

ASPR TRACIE Technical Assistance Request

Request Receipt Date (by ASPR TRACIE): April 6, 2020

Response Date: April 8, 2020; Updated June 10, 2020

Type of TA Request: Standard

Request:

ASPR TRACIE received a request to identify: (1) resources to assist outpatient centers in documenting clients experiencing homelessness who have been tested for COVID-19; and (2) information on any states that have opened designated shelters for people experiencing homelessness who have tested positive for COVID-19.

Response:

The ASPR TRACIE Team reviewed existing resources including our [COVID-19 At-Risk Individuals Resources page](#). We also conducted a search online for other relevant materials. The following two sections in this document provide the resources gathered in response to the requestor's inquiries.

Please refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Coronavirus Disease 2019 webpage](#) for the most up-to-date clinical guidance on COVID-19 outbreak management.

I. Guidance Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). [Interim Guidance for Homeless Service Providers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#).

This web page provides interim guidance for providers of homeless services on community coalition-based COVID-19 prevention and response, communication, supplies, consideration for facility layout and procedures, and COVID-19 readiness resources.

National Health Care for the Homeless Council. (2020). [COVID-19 Resources](#).

This web page provides links to multiple resources specifically geared towards individuals experiencing homelessness and COVID-19.

National Health Care for the Homeless Council. (2020). [Medical Respite Care and Alternate Care Sites.](#)

This issue brief outlines considerations for communities providing respite care to people experiencing homelessness to promote infection prevention or offer a safe place while waiting for COVID-19 test results or recovering from illness. The document includes links to guides, protocols, and handbooks used in some communities.

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. (2020). [Interim Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Guidance for Homeless Shelters and Service Providers.](#)

This document includes a checklist for homeless shelters to consider when planning for and responding to the COVID-19 outbreak in homeless shelters.

Public Health – Seattle & King County. (2020). [Healthcare for the Homeless Network \(HCHN\) COVID-19 Resources.](#)

This web page provides resources to support those experiencing homelessness, including guidance for homeless service providers, frequently asked questions, cleaning and disinfection information, planning guidance, hand washing posters, and street outreach guidelines.

San Francisco Department of Public Health. (2020). [Interim Guidance: Preventing and Managing COVID-19 Transmission in Shelters and Navigation Centers.](#)

This document offers guidance to persons experiencing homelessness and the providers that serve them. It includes infection prevention information, identifies staff and resident education needs, lists necessary supplies, provides cleaning instructions, and identifies ways to reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 cases.

State of California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency. (2020). [Interim Guidance for Homeless Assistance Providers on Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\).](#)

This memo sent to homeless assistance providers emphasizes steps to take to prevent disease spread among clients and staff. It also provides an overview of Project Roomkey, the state's collaborative effort to ensure access to shelter and medical care for people experiencing homelessness who test positive for COVID-19, have been exposed, or are asymptomatic but at high risk of severe illness.

Washington State Department of Health. (2020). [Planning Guide for Local Governments: Setting Up Assessment and Recovery Locations for COVID-19.](#)

This guide assists local governments in planning to establish care locations for persons with COVID-19 who do not need to be hospitalized or have been released from the hospital while they recover and those who have been exposed and need a place to be quarantined away from others.

II. **Shelters for People Experiencing Homelessness with COVID-19**

ASPR TRACIE conducted an online search for articles that referenced state and local shelters for people experiencing homelessness and how they were preparing for and managing clients who tested positive for COVID-19. The following articles highlight state and local examples of how shelters are working with clients who are waiting for test results or have tested positive for COVID-19.

Gomez, A. (2020). [As COVID-19 Cases Increase in Homeless Shelters, D.C. Provides Hotel Rooms for Some Unsheltered Residents.](#)

In Washington, DC, the Department of Human Services is notifying clients when someone who has been staying at a homeless shelter has tested positive for COVID-19. Those who were in close contact with confirmed cases and clients with overall higher risk (e.g., older clients) are moved to a quarantine site (a vacant hotel room).

Laroque, M. (2020). [As 19 Homeless Test Positive for Coronavirus in Brockton, Heated Tents Established.](#) The Enterprise.

After receiving reports about several clients who tested positive for COVID-19, the city of Brockton (MA) stood up heated tents to house homeless “individuals whose health needs to be monitored after exposure to a positive case, or while waiting for their test results.” “Isolation hotels” with 24/7 nursing and security support are being used to house those who tested positive.

Lindstrom, L. (2020). [Nearly 60 People Who Are Homeless Are Isolating at Hotel After COVID-19 Exposure.](#) The Charlotte Observer.

This article addresses the experience of Mecklenburg County, NC, which has leased a hotel for people experiencing homelessness and “have tested positive for the virus, display symptoms and are awaiting results, or have been exposed to someone with the virus and need somewhere to isolate.”

McDonald, S. (2020). [COVID-19: What State and Local Leaders Can Do for Homeless Populations](#). National Alliance to End Homelessness.

This blog post describes, in general, how funding to homeless service providers can be used to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

Watson, T. (2020). [Mayor Young Releases COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan for the Homeless](#).

In Baltimore, the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services worked with service providers and public and private agencies to develop five interventions specific to COVID-19:

1. Emergency Shelter Assessments and Testing (includes a shelter screening tool, telephonic screening, and COVID-19 testing and isolation);
2. Hospital Discharge Policies (depending on COVID-19 status);
3. Isolation Sites (for those awaiting results and/or recovering from the virus);
4. Expanded Capacity for Social Distancing in Shelters; and
5. Outreach to People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness.