

Porchlight Men's Drop-In Shelter Policies & Procedures

The Porchlight Drop-In Shelter provides emergency overnight shelter to male-identified individuals over the age of 18. Each eligible guest is afforded 90 nights of shelter during each operating year at no cost. The operating year is November 1st – October 31st, and guests may ask intake staff how many days they have accrued at any point.

Hours & Location

All guests must check in each night at Shelter 1, located at Grace Episcopal Church (116 W Washington Ave). Shelter hours are 5:30pm – 7:15am year-round, unless posted otherwise. *Intake hours are 5:30pm – 8:30pm.* Guests may not line up for entry until five (5) minutes prior to opening. Guests will not be admitted to shelter after intake hours, except with prior approval by the Night Manager [see *Late Entry Policy*]. Guests who exit shelter during the night may not be readmitted.

Intake Process

All guests must pass through Intake in order to access shelter. Guests are asked to present with ID in order to confirm identity and speed up the intake process. Guests who need assistance in obtaining an ID may sign up to meet with shelter case management. Guests who are new to shelter or who have not accessed shelter in the past 30 days will be asked to provide information to an intake worker including details about their current episode of homelessness. Responses to these questions will not be used as a reason to deny access to shelter. Due to high demand for services at Shelter 1, guests are asked to rotate to the overflow shelter(s) on alternating nights. Guests assigned to overflow shelters will remain at Shelter 1 until the Night Manager of each shelter approves departure. Please note that guests with medical authorizations may be exempt from this policy [see *Authorization for Medical Priority Entry*].

Shelter Services

All services are currently available only at Shelter 1.

- Dinner is served at Shelter 1 from 7:30pm – 8:15pm each night. Breakfast is served at Shelter 1 from 6:00am – 6:45am each morning. Breakfast is open to women and children as well, provided that children are always accompanied by an adult.
- Showers are available for guests from shelter entry until 6:45am. Staff may ask a guest to shower if necessary. Guests may use one towel per person, and toiletries are available for guests who need them. Guests may also sign up with staff to use the laundry machines.
- Guests may access the lounges to read, work, or watch TV. Lounges close at 10:00pm, but may close earlier if not in use.
- Please note that guests may not receive mail at the shelter. Any mail delivered will be returned to sender. Guests in need of an address for mail may access services at The Beacon (615 E Washington Ave).
- Guests may not smoke inside the shelter. However, after they have checked in for the night, guests may still smoke outside the shelter in designated areas when shelter staff calls official smoke breaks.
- Any guest accessing the shelter may participate in case management services. Shelter Case Managers can work with guests to create individual housing plans, provide information on resources in the community, and connect guests with medical, mental health, and substance abuse treatment providers as necessary. A Coordinated Entry worker is also available to conduct a VI-SPDAT and make referrals to the community housing priority list. The shelter service team is available on a drop-in basis during shelter hours and by appointment outside of shelter hours.

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Shelter Expectations

All guests are expected to adhere to the following shelter guidelines:

1. **Guests will help create a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.** We celebrate respect, kindness, tolerance, patience, and compassion. Incidents involving violence, threats of violence, and/or harassment of guests, staff, or volunteers may result in a suspension of shelter services.
2. **Guests are responsible for their personal belongings.** Lockers are available for use on a daily basis during operating hours. Any items left behind after operating hours will be subject to disposal. The shelter is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
3. **Guests may not vandalize any shelter property.** Porchlight is borrowing space from each of the emergency shelter church locations. Guests are expected to observe all policies on all church premises. This includes no theft of Porchlight or church property, and no urinating outside marked restrooms.
4. **Guests may not bring weapons onto shelter property.** This includes guns, knives, and any other item that may be construed as a weapon, either real or replica.
5. **Inappropriate sexual or intimate contact is not allowed in shelter.** This includes both consensual and non-consensual contact, as well as viewing of pornographic materials. Sexual harassment of any kind against other guests or staff is prohibited. Guests are also expected to be fully clothed in public areas.
6. **Guests may not bring drugs or alcohol to shelter, and may not be admitted under the influence.**
[see *Alcohol Testing Policy*]

Suspension of Shelter Services

If a shelter guest fails to adhere to a shelter guideline, they may be denied access that day, asked to leave shelter for the night, or receive a longer suspension of services depending on the severity of the incident. Staff may also limit access to specific shelter(s) as necessary. If an incident requires the presence of law enforcement, a longer suspension may be issued. If a guest is suspended from shelter for more than 24 hours, they will receive a suspension notification that includes the corresponding incident report and the appeal process.

Weather Nights

Inclement "weather nights" will go into effect when temperatures drop to 20 degrees or lower (with wind chill) or in other cases of severe weather, such as extreme heat. On weather nights, guests may access shelter even if they are intoxicated, suspended from accessing services, or have reached their 90-day limit. *Please note that weather nights *do* count toward a guest's 90-day limit, but guests who have reached the limit may still access shelter on weather nights. Weather nights will be posted on the Homeless Services Consortium of Dane County website at <https://www.danecountyhomeless.org/inclementweatherinformation>.

Receipt of Rules

I understand that all guests are responsible for knowing and adhering to shelter expectations. A copy of the *Men's Drop-In Shelter Policies & Procedures* was offered to me, and I will approach staff if I have any questions.

Guest Name: _____

Date: _____

Guest Signature: _____