



Policy # 10-001 Temporary Cold Weather Shelters

The following policy shall be followed for all buildings or portions thereof, structures, facilities, or centers, designated as temporary cold weather shelters in accordance with Anchorage Municipal Code Title 16, Chapter 16.120, Cold Weather Plan for Homeless Persons, as Amended

Section 1.0 Purpose and Objective

- A. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the use of buildings or portions thereof, structures, facilities, or centers designated as Temporary Cold Weather Shelters.
- B. The objective of this policy is to work cooperatively with the Municipality’s faith-based and community partners, the Anchorage Fire Department (AFD) and other Agencies to provide a safe temporary cold weather shelter for vulnerable homeless individuals.

Section 1.1 Role of the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)

- A. The role of DHHS is to oversee implementation of the Cold Weather Plan for Homeless Persons (The Plan) and to accept, review and approve, or disapprove, applications for designation as a temporary cold weather shelter.
- B. DHHS will maintain a database of buildings, structures, facilities, or centers designated as temporary cold weather shelters under AMC Title 16, Chapter 16.120, Cold Weather Plan for Homeless Persons (AMC 16.120), as Amended.

Section 1.2 Requirements for Designation and Operation

- 1. Designation is solely at the discretion of the Director of DHHS, or their designee. Satisfaction of the requirements of AMC Title 16, Chapter 16.120, as Amended does not guarantee designation.
- 2. Churches designated as temporary cold weather shelters may provide overnight shelter to homeless families and individuals who are not under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances not prescribed to the individual.
- 3. Social service facilities designated as temporary cold weather shelters may provide overnight shelter to homeless persons.
- 4. Churches or social service facilities designated as temporary cold weather shelters under AMC 16.120 may not accept/shelter unaccompanied (by a parent or legal adult guardian) youth under the age of 18. The State of Alaska requires that shelters accepting unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 be licensed to do so

- by the state. If an unaccompanied youth between the ages of 13-17 arrives at a designated church or social service facility seeking shelter, staff/volunteers should immediately notify Covenant House Alaska: 907-272-1255. If an unaccompanied youth under the age of 13 arrives at a designated church or social service facility seeking shelter, staff/volunteers should immediately notify the Office of Children's Services: 907-269-4000, or if they are not available, the Anchorage Police Department: 907-786-8900.
5. Churches or social service facilities designated as temporary cold weather shelters under AMC 16.120 providing shelter to families with children must inform those families of the services offered by the Anchorage School District's Child in Transition Program: 742-3833.
 6. All applicants must review AMC 16.120, The Plan, DHHS Policy # 10-001, and Anchorage Fire Department Fire Prevention Division Policy # 10-002, Temporary Cold Weather Shelters. Non-compliance with the requirements of the aforementioned codes, policies and plans may result in suspension or revocation of designation. Facilities and organizations will be given a reasonable amount of time (as determined by the Director of DHHS & the Fire Marshal) to correct any non-compliance issues.
 7. Applicants must fill out and submit to DHHS an "Application to Operate a Cold Weather Shelter," available at DHHS, or on muni.org, and provide all requested information and attachments, including a copy of their insurance certificate, a copy of their last AFD inspection, a plan of operations and a to-scale floor plan.
 8. If the contact person(s) change, applicants must provide new contact information to DHHS within one week.
 9. Before designation, a building, structure, facility or center must pass an AFD fire inspection and any non-compliance issues must be corrected.
 10. Applicants shall submit a written operations plan and protocols consistent with the requirements of AMC 16.120, The Plan, DHHS Policy # 10-001, and Anchorage Fire Department Fire Prevention Division Policy # 10-002, Temporary Cold Weather Shelters. Once approved, a copy of the operations plan must be kept on site at all times.
 11. The plan and protocols shall include provisions indicating cooperation with other cold weather and emergency shelter providers identified by DHHS, and point of entry protocols.
 12. Designated facilities shall not exceed their approved maximum occupancy load while operating as cold weather shelters. Occupancy load factor for a designated sheltering space within a building, structure, facility or center shall be determined by the Anchorage Fire, prior to designation.
 13. While operating as a designated temporary cold weather shelter there shall be a minimum of two (2) staff/volunteers on duty at all times, and a staff/volunteer to client ratio of 1:10 shall not be exceeded.
 14. Designees shall maintain a written record listing the individuals occupying the temporary shelter, and if feasible, the designated shelter shall work with DHHS in providing information for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

15. Designation as a temporary cold weather shelter under AMC Title 16, Chapter 16.120 is for a 24 month period. It is the responsibility of designees to contact DHHS at least 90 days before expiration of their designation, in order to apply for renewal.
16. Renewal of designation for an additional 24 month period requires submission of a new/updated application for designation, and cover letter stating that the insurance coverage and carrier are unchanged, or have a new insurance certificate attached if the coverage or carrier has changed. The letter shall also state if the same designated space within the facility is being used for sheltering. AFD approval is not required for renewals, unless the sheltering space changes from the original application. Final determination regarding renewals is at the discretion of the Director of DHHS.

The Director of Health & Human Services may amend this policy as needed.