

Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter Volunteer Manual

Overflow Shelter