

Lebanon County Christian Ministries



Emergency Shelter Handbook

INDEX

Background	3
Referral and Voucher Distribution	3
Emergency Shelter Staff	5
Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities	6
Volunteer Daily Responsibilities	7
Monday Mornings	8
Security Information	8
Social Contract - English	9
Emergency Shelter Flow Chart	10

BACKGROUND

A long-time, unmet need in Lebanon County was the absence of an emergency shelter with the capacity to accept a family (parents w/children) or individuals facing an immediate housing crisis. Organizations that provide emergency shelter often had to separate families in order to provide the shelter; which often led to the family staying in a hotel room for a limited time.

In 2012, Lebanon County Christian Ministries (LCCM) and Jubilee Ministries (JM), along with the support of the Lebanon County Coalition to End Homelessness, formed a collaborative effort, Lebanon HOPES. This effort is based on existing programs in Lancaster, Carlisle and other communities throughout the country. JM operates the Resource Center; which acts as the qualifying, screening, and case management agent of Lebanon HOPES and LCCM manages a network of facilities that are used to serve as the Emergency Shelter.

Currently, the Resource Center operates Monday-Friday, 7:30 am – 8:30 pm, twelve months per year. The Emergency Shelter operates during the winter months (October – March) and rotates between several congregations and other organizations on a bi-weekly schedule.

The Emergency Shelter provides only basic shelter. Meals, showers, laundry facilities, telephone access, etc. are provided through the Resource Center.

REFERRAL AND VOUCHER DISTRIBUTION

- The HOPES Resource Center (HRC) will be the only referral source for the Emergency Shelter.
- Appropriate individuals will be referred to the Lebanon Rescue Mission, Agape Shelter, DVI, or other appropriate agency.
- Families and Individuals that find themselves in a homeless situation should report to the HRC during normal business hours (7:30 am – 5:00 pm, Monday – Friday).
- Upon arriving to the HRC, guests will sign-in and they will be interviewed and screened for admittance into the shelter on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Guests will be asked for their name, date of birth and proof of identification. If guests do not have any identification, they will be given information on how to obtain identification. Lack of identification will not be a reason to refuse services; as long as identity can be verified through other means.
- Guests will be required to obtain NCIC clearance by Lebanon City Police prior to interview.
- Guests will not be given a voucher if they have the appearance of being intoxicated or are otherwise under the influence of illegal substances.
- Final judgment for qualification will be at the full discretion of the qualified staff of JM and LCCM. JM and LCCM reserve the right to deny services to guests who have violated the Social Contract or who are determined to be a threat to the program.
- Upon successful screening, guests will be given information regarding the Emergency Shelter and HRC, and will be required to review and sign the Social Contract.
- If a guest is employed during HRC normal business hours, arrangements can be made for the interview and screening process to be completed in the evening hours.
- At the conclusion of the referral time, HRC staff will provide a master list to the Shelter Coordinator.

- Vouchers are issued daily. Guests must return to the HRC to request future vouchers and or other services.
- Guests will be told that they need to report to the shelter location no earlier than 8:45 pm and no later than 9:45 pm. Guests will be reminded that if they show up later than 9:45 pm or appear to be intoxicated or under the influence of illegal substances, they will be denied entrance into the shelter.
- In the event that a guest is employed and will not be able to be at the shelter before 9:45 pm, prior approval must be obtained for a late admittance. This will include a note/schedule from the employer, confirming the working times. HRC staff will report this to the Shelter Coordinator. This will need to be reconfirmed each day.
- Vouchers will be reserved for persons with disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Individuals may be considered for these reserved vouchers through a verified caseworker referral or through a properly documented self-referral.
- If a guest causes a disturbance or doesn't adhere to guidelines, they may be suspended or terminated from the program. If a guest is denied entrance into the shelter because they reported late or intoxicated, they can apply for a voucher at HRC on the next business day. If they use threatening language or are otherwise violent, they may be permanently barred from participation.
- Vouchers will be distributed to qualified guests at 7:45 pm.
- Vouchers distributed on Friday will qualify the guests to stay at the shelter for the weekend.
- Guests that are working during the voucher distribution and have shown proof of their employment will have a voucher set aside for them to pick up at a later time.
- Guests will be required to leave the shelter by 7:30 am.

EMERGENCY SHELTER STAFF

The Emergency Shelter is primarily run by volunteers under the direction of Lebanon County Christian Ministries. Each host site has a volunteer coordinator and a volunteer staff. Responsibilities for each party are described below:

Lebanon County Christian Ministries (LCCM) is the organization that oversees the administrative responsibilities of the Emergency Shelter.

- A designated LCCM employee (Emergency Shelter Coordinator) is responsible for maintaining the quality of the program. The responsibilities range from convening meetings and setting up the shelter schedule to establishing guidelines, policies and procedures and ensuring the safety of the guests and volunteers by enforcing set policies.

Volunteers are the heart of the Emergency Shelter program.

- Congregations provide volunteers to staff the shelter on a daily basis. The volunteer staff should consist of 2-5 individuals with a combination of both male and female volunteers.
- There should be at least 2-3 volunteers present at the shelter between 8:30 pm – 7:30 am and include at least one male and one female.
- There should be at least 2-3 individuals present at the shelter between 6:00 am – 7:30 am and include at least one male and one female.
- All volunteers must complete a full background check and child abuse clearance.
- The Shelter Coordinator will schedule the volunteers, ensuring there are enough volunteers for each evening and the coordinator will be present each evening from opening until everyone is settled (approx. 10pm). A congregation may have more than one volunteer coordinator if they would like this responsibility to be shared. Please see the Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities
- Congregations outside of the Lebanon City limits can also create a volunteer team for the Emergency Shelter.
- Guests of the shelter will also volunteer in the cleaning process as part of their required services hours.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

Arrive at 8:30 pm. Unlock the door for volunteers to enter. If this is the door that guests will also use make sure that the door is properly secured until the shelter opens at 8:45 pm.

Check to make sure that everything is in place or ready for placement when the volunteers arrive.

Once the volunteers arrive, review the Emergency Shelter Handbook (they should have already received and read a copy). Start promptly with this review leaving time for questions and prayer. It is important for the shelter to open promptly at 8:45 pm. In your instructions emphasize the necessity for adhering to rules and procedures, particularly with regard to guests entering and leaving. Consistency will make things run much smoother, especially since the shelter will be moving to another location. We are in ministry together.

Assign duties. (Depending on the number of volunteers, a volunteer may be responsible for more than one duty).

1. One volunteer to maintain the log book.
2. One volunteer to greet at the entrance.
3. One volunteer to sign in guests.
4. One or two volunteers to conduct security checks.
5. One volunteer to float
6. One volunteer to lead a brief devotional (if desired).

Review entrance, evening and morning procedures.

Especially encourage the volunteers to remember our purpose in ministering to our guests. We are here to share God's love as God's servants. As we minister with the homeless we are working in partnership with God and with them to meet a present need, with the firm hope that through our sharing together their present situation may find a just and acceptable resolution.

VOLUNTEER DAILY RESPONSIBILITIES

DAILY SCHEDULE:

- 8:30 PM Church Host Volunteer (or Volunteer Coordinator) and Shelter Coordinator arrive to set up.
Other volunteers arrive
1. Volunteers are briefed by the Shelter Coordinator.
 2. Volunteers determine shifts, making sure that at least 2 are present at all times.
 3. Ready the mattresses and bins.
 4. Set up screen/room for security check.
 5. Check on mop, bucket and other cleaning supplies
 6. Arrange sign-in table with log book.
- 8:45 PM Guests begin arriving. Shelter Coordinator will greet at the door, assist with check-in, and float between the volunteers. Guests must have a voucher to be permitted into the shelter. Guests who are visibly intoxicated or violent may be refused admission into the shelter. If someone comes to the door without a voucher, he/she will be referred to Crisis Intervention and the HRC.
- Two volunteers will conduct the security check (the Shelter Coordinator may also assist with the security checks). This will be done in a more private location; behind a screen or in a separate room. An adequate and thorough check is essential every night. If a guest refuses the security check, they cannot stay in the shelter. This is NOT a hands-on check. Guests should empty their pockets onto a table or into a box, reveal the contents of bags or knapsacks, raise their trouser legs above the sock level, remove coats (to reveal belt) and pull out shirt to hang loose.
- ALL WEAPONS and anything construed as a weapon must be confiscated for the evening. They will be returned upon departure the next morning.
- Guests are responsible for their own prescribed medication.
- After the security check, each guest receives a mat and bin. They may use their own bedrolls if they prefer or use the blankets provided. They place their possessions in their bin, return the bin to the bin rack, then go to their designated sleeping area with mat and blankets.
- 9:45 PM DOORS CLOSE – The outside doors are locked. No one else will be admitted – unless prior arrangements have been made.
- A light snack may be served at this time.
- 9:50 PM The Volunteer Coordinator or Shelter Coordinator will again explain the rules, and explain procedures for fire, safety and medical emergencies. If there are any disturbances, everyone involved may be removed. Guests will be reminded that wake up time is 6:30 am and everyone must leave by 7:30 am and move away from the premises. If a guest wants to leave before that time, he/she can ask a volunteer to let them out, but they will not be able to return that night.
- A brief devotional may be offered using scripture and offering a prayer. Please do not preach, proselytize or condemn. But do offer words of hope and God's love.
- 10:00 PM LIGHTS OUT – Check to make sure that designated lights remain on. Volunteers should refrain from loud talking after guests go to sleep. The designated volunteer completes the shelter log, indicating any situations that need to be examined further or any pertinent information concerning the guests. Any serious concerns should be documented in the shelter log, as well as, verbally told to the Volunteer Coordinator so every night the group of volunteers is alert to any concerns.
- 6:30 AM Volunteers wake up the guests. At this time guests may use the bathroom and gather their belongings.

