



Manchester Human Services

Update on Winter Services for the Unhoused.



Winter 2023 - 2024



Background, Winter 2020-2021:

- For this winter, Manchester Human Services partnered with Cornerstone and others to operate a congregate model warming center at the Community Y during the winter of 2020-2021.
- The warming center successfully operated from January 28 to March 31st.
- Was the result of community advocacy, leadership's willingness to allocate resources and the efforts of several town departments and partners.
- This was at the onset of COVID and there were state funds available.
- Provided a safe space from 7PM to 7AM daily.

Background Continued: Winter 2021-2022:

For this winter, Manchester Human services partnered with Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC) to operate a pilot program to provide shelter to unhoused people.

- Operated for 109 days from December 13, 2021 - March 31, 2022
- Located at the Manchester Inn, with 14 rooms
- Funded by a combination of local and state Covid funding.
- Served a total of 30 clients over the duration of the program (11 were from Manchester.)
- Provided 1860 meals.
- Provided a variety of referrals and assistance for housing, mental health, employment and other services.

Recap: Winter 2022-2023:

For this winter, The Town once again partnered with Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC) to provide shelter to unhoused people.

- Operated from December 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023
- Located at the Manchester Inn, with 14 rooms.
- Funded entirely using ARPA dollars, with a program cost of \$217k.
- Served a total of 23 clients, all of were unsheltered in Manchester or were Manchester residents prior to becoming unsheltered.
- Provided 2640 meals.
- Connected 11 of 12 employable individuals with employment.
- Connected 8 clients with shelter or other housing opportunities.
- Provided a variety of referrals and assistance for housing, mental health, employment and other services.
- MACC and Human Services worked with 211, Journey Home, Police/Fire and others to ensure that there was appropriate awareness of referral and other protocols.
- During statewide severe weather protocol activations, Human Services reserved additional blocks of rooms at area hotels in the event people presented themselves and no other resources were available.

Current Trends:

- During the 12 month period ending 6/30/23, MACC received 213 referrals for homelessness, representing a 52% increase year over year.
- SAFS continues to see high numbers of residents looking for housing stability assistance.
- Statewide, shelters space for individual males and females remains at or near capacity most times.
- To date, MACC reports that homeless referrals and outreach are up 32% compared to this time last year with the numbers likely to rising into the winter.
- Statewide, roughly 31% of all calls to 2-1-1 are related to shelter and housing.
- Shelter providers in Greater Hartford are reporting seeing people presenting with more and more behavioral, mental health and other challenges further complicating sheltering and housing efforts.

Overview of Plans for Winter 2023-2024

- Manchester Human Services and MACC will once again partner to operate a Warming Center at the Manchester Inn.
- The program will run from December 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.
- The plan is to increase our capacity to 18 rooms for this winter.
- Total program costs: \$243k
- Because this program will use ARPA funds, the program will continued to be only for those clients identified as being from Manchester.
- Journey Home has offered to provide additional funds for winter outreach as well as funds for rehousing efforts(still working out the details).
- MACC, 2-1-1, Police/Fire and others will continue to ensure that appropriate referral and other processes are in place.
- MACC and SAFS will continue to collaborate on rehousing and other case management efforts for those being served at the warming center.
- Manchester Fire and PD will continue to have access to hotel vouchers for individuals they encounter overnight who they are unable to assist otherwise.
- In the event of a declared “Severe Cold Weather Protocol” activation, Manchester Human Services will work with local hotel partners, MACC and the region to provide additional hotel capacity for the duration of the weather emergency.

Other considerations for this winter and beyond:

- Following this winter, we will only have access to roughly \$130k in left in ARPA funds allocated for this purpose.
 - It is too early to tell whether or not the state/region will provide any additional funds or be agreeable to funding our program in the manner in which we feel works best locally and that allows us to prioritize Manchester residents.
- Trending and the fact that Manchester is a supportive community with resources makes it highly likely that we will continue to see the numbers of unhoused people in our community rise.
 - Manchester Human Services is working with our partners to develop suggestions for ongoing services beyond the winter warming model that is based on local priorities/resources/partnerships.
- Manchester is on a short list of municipalities in Greater Hartford that provides an array of services for housing and homelessness (Manchester, Vernon, East Hartford and Hartford.)
 - Advocacy is needed at the state level to create greater buy-in and incentives for all municipalities to do their fair share of work in responding to homelessness.



Questions ?