

Kittitas County Homeless and Affordable Housing Committee Kittitas County Emergency Housing Hotline

Guiding Principles and Responsibilities

Goal: The goal of this project is to have a 24/7 system for identifying persons/families in Kittitas County who need emergency shelter and who can be moved into transitional housing.

Purpose: To identify and place homeless individuals/families who live in Kittitas County into emergency shelter, provide a connection to the appropriate service agency that can provide support services needed and move the family or individual into transitional housing.

Guiding Principles

General:

- This service shall be called: Kittitas County Emergency Housing Hotline (KCEHH).
- An Emergency Housing Hotline number will be established for this service at the Kittitas County Housing Authority office.
- Funds from the Kittitas County Homeless account provided through ESSHB 2163 of the Washington State legislature will be used to pay for the costs of this project.
- After hours and weekend/holiday service will be supplied by Seattle Crisis Line, through a contract with Kittitas County. Staff are highly trained and conduct similar screenings in King County.
- The Point of Contact agency in Kittitas County will be the Housing Authority of Kittitas County (HAKC) through a contract with Kittitas County.
- This service will be the last line for emergency housing.
- Individuals may take advantage of this emergency housing program three times in one year. After that, services will be denied.

Process-Housing:

- HAKC will identify the referent local agency based on client need and be responsible for coordination with the agency to get appropriate services for the client.
- KC Housing authority will exhaust referent agency emergency housing options before using 2163 funds for this service.
- This project is only to provide emergency housing for a maximum of 3 nights until local agencies can identify a more stable living arrangement for these individuals/families. However, HAKC will have the ability to extend the three-night stay when an extension is warranted by the agency involved in delivering services to the individual/family.
- Persons/families who call the KCEHH will be screened for eligibility for these services.
- Persons who do not meet or who do not agree to the screening criteria will not be eligible for emergency shelter under this program.

- Repeat individuals/families will be eligible for services up to three times. After the third stay, individuals/families will not be eligible for emergency housing under this program.
- Clients who meet and agree to the screening criteria will be required to sign a document at each hotel, describing the conditions of their stay in the facility.
- Kittitas County will contract in Ellensburg with the Thunderbird Hotel, the Nites Inn Hotel and the Stewart Lodge in the Upper County to house the clients who meet the screening criteria for these services. These hotels are currently being used by other agencies for this same purpose.

Documentation and Reporting:

- Seattle Crisis Line and the Housing Authority will share a database for documenting the use of this service and provide quarterly reports to the Homeless and Affordable Housing committee, Kittitas County Auditor, and the Board of County Commissioners.

Process-Transportation:

- Kittitas County will contract with a local taxi service (Rodeo Town Taxi) to provide transportation to the local hotel and to the Yakima Mission when needed. This service is currently being utilized by other agencies in this county.

Process-Marketing

- The Hotline number will be publicized through identified social service agencies and the 2-1-1 network.

**Specific Responsibilities of the Seattle Crisis Line
and the Kittitas County Housing Authority**

Responsibilities of the Seattle Crisis Line after business hours and on weekends:

- Answer the Hotline number, talk to client and conduct the required screening;
- Authorize emergency housing when appropriate; contact the local hotel and arrange lodging; coordinate with the client to provide the address of the hotel.
- Authorize transportation if necessary.
- Fax client information to the Kittitas County Housing Authority (point of contact) for follow-up and agency referral.

Responsibilities of the Housing Authority of Kittitas County for follow-up and referral of after hours and weekend calls:

- Check fax box on Monday mornings (or day after a holiday); confirm client is staying at the assigned motel;
- Contact appropriate local agency for follow-up and referral of the client.
- Track client with the referral agency through the referral process.
- Keep a database of all client movement through the system.

- Coordinate database entries and changes with the Seattle Crisis Line.

Responsibilities of the Housing Authority of Kittitas County for follow-up and referral during weekday business hours:

- Receive referrals from other county agencies or receive direct calls to the Housing Hotline.
- Conduct the appropriate screening with the client (same as Crisis Line screening).
- Contact appropriate referral agency to check on housing options. If none available, contact the motel and make arrangements for client to stay; determine length of stay for client. Continue to coordinate with referent agency. Note: Agencies referring at this time are Hopesource, CWCMH, if mental health issue, and HEARTH, if DOC client.
- Authorize transportation if necessary.
- Authorize additional length of stay if needed by the referral agency.
- Track client with the referral agency through the referral process.
- Keep a database of all clients' movement through the system.
- Provide quarterly reports to Homeless and Affordable Housing Committee.
- Coordinate database entries and changes with the Seattle Crisis Line.