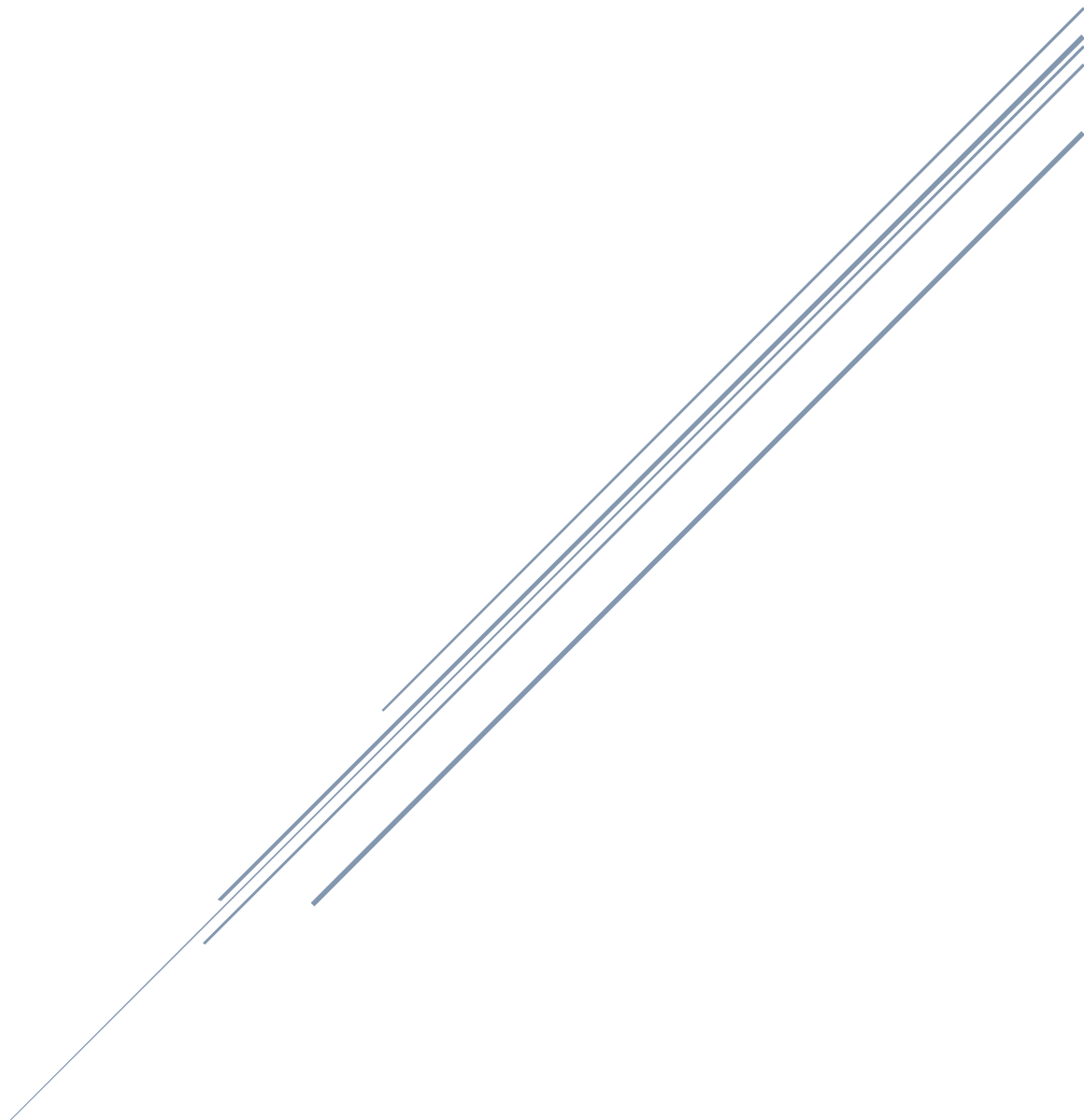


PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR
HOMELESS AND OTHER CONGREGATE
SHELTERS COVID-19 RESPONSE
COVID-19 RESPONSE



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Introduction

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

Acronyms

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

Admission

The following admission process is followed for all clients:

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

Orientation

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

Isolation and Quarantine

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

Release of Isolation or Quarantine

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

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

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

Transportation

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

The following are guidelines to request transportation:

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

Lodging and Necessities Arrangements

Lodging

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

Meals

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

Other Necessities

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

Testing, Case Management, and Contact Tracing

Testing

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

1. Once a resident is deemed to be symptomatic, isolate within your shelter. Gather the following information.
 - a. First and Last Name
 - b. Gender
 - c. Full Social Security Number
 - d. Date of Birth

2. Contact Endeavors at the Delta Welcome Center. Order and method of contact are as follows.
 - a. Primary: Email the information to Justin Rotti at jrotti@endeavors.org
 - b. Secondary: Call Justin Rotti at 210-552-2744
 - c. Tertiary: Call the transport driver at 210-425-2113
3. Endeavors staff will acknowledge the receipt of the information and schedule testing. If the information is received before 12:30pm, testing will be the following day. If the information is received after 12:30pm, testing will be scheduled within two (2) days' time. There is no testing on Sunday.
4. Endeavors staff will notify the shelter of their client's pick-up time the morning of their testing day. Clients must have their Homeless Verification Letter at pick-up. Clients without their verification letter will not be transported.
5. Endeavors staff will check test results the day after testing.
 - a. If results are negative: shelters will be notified and told a drop-off time.
 - b. If positive: the client must remain in isolation for a minimum of 10 days or until they do not present symptoms. Their release will be at the discretion of the El Paso Department of Public Health.

Case Management

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

Contact Tracing

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

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

Decontamination and Disinfection

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

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

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

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

1. Door handles
2. Counters, tabletops, and chairs
3. Coordinated Entry Stations after each use
4. Phones after each use
5. Water fountains after each use
6. Isolation restroom after each use
7. The kitchen will be sanitized before and after each meal is served
8. Staff will ensure all soap and hand sanitizer stations are full and operational every hour
9. For recommend disinfectants approved by CDC please visit the following website:

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>

Prevention of Infectious Disease Outbreak

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

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

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

Additional Resources for Shelters

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

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

World Health Organization

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

El Paso Strong

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

COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation

Background

Immunization with a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is a critical component of the United States strategy to reduce COVID-19-related illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths and to help restore societal functioning. The goal of the U.S. government is to have enough COVID-19 vaccine for all people in the United States who wish to be vaccinated. It is anticipated to have one or more COVID-19 vaccines in the market by late 2020 or early 2021.

The City of El Paso Department of Public Health (DPH) works closely with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and federal partners to provide up to date information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and follows CDC phased approach in preparation for the vaccine administration.

Phase 1

- **Phase 1, Group A**
 - This includes first responders and healthcare personnel who are essential to keeping the healthcare system intact.
 - **First Tier**
 - Paid and unpaid workers in hospital settings working directly with patients who are positive or at high risk for COVID-19
 - Long-term care staff working directly with vulnerable residents.
 - EMS providers who engage in 911 emergency services like pre-hospital care and transport
 - Home healthcare workers, including hospice care, who directly interface with vulnerable and high-risk patients
 - Residents of long-term care facilities
 - **Second Tier**
 - Staff in outpatient care settings who interact with symptomatic patients.
 - Direct care staff in freestanding emergency medical care facilities and urgent care clinics
 - Community pharmacy staff who may provide direct services to clients, including vaccination or testing for individuals who may have COVID
 - Public health and emergency response staff directly involved in administration of COVID testing and vaccinations
 - Last responders who provide mortuary or death services to decedents with COVID-19 (Embalmers and funeral home workers who have direct contact with decedents, medical examiners and/or medical certifiers)
 - School nurses who provide healthcare to students and teachers

- **Phase 1 Group B**

- This is the next group in line for vaccines.
 - The people eligible are the following:
 - People 65 years of age and older
 - People 16 years of age and older with at least one chronic medical condition that puts them at increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19, such as but not limited to:
 - Cancer
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
 - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies
 - Solid organ transplantation
 - Obesity and severe obesity (body mass index of 30 kg/m² or higher)
 - Pregnancy
 - Sickle cell disease
 - Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Phase 2

Large number of vaccine doses available.

- Emphasis on ensuring access to vaccine for members of Phase 1 critical populations who were not yet vaccinated as well as for the additional populations; critical populations include:
 - People from racial and ethnic minority groups
 - People from tribal communities
 - People who are incarcerated/detained in correctional facilities
 - People experiencing homelessness or living in shelters
 - People attending colleges/universities
 - People who work in educational settings
 - People living and working in other congregate settings
- Texas will use specialized vaccine teams, as needed, to vaccinate identified critical groups lacking access to the vaccine (e.g., rural communities).

Phase 3

Sufficient supply of vaccine doses for entire population.

- DSHS will focus on ensuring equitable vaccination access across the entire population. Monitor vaccine uptake and coverage; reassess strategy to increase uptake in populations or communities with low coverage.
- May consider extending the use of vaccine teams depending on the uptake and coverage received thus far, especially to ensure second doses are administered from the end of Phase 2.

Phase 4

Sufficient supply of vaccine with a decreased need due to most of the population being vaccinated already.

- May include boosters or annual vaccines, if required.
- Vaccine availability open throughout private vaccinators. Population able to visit vaccinator of choice.

All information was obtained at <http://epstrong.org/vaccine.php> and <https://www.epcovidvaccine.com/>

Appendix

In collaboration with the City of El Paso Department of Public Health, the El Paso City-County of Emergency Management (OEM) designed guidelines for the homeless and other shelters in the county. These guidelines parallel to this COVID-19 guideline response the City of El Paso has provided but have establish additional protocols if exposure to COVID-19 at a homeless shelter occurs.

Protocol for potential COVID-19 exposures at homeless shelters			
If a resident is displaying Influenza Like Symptoms (ILS)	If a staff/volunteer is displaying symptoms	If a staff/volunteer is waiting COVID-19 test results	If a staff/volunteer has gotten a positive result for COVID-19
<p>1. Shelter administration will identify symptomatic residents. Symptoms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fever or chills - Fatigue - Cough - Muscle or body aches - Congestion or runny nose - Sore Throat - Diarrhea - Headache - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing - New loss of taste or smell - Nausea or vomiting <p>2. Shelter Administration shall immediately separate and isolate a symptomatic resident. Staff should wear proper PPE (face coverings, gloves, etc) at all times and a surgical mask, or face cover, should be provided to the individual upon identification of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Symptomatic staff/volunteer should immediately be sent home and/or isolated from the rest of the employees until the isolation or quarantine period has passed and he/she is released by the DPH epidemiology staff ➤ Symptomatic staff should seek medical attention if their symptoms worsen. Staff must call healthcare provider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If staff is symptomatic, he/she should remain at home until test results are obtained ➤ Staff should notify their supervisor about the test results ➤ Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing or taxis when commuting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff shall notify his/her supervisor of positive result ➤ Supervisor should compile a list of all the employees/clients that had close contact/exposure with the infected staff ➤ Monitor exposed staff (usually low or medium risk* for contracting the disease) for any symptoms
<p>symptoms. Any requests for PPE should be email to EOC-Logistics@elpasotexas.gov.</p> <p>3. Upon arrival, shelter administration shall provide education to the symptomatic individual about social distancing, hygiene, self-isolation, and self-quarantine and answer any questions the resident may have.</p> <p>4. Shelter Administration shall notify EOC Planning Section about the individual. EOC Planning will coordinate with the RMOC for testing.</p> <p>5. Shelter administration will plan arrangements to transport the symptomatic individual to the City of El Paso Drive-Thru testing site for specimen collection and testing, and return to hotel. Shelter administration will explain the rules and regulations of isolation at hotels to clients and ensure to answer any questions they might have.</p> <p>6. If the results are positive for COVID-19, the individual will remain in isolation for 10 days, counting from onset of symptoms, or until fully recovered, as determined by the DPH epidemiology staff. Upon recovery, shelter administration will provide the individual with return transportation to the shelter, as needed.</p> <p>7. If results are negative for COVID-19. shelter administration will provide return transportation to the shelter, as needed.</p> <p>8. EOC Planning will maintain a database for people quarantined/isolated, and released.</p>	<p>in advance to allow the provider a proper preparation for his/her arrival.</p>		<p>and ask staff to self-monitor</p>
FOR MORE INFORMATION			
<p>The 21-COVID hotline is operational from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For referral to social, and other services contact 2-1-1 and select option six (6). For more information, visit www.epstrong.org.</p> <p>*See Exposure and Risk Table.</p>			

El Paso County has provided additional point of contacts from the Office Emergency Management (OEM) that provide recommendations with exposure, testing, quarantine and/ or isolation to individuals with potential symptoms and exposure. If individuals that require any assistance with quarantine and/ or isolation, OEM requests to notify:

Emergence Management Specialist Tonya Clarke - (915) 240-3172

Battalion Chief Tony Muro - (915) 240-3301

Individuals are required to provide their full name, date of birth, and social security number when they contact one of the point of contacts. Any additional information will be requested by these point of contacts based off an assessment they provide regarding the symptoms and exposure of the individual.

El Paso Strong's official website will provide updated information from both the City and County of El Paso relating to COVID-19 guidelines.