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## **Emergency Cold Weather Shelter 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Oversight**

### **Weekly Report for Week 14**

**Project Name: 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Emergency Shelter Oversight**

**Submitted to: Anchorage Assembly, Anchorage Mayor's Office, Anchorage Health Dept., and Shelter Operators (Henning, Inc. and The Alaska Hotel Group)**

**Date: Reporting period February 19 - 25, 2024**

**Date Submitted: February 28, 2024**

**Submitted by: Cathleen McLaughlin, JD/MBA**

**Monica Gross MD, MPH**

#### **A. Background**

As required under Contract #2023003145, fully executed on November 17, 2023, RRS submits its Weekly report for Week 14. This report is for the period February 19 - 25, 2024 (but also includes information up to the writing of this report on 2/28/2024).

#### **B. Actions and Events During this Reporting Period**

1. RRS focus is on operations at the 3 Emergency Cold Weather Shelter sites (CWS, The Alex Hotel, The Aviator).

2. Key topics:

A. **Use of The Client Questionnaire.** On Friday, February 2/23/2024 the Client Questionnaire was sent to RRS by AHD, with some edits. RRS finalized the Client Questionnaire and began visiting the sites. 18 interviews were conducted at the Aviator on 2/26/2024 and 15 were conducted at the Alex on 2/27/2024. RRS will continue to conduct these interviews at all sites, with the next scheduled at CWS on Thursday, February 29, 2024 at noon.

At the report out to the Assembly and the Administration on February 14, 2024, Mia Costello, the representative for the Administration, stated it would be of interest to the Administration to begin receiving client comments at the report out meetings. To that end, RRS can report, of the

32 interviews conducted at the Aviator and the Alex, the client experiences and opinions were that at these sites there was a sense of safety, the level of services was good, shelter staff was very caring and considerate. Overall, the comments made by clients at these 2 sites was positive. Suggestions for additional services at each site included having access to a medical clinic at the Aviator, and availability of a kitchen at the Alex. RRS is simply reporting these comments, not recommending.

The overarching theme of all interviews conducted to date was that clients were appreciative to have gotten into the shelter system, with many coming through CWS and given the opportunity to move from outside to a congregate setting and then to a room with a door. For a few, they had been in rooms before, had mis-stepped, stayed at CWS to re-set, and were now returning to a room to try it again. As has been noted in past weekly reports, RRS fully supports this process. The integrated processes between CWS, Alex and Aviator, are working.

A few clients disclosed they had not engaged in the in-house case management or housing specialist services that are offered. This is not a reflection on the services being offered, it is the reality that some shelter clients are not engaging in services offered. During the interviews, Henning, Inc. staff was very proactive in encouraging clients to become engaged.

**B. Commencement of review of exit data by RRS.** On February 14, 2024, AHD provided RRS with the monthly data regarding exits from shelter sites for the period October 2023 – January 2024. This is the data given to RRS by the AHD Homeless Coordinator:

RRS was given access to 23c, d and e of monthly ECWS HMIS reports-

This is a table of number of individuals exiting to a positive housing destination

(As reported in 23c HMIS reports)

	CWS	Aviator	Alex
Oct '23	0	2	2
Nov '23	2	2	3
Dec '23	2	3	7
Jan '24	2	2	1
Feb '24			

This data does not reflect the exits to housing through the 'Next Steps' program at the Alex. RRS's best data is that under the 'Next Steps' program over 35 have exits into permanent supportive housing.

C. **Client Call Log** – This workbook, as reported last week, is now being used as the daily call log and contacts for RRS. It is submitted to AHD everyday by Midnight. The only deviation from this was on Sunday, February 25, 2024, when the call log was emailed on Monday Morning. All client concerns during this period were forwarded to the respective shelter managers and recorded on the daily Client Call log, as stated above. RRS is to receive and report, not opine on the validity of the concern.

D. **Incidences** – 1 overdose was reported at the Aviator to have occurred on 2/14. Response measures were successful.

E. **Shelter Operator’s Brief Weekly Update** - None provided to RRS during this reporting period. (Note: This Brief Weekly Update was submitted and attached to one RRS Weekly Report. The intent behind this was for shelter operators to have the opportunity to include updates on projects and programs from their perspective.)

F. **RRS was presented with a Notice to Cure.** On February 13, 2024, RRS was sent an email with a Notice to Cure, request to mutually terminate the contract or, face a termination by AHD on March 7, 2023 if AHD deems RRS is not in compliance with the terms of its contract. RRS is responding to AHD in writing to this Notice to Cure and will report the outcome of this in RRS’s next weekly report.

### **C. Shelter Operations**

#### **1. Alex – Non-congregate**

Since beginning the ‘Next Step’ program at Alex Hotel, exits to housing (completed or in process) are occurring weekly. RRS has not been provided the exact number of clients who have exited to permanent supportive housing by the Alex shelter manager for this reporting period but estimates it is over 35.

#### **2. CWS – Congregate Shelter**

RRS did not visit CWS during this reporting period. CWS had asked that RRS not schedule time at CWS until the Client Questionnaire was approved by AHD and processes and protocol is established that is satisfactory to CWS shelter management and staff. RRS will be on-site Thursday, February 29, 2024.

CWS shelter management did report that CWS does provide opportunities every week for clients to get IDs.

#### **3. Aviator – Non-congregate.**

The Aviator is operating at close to capacity. Movement between CWS and Aviator has been very fluid with up to 12 individuals moving in to Aviator rooms in one day. The

shelter operator, The Alaska Hotel Group, got access to a courtesy van for purposes of shuttling clients between CWS and the Aviator. Clients continue to sign up for Medicaid and the MAT clinic for substance misuse treatment. 1 client was housed during this reporting period.

A few clients, during the client interviews, were very positive about the Friday night game night. One client reported he thought 15 – 20 people participated. Snacks are provided. RRS fully supports programs that build community.

**F. Recommendations, Conclusions and Summary**

RRS continues to recommend that ECWS stakeholders build positive momentum around shelter services.

Any questions, please contact RRS through phone, text, or email at any time.

**Respectfully Submitted, Cathleen N. McLaughlin, J.D./M.B.A. Monica Gross MD, MPH**