up. Know that you have the choice to leave, tell the person to leave, or call 911 should de-escalation not be effective. Walk away to call 911! Never call 911 in front of the person!
5. Be very respectful even when firmly setting limits or calling for help. The agitated individual is very sensitive to feeling shamed and disrespected. We want them to know that it is not necessary to show us that they must be respected. We automatically treat them with dignity and respect.

B. The Physical Stance

1. Always be at the same eye level. Encourage the person to be seated, but if they need to stand, you stand up also.
2. Allow extra physical space between you – about four times your usual distance. Anger and agitation fill the extra space between you and the person.
3. Do not stand full front to the person. Stand at an angle so you can sidestep away if needed.
4. Do not maintain constant eye contact. Allow the person to break their gaze and look away.

5. Do not point or shake your finger.
6. DO NOT smile. This could look like mockery or anxiety.
7. Do not touch – even if some touching is generally culturally appropriate and usual in your setting. Cognitive dysfunction in agitated people allow for easy misinterpretation of physical contact as hostile or threatening.
8. Keep hands out of your pockets, up and available to protect yourself. It also demonstrates non-verbally that you do not have a concealed weapon.
9. Do not argue or try to convince. Instead, give choices (i.e., empower).
10. Don't be defensive or judgmental.
11. Don't be parental, join the resistance: You have a right to feel angry.

C. The De-Escalation Discussion

1. Remember that there is no content except trying to calmly bring the level of arousal down to baseline.
2. Do not get loud or try to yell over a screaming person. Wait until he/she takes a breath; then talk. Speak calmly at an average volume.
3. DO NOT answer abusive questions (e.g. "Why are all shelter volunteers ___?) This question should get no response what so ever.
4. Explain limits and rules in an authoritative, firm, but always respectful tone. Give choices where possible in which both alternatives are safe ones (e.g. Would you like to continue our discussion calmly or would you prefer to stop now and try again when things can be more relaxed?)
5. Empathize with feelings but not with the behavior (e.g. "I understand that you have every right to feel angry, but it is not okay for you to use abusive language.)
6. Do not argue or try to convince.
7. Wherever possible, tap into the person's cognitive mode: DO NOT ask "Tell me how you feel. But: Help me to understand what you are saying to me". People are not necessarily attacking you while they are telling you what they want you to know.
8. Suggest alternative behaviors where appropriate (e.g., "Would you like to take a break and have a cup of coffee (tepid and in a paper cup) or some water?")
9. Give the consequences of inappropriate behavior without threats or anger.
10. Trust your instincts. If you assess or feel that de-escalation is not working, STOP! You will know within 2 or 3 minutes if it's beginning to work. Tell the person to leave, escort him/her to the door, call for help or leave yourself and call the police.

    There is nothing magic about talking someone down. You are transferring your sense of calm

and genuine interest in what the person wants to tell you, and of respectful, clear limit setting in the hope that the person actually wishes to respond positively to your respectful attention.

Again, if at any time the person threatens to harm him/herself or others, contact 911.

APPENDIX C: Reporting Child, Elder, and Vulnerable Adult Abuse

As a volunteer there are 2 important facts that you need to know:

1. Severe Weather Shelter volunteers and WA State Emergency Workers are not mandated reporters.

2. Being homeless is not a reason for child protective services to remove a child. The only reason for CPS to remove a child is if they believe the child is in danger of imminent harm or is being neglected. "Poverty, homelessness, or exposure to domestic violence as defined in RCW 26.50.010 that is perpetrated against someone other than the child does not constitute negligent treatment or maltreatment in and of itself." (RCW 26.44.020)

Included in the Admin Kits are handouts regarding protecting abused and neglected children and protecting elders and vulnerable adults. These handouts provide information including: criteria to be considered and child, elder, or vulnerable adult, definitions of abuse/neglect/exploitation/abandonment/self-neglect, warning signs, and information needed to make a report. Also described are what Child Protective Services (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS) will do when investigating a report. A substantial amount of detail including name of child/vulnerable adult, age, parents' names, extent of abuse or neglect, information about previous incidences, protective factors, interventions, and your contact information will need to be provided if you choose to make a report.

Please refer to the handouts for detailed information about reporting abuse and neglect.

To report dial: 1.866.EndHarm (1.866.363.4276) This toll-free, statewide number is available 24 hours a day.

Emergency Contact Information

If there is a life-threatening emergency, an injury, or a guest threatens to harm him/herself or others

1. Call 9-1-1
2. Call the Site Manager
3. Fill out an Incident Form
4. Site Manager will notify KCDEM at 360-307-5871
5. Site Manager will notify KCHHD on-call 360-979-6027

If a volunteer is injured and requires hospitalization

1. Call 9-1-1
2. Call the Site Manager
3. Fill out an Incident Form and Medical Claim Form
4. Site Manager will notify KCDEM Duty Officer at 360-535-9988
5. Site Manager will notify KCHHD on-call 360-979-6027

If a volunteer is helping a guest who:

- Is struggling or is distressed
- Is talking about suicide (wishing they were dead, feeling like a burden to others, feeling hopeless, seeing not reason for living), but is not threatening to harm themselves or others
- The volunteer feels is beyond their ability to provide support, but does not require law enforcement intervention

The Crisis Care Line 24-hours daily to help provide a supportive listening ear, community resources, and crisis intervention to the volunteer or guest.

Dial 1-888-910-0416

If a volunteer does not show up for their shift

1. Call the Volunteer
2. Call the Site Manager
3. If Site Manager cannot be reached call the KCHHD on-call 360-979-6027

If volunteers have questions or issues which arise during their shift which are not covered in this handbook

1. Call the Site Manager
2. If Site Manager cannot be reached call the KCHHD on-call 360-979-6027

Site Manager	Email	Phone #

If the Shelter Site Manager cannot be reached, please contact the Housing and Homelessness Division Program Manager (on-call KCHHD staff).

Kitsap County Department of Human Services, Housing and Homelessness Division
345 6th Street, Suite 400
Bremerton, WA 98337

Carl Borg
Program Manager
ceborg@kitsap.gov
Cell: 360-979-6027

Cory Derenburger
Division Specialist
cderenbu@kitsap.gov
Office: 360-337-7287
Cell: 360-362-0404

Virginia McCaslin
Grants Program Analyst
vmccaslin@kitsap.gov
Cell: 360-979-6358

Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management
8900 S Imperial Way
Bremerton, WA 98312
360-473-4360

KCDEM Duty Officer: Cell: 360-535-9988

Dave Rasmussen
Public Information Officer
drasmussen@kitsap.gov
Direct: 360-307-4354

Michelle Moen
Volunteer Coordinator
MMoen@kitsap.gov
Direct: 360-473-4353
Cell: 360-900-8824

Kitsap 911 – Kitsap911/CENCOM back line non-emergency number (360) 308-5400