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Emergency Cold Weather Shelter 3rd Party Oversight

Weekly Report for Week 4

Project Name: 3rd Party Emergency Shelter Oversight

Date: Reporting period December 18 – 24, 2023

Date Submitted: December 27, 2023

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 5. This report is for the period December 18 – 24, 2023. To ensure compliance with the terms of the Contract, RRS will submit a weekly report no later than 12 p.m. every Wednesday (for the week ending the prior Sunday) to the Anchorage Health Department (AHD). The Weekly Report will be reviewed and circulated to the Assembly, Administration, and Emergency Cold Weather Shelter Operators by AHD. If AHD has any questions or concerns with the content of the Weekly Report, it will notify RRS prior to distribution.

To ensure RRS is in compliance with the terms of the Contract, as discussed with AHD, RRS will submit a separate weekly report for the first 4 weeks, rather than an aggregate report for this period.

Week 1	11/18 – 11/26	(submitted)
Week 2	11/27 – 12/3	12/31/2023
Week 3	12/4 – 12/10	12/31/2023
Week 4	12/11 – 12/17	12/31/2023

Moving forward, weekly reports will be submitted, using the following schedule:

Week 5	12/18 – 12/24	Submit by 12/27/23
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Week 6	12/25 – 12/31	Submit by 1/3/2023
Week 7	1/1 – 1/7/2024	Submit by 1/10/2024
Week 8	1/8 – 1/14/2024	Submit by 1/7/2024
Week 9	1/15 – 1/21/2024	Submit by 1/24/2024
Week 10	1/22 – 1/28/2024	Submit by 1/31/2024

B. Actions taken during this Reporting Period

1. RRS focused on the operations at the 3 Emergency Cold Weather Shelter sites – The Cold Weather Shelter (CWS) at 1111 E. 56th, The Alex Hotel, and The Aviator. RRS went to each facility at least once this week and did 3 random visits to ECWS locations during this reporting period.

2. RRS, with approval from the Shelter operators, scheduled a Townhall at each site. The Townhalls were conducted at each site. The current Townhall schedule is:

- a. Alex – 2 p.m. Tuesdays (14 attended)
- b. CWS – 2 p.m. Thursdays (18 attended)
- c. Aviator – 2 p.m. Fridays (9 attended)

This week Assembly member Karen Bronga requested to attend the Townhalls at CWS and The Aviator. RRS relayed this request to Alexis Johnson, received her approval, and notified Shelter Operator Staff. At the CWS townhall, Karen Bronga offered to find a community partner to facilitate an art class. Henning, Inc. shelter staff encouraged this and is directly working with Karen Bronga on this project.

All 3 Townhalls were better attended than prior weeks. RRS is hoping that this will continue and become a regular expectation for clients who wish to engage. Townhalls are not mandatory.

This Townhall schedule is subject to change if other dates and times would provide shelter clients more access to RRS.

3. Attended the weekly Third-Party Oversight Meeting at 2 p.m. Wednesday.

4. Attended the bi-weekly “Report Out” Meeting which includes AHD, an Assembly Member and a Member of the Administration at 3 p.m. Wednesday. This week Alexis Johnson, Felix Rivera, and Mia Costello, joined RRS. (Note: There was some discussion between Alexis Johnson and Felix Rivera about whether RRS should be focused on shelter operations only or shelter operations and the shelters being operated to support a Housing First housing model. RRS is currently focusing on operations but, as required under the contract, will also be attempting to understand and support “timeline and services with community partners around

the transition of clients from shelter services to permanent housing” that is being created by Henning, Inc. and the ACEH.)

5. Attended a meeting with AHD to discuss RRS’s scope of work, processes, and steps forward to meaningfully perform under the current contract.

6. Prepared and submitted 2 client concerns to AHD and Shelter Operators.

7. Accepted 23 calls from shelter clients that did not rise to client complaints. Examples of these calls are:

a. Requesting transportation to CWS – RRS informed the clients they could access CWS by using the Shuttle service from the 3rd Avenue Navigation Center to CWS and reminded them that a shuttle also brings individuals from CWS to 3rd Avenue Navigation.

b. Concerns the client would not make curfew at the various sites. RRS gave the clients the telephone numbers provided by Henning, Inc. Phone #s provided were:

Alex – 907-310-5998

Aviator - 907-793-5555

CWS - 907-538-8547

c. Clients wanting an opportunity to move from CWS to the Alex or the Aviator. RRS messaged to these clients to speak with their assigned case managers or housing specialists. If they do not have a case manager or housing specialist at CWS, then they needed to self-advocate so they are put on CWS staff’s radar.

d. Difficulty with roommate or wanting a different roommate. These concerns were passed along to the Shelter Operator site-supervisor at Aviator so she was aware of the requests.

e. ECWS clients giving RRS phone number to individuals who are on the street and have not entered into the ECWS system. Those who contacts RRS, often from the Consumer Webb, were encouraged to go to CWS first, work with Shelter staff, and move forward from there.