Guests return their blankets to their bin and retrieve personal items.

Guests are responsible for wiping down their mats and placing them in the designated area.

7:30 AM

EVERYONE OUT

1. Beverages may be offered at this time.
2. Provide meal schedule
3. Return personal items and sign out guests
4. Clean up (See specific procedure for each congregation)

MONDAY MORNING MOVE

Congregation completing the week of shelter:

1. The LCCM truck will arrive at predetermined time. Guests and volunteers will load all the Emergency Shelter supplies into the truck.
2. If mats have become too damaged to use, they should be removed from service. Damaged mats should be set aside and LCCM should be informed that a replacement mat is needed.

Congregation beginning the week of shelter:

1. Be prepared to receive Emergency Shelter supplies at predetermined time.

SECURITY INFORMATION

In case of an EMERGENCY call 911. Do not hesitate to call the appropriate authority if their assistance is needed.

Lebanon Police (non-emergency): 272-6611

Lebanon Fire (non-emergency): 272-2025

LCCM Emergency Numbers: Shelter Coordinator – 717-639-5380. Executive Director – 717-269-1487

IF SOMEONE IS CAUSING A DISTURBANCE:

1. Ask them to stop. “I would like you to stop because you are disturbing others”.
2. Do not respond to anger or “get hooked” by certain kinds of behavior. Look at the need behind the behavior and see what they are really saying.
3. Do not shout or yell. Remain calm. Do not try to handle the situation by yourself. Get other volunteers to help.
4. If individuals are arguing, do not take sides between two people, as you may not know what actually happened. If they do not stop a verbal argument, tell them that if they cannot work this out in 2 minutes, you will ask them to leave.
5. If you see that you need the police, CALL. If you have to ask someone to leave, call the police. Do not try to be a hero and deal with a potentially violent situation.
6. If you ask someone to leave, record it in the log book and be sure to notify LCCM and HRC first thing in the morning. Identify the name of the guest and the reason they were asked to leave.

Lebanon HOPES Social Contract

Name(s)

