



# Caring for Our Homeless During Extreme Weather

A proposal presented by the Emergency Shelter Agencies of Southeast Missouri



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# Extreme Weather Proposal

- The goal of this proposal is to include the City of Cape Girardeau in providing overnight shelter to our homeless citizens during life-threatening winter weather.
- Temporary overnight shelter is not a solution to homelessness.
- While multiple groups are working to assist our homeless citizens, all organizations involved in this proposal who comprise the self-named Emergency Shelter Agencies (ESA) endorse a “housing first” model that includes multiple supports leading to self-sufficiency.



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# Collaboration

- Emergency Shelter Agencies (ESA) include: United Way of Southeast Missouri (UWSEMO), Community Partnership (CP), The Salvation Army (TSA), and First Call For Help.
- To provide life-saving shelter during extreme winter weather, we intend to coordinate with Street Level, The People's Shelter, area churches, and other organizations that work to shelter and support the homeless.



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# Weather Requirements

- Overnight temperatures must reach 28 degrees F or lower OR
- Icy conditions are forecast OR
- A winter storm warning is in effect/impending
- If volunteers and staff cannot safely get to The Salvation Army, it will not open.



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# Intake Procedure

- Citizens seeking overnight shelter must go through Community Partnership, The Salvation Army or First Call For Help.
- These agencies will determine who is eligible to overnight at The Salvation Army and who needs a hotel room. As a general rule, hotel rooms will be used for families with children and individuals deemed harmful to themselves.
- Other assisting organizations must refer people to one of these agencies to complete an intake form.



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# House Rules

- The Salvation Army will provide overnight shelter between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m.
- Guests must sign in and out and must check in by 10 p.m. Doors will be locked promptly at 10 p.m. No in and out.
- Lights out at 11 p.m. Breakfast at 6 a.m.
- No one will be allowed in who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. These substances are not allowed in the building.
- No weapons, smoking or pets will be allowed in the building.



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# Volunteer Requirements

- Lead volunteers will be selected and approved by TSA for an extensive online training. Only leads will have keys to the building.
- People who took the Safe From Harm training last year can volunteer.
- Anyone who has not taken Safe From Harm training cannot volunteer more than three times.
- Goal is to have one lead and at least one person with SFH training on each shift.
- TSA will not open if there are too few volunteers to ensure safety of all.



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# Communications Procedure

- UWSEMO will communicate with Emergency Shelter Agencies, community agencies, media, identified City personnel.
- A UWSEMO post in social media will explain the rules, process, and acceptable donations. Everyone will be encouraged to share the post.
- Volunteers will be directed to the volunteer page on the UWSEMO website to sign up for shifts, tasks, donations.
- A designated Volunteer Coordinator will communicate with volunteers and confirm the necessary number to cover shifts.



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# Estimated Budget

The Salvation Army

| ITEM                | COST /PERSON | NOTES                            |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Food                | \$20         | Dinner, Snack, Breakfast         |
| Bedding             | 0            | Donated                          |
| Overhead            | \$25         | Utilities, electricity, cleaning |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>\$45</b>  |                                  |
| Cost per hotel room | \$80         | Houses 2-4 with no meals         |



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# Data & Estimates

- Currently 63 people report themselves to be homeless in Cape Girardeau County according to the Homeless Missourians Information System. Organizations dealing directly with the homeless believe this number may be higher now.
- Last year Community Partnership spent \$8,000 from Nov. 22-Feb. 23 to hotel people. UWSEMO has issued \$1500 to Street Level for hoteling in addition to the funds their donors provided, which they state is near the same amount as CP. The People's Shelter and area churches also used donations to provide hotel rooms.
- We estimate 15-20 nights of extreme weather at 28F or below in winter of 2023-24 based on 2022-23.



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# Financial Considerations

- The Emergency Shelter Agencies sit on the board of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP), along with other agency representatives.
- Last year the EFSP board chose to allocate \$5,000 to sheltering the homeless during extreme weather.
- Although the amount and timing of EFSP funds is never known in advance, it is possible the board may elect to allocate funds again for this purpose from the next funding phase.



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# Estimates

- 40 individuals seeking shelter at The Salvation Army on 20 nights = \$1800 per night; total cost of \$36,000.
- Estimated \$80 cost of up to 6 hotel rooms for 20 nights = \$9,600.
- With Community Partnership, UWSEMO, EFSP Board, Street Level, The St. James AME People's Shelter, and other churches contributing funds to shelter the homeless, it still is far below \$45,600.
- Area nonprofits have limited funds and already are committing significant amounts of personnel hours. Additional financial assistance is imperative to save lives when extreme weather arrives.



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# Requested City Support

- The ESA are asking the City of Cape Girardeau to allocate a minimum of \$10,000 to be used as needed to save lives during extreme winter weather.
- For simplicity, these funds can be provided to UWSEMO as needed to reimburse TSA and CP.
  - UWSEMO is already a vendor with the city through First Call For Help
  - Going through UWSEMO simplifies the process for the City: TSA and CP will submit proper paperwork to UWSEMO for funds to be reimbursed.
- CGPD/FD give support when overnight shelter is open through unscheduled and as-needed visits
- Communications assistance



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# Community Support

- Volunteer to prepare meals, work shifts, prepare cots, clean.
- Donations of pre-packaged food items for breakfast and snacks. (No prepared meals may be brought in. Meals must be prepared in professional facility.)
- Monetary donations
- Spreading the word

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?



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