(Note: RRS encourages ECWS clients to call for whatever reason in order to ensure that they feel their voice is being heard. Many have difficulty self-advocating and often need a bit of urging to be a bit more proactive. RRS does not case manage. RRS attempts to connect the individual with the correct person in real time.)

4. Requested aggregate data around shelter and housing information from the shelter operators by email dated 12/21/2023. AHD was copied on the email. Awaiting a response. (Note: RRS will be the first to acknowledge that there has been some challenges and misunderstood messaging around how it should access data that it is expected to report on under

this 3rd Party Oversight Contract. As RRS now understands from AHD, it can request the aggregate data directly from the Shelter Operator.)

5. Created a “Client Concern Spreadsheet” to capture any complaints RRS receives about any of the ECWS shelters. This is a work-in-progress. Throughout the last 2 1/2 weeks, there have been robust conversations about how to process and share client concerns in an efficient and fair manner. RRS continues to be open for constructive comments on this process.

C. Action Item Report, Process and Plan (What has been Accomplished)

1. As was stated at the meetings during this week between shelter operators, AHD, the Assembly, the Administration, and RRS, the ultimate goal of RRS’s work is to create an initial 360 Assessment, provide 3rd Party Oversight as specified in the Contract and, create a final report. In moving forward, it is helpful to state the requirements RRS must comply with under the contract:

- Provide recommendations and guidance to service providers. **(on-going)**
- Work with shelter service providers to provide options and guidance to address any challenges, gaps in services, and/or community collaboration. Activities will include but are not limited to:
 - Assessing timeline and services with community partners around the transition of clients from shelter services to permanent housing **(w/ input from AHD and Henning, Inc. still in process of determining how this will be done)**
 - Communicating with all stakeholders opportunities to know, cure and/or amend process and address situations in real time. **(on-going)**
- Create a real-time communication process at all ECWS locations to efficiently measure client expectations, behavior, and resolution through individual and group-based best-practices, resulting in an “open door” for shelter clients to address concerns. **(on-going)**
- Work closely with the AHD team to ensure that any contractual and liability issues that may arise from recommended changes are appropriately addressed before any changes or recommendations are implemented. **(on-going)**
- Create, print, and post in all ECWS locations the process for shelter residents to lodge complaints and concerns about the facilities and services to the Contractor. **(completed – although RRS will be improving its signage in coming weeks)**
- Distribute a written weekly report no less than once weekly to the Anchorage Health Department, the Municipality of Anchorage Administration, and the Anchorage Assembly. **(now properly scheduled by RRS to be submitted by noon on Wednesdays)**

- Notify the identified reporting team immediately and in real-time if needed due to the urgency of a concern. **(2 weeks ago the reporting team was identified and the process is now being efficiently used)**
- Report on contract compliance, services provided at each ECWS location, client concerns, etc. **(on-going and will be more of a focus in the coming weeks)**
- Actively share and address concerns with shelter staff, clients, and community providers. **(on-going)**

With the above-stated contractual terms in mind, RRS reports:

1. This week has allowed shelter operators, RRS and AHD to listen, respect and learn from each stakeholder the expectations and process needed to move forward. Processes are now more-fully in place to address reporting, client concerns, providing information to RRS without violating client confidentiality, and addressing immediate needs (via a shared group text).
2. Re-set regular reporting requirements and client concern processes.
3. Begin openly discussing and “collaborating as much as possible within our bounds”, as Alexis Johnson correctly stated in the 3rd Party Oversight Text, in order to service the community and the clients.
4. RRS’s site review of all 3 ECWS locations, various calls, and client comments, has given RRS the basis to state that the ECWS operations at this time, at all 3 locations, are stable.

D. Action Items for the Report Week of December 24 – 31, 2023 - Report, Process and Plan (What Will Be Accomplished)

1. Continue to build an open and healthy communication policy between RRS, AHD and the ECWS operators.
2. RRS will connect with Henning, Inc. and The Alaska Group about confirming that the 24/7 phones at each ECWS site are in operation and properly manned. This is not a significant concern at this time but one where clients, community partners and providers need to be sure they have the correct phone numbers and that the phones are being answered.
3. Receive the aggregate data regarding client census, movement and housing as requested above.
4. Ensure RRS has supplied all parties the necessary reporting on or before December 31, 2023.
5. RRS will put more time at each ECWS location to ensure that it is more aware of activities at each site at various times of the day.

E. Recommendations, Conclusions and Summary

RRS's work under the Contract will be done with the goal of providing open channels of communication, a willingness to openly address challenges and opportunities, and to work with all individuals involved in Cold Weather Shelter Services. RRS is also open to and encourages constructive comments and criticism so it can perform as best as possible under this Contract.

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

Respectfully,
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