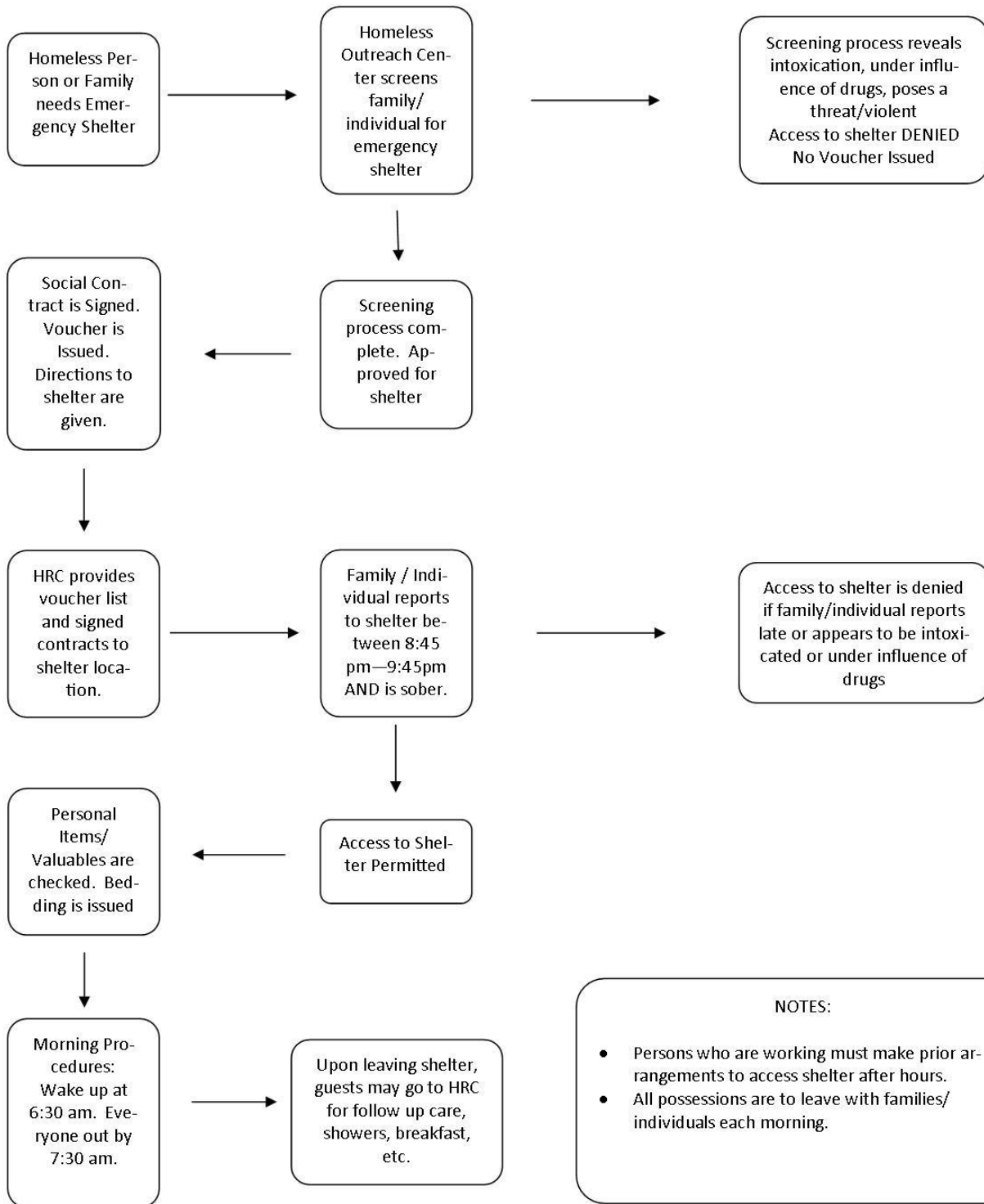
1. Guests must comply with the daily screening process to obtain a voucher and enter the shelter. Weekdays, guests must check in before 4pm at the HRC to get a voucher for the night. Vouchers are then handed out at 7:45pm at the HRC.
2. Overnight shelter will be available from 8:45 p.m. - 7:30 a.m. every night of the week from the beginning of October through the last Monday in March. Guests must be in the shelter by 9:30 p.m. After that, the doors are locked. If you leave the building after that time, you will not be allowed back into the shelter.
3. Weekend vouchers are handed out on Friday night at 7:45pm and are valid for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. If you do not stay any night over the weekend, you will not be allowed back into shelter until you check in at the HRC when it opens Monday morning. Exceptions may be granted *ahead of time* through your case manager.
4. A security check will be conducted upon entry to the Emergency Shelter. Each guest will be required to empty their pockets and place their personal belongings in their designated bin.
5. To help maintain sanitary conditions, guests arriving at the shelter who are visibly sick will be asked to wear a facemask to protect the health of the other shelter guests. Hand sanitizer will also be provided.
6. Guests will respect others in the same way they want to be respected.
7. No alcohol, illegal substances, or drugs (with the exception of prescribed medication – staff and volunteers may not dispense medications, even over the counter medications to our guests) may be consumed while at the resource center or shelter.
8. ALL WEAPONS and anything construed as a weapon must be turned in while at the Resource Center and Emergency Shelter. They will be returned upon departure.
9. No fighting or violent behavior will be allowed, including threats or threatening behavior. Be mindful of your own behavior and respect other guests, volunteers and staff.
10. No sexual or inappropriate conduct will be allowed at the resource center or emergency shelter.
11. No smoking on the premises. Cigarettes, matches, and lighters must be left at the security check at the shelter and will be returned in the morning.
12. All cell phones MUST be turned off or "silenced" between the hours of 9:30 p.m. - 7:00 a.m. Do not make calls in the sleeping area or the restrooms.
13. Guests must stay within the sleeping area and restrooms. Do not wander around the shelter site.
14. Do not use the bathroom at the shelter to "wash up" or shower. Use the shower at the HRC.
15. Guests are responsible for the care of their own children. NO ONE may baby-sit, care, discipline, or look after another person's child.
16. Guests are responsible for their own belongings. Respect other's belongings and do not take anything that does not belong to you. If you need something, let your case manager at the HRC know and they will do their best to help.
17. No bags will be left at the shelter during the day. Guests **must** take all their personal belongings.
18. Guests will be responsible for helping in the clean-up process each morning.

I agree to enter the shelter under these conditions. I realize that if I don't live up to them, I can and will be dismissed and will leave when I am asked.

(Signature of Emergency Shelter Guest)

Date

Emergency Shelter Flow Chart



- NOTES:**
- Persons who are working must make prior arrangements to access shelter after hours.
 - All possessions are to leave with families/ individuals each morning.