

**Applies to all Emergency Shelters funded by MSHDA.**

1. Shelters have the capacity to resolve a household's immediate housing crisis by providing overnight lodging in a safe physical environment including:
  - a. The shelter building is structurally sound to protect the residents from the elements and does not pose any threat to the health and safety of residents.
  - b. The shelter provides each program participant in the shelter with an acceptable place to sleep and adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings.
  - c. Each room or space within the shelter has a natural or mechanical means of ventilation. The interior air is free of pollutants at a level that might threaten or harm the health of residents.
  - d. The shelter water supply is free of contamination.
  - e. Each program participant in the shelter has access to sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, are private, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.
  - f. The shelter has any necessary heating/cooling facilities in proper operating condition.
  - g. The shelter has adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and support health and safety.
  - h. There are sufficient electrical sources to permit the safe use of electrical appliances in the shelter.
  - i. The shelter is maintained in a sanitary condition.
  - j. The shelter has adequate provisions for garbage removal and pest control.
  - k. The shelter has adequate provisions to ensure that sleeping surfaces and linens are sanitized on a regular basis.
  - l. There is at least one working smoke detector in each occupied unit of the shelter.
  - m. Where possible, smoke detectors are located near sleeping areas.
  - n. All public areas of the shelter have at least one working smoke detector.
  - o. The fire alarm system is designed for hearing-impaired residents.
  - p. There is a second means of exiting the building in the event of fire or other emergency.
  - q. The shelter has adequate first aid supplies available at all times in an area readily accessible.
  - r. The shelter has adequate telephone and emergency telephone number access in an area readily accessible.
2. Shelters shall maintain the following general operations standards:
  - a. The shelter is a non-profit corporation organized under the Internal Revenue Service code section 501(c)(3).
  - b. The shelter maintains participant and program records in a secured area.
  - c. The shelter has on-site staff coverage during hours of operation.
3. Shelters shall meet the following operating conditions:
  - a. The shelter provides access to a minimum of two meals per day.
  - b. The shelter's food preparation areas, if any, contains suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a safe and sanitary manner.
4. Shelters shall be low-barrier and equal access, meaning:
  - a. The shelter is accessible for all clients in accordance with: a. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; b. Title II of the American Disabilities Act; and c. The Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.).
  - b. Sobriety is not a condition for entry, stay, or access to services. Rules address behaviors, not the cause of behaviors, to ensure safety and security of guests and the facility.
  - c. Does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or family composition.

- a. Households presenting as a family must be provided shelter together as a unit and not involuntarily separated.
  - d. Has capacity to serve consumers that need accessibility accommodations.
  - e. Participation in religious-affiliated activities as a condition of entry, stay, or access to emergency shelter is not permitted.
5. Shelters shall participate with statewide prioritization tools:
  - a. The shelter utilizes the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) to prioritize persons that are the most vulnerable for intensive services.
6. Shelters shall work cooperatively with other members of the Continuum of Care (CoC) or Local Planning Body (LPB) to provide needed services to rapidly exit guests to permanent housing using available community resources and utilizing shelter diversion when appropriate. Including:
  - a. Participates in the local coordinated entry/access system.
  - b. Participates in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
  - c. Practices real-time data entry and ensures complete client records are entered.
  - d. Collaborates with the local Housing Assessment and Resource Agency (HARA).
  - e. Provides or ensures documentation of housing case management.
  - f. Provides or ensures linkages to mainstream resources.
  - g. Practices shelter diversion when applicable.
  - h. Upholds a Housing First approach and utilizes Rapid Re-Housing resources and other community resources in accordance with best practices.
  - i. Uses data to measure effectiveness and inform service delivery improvements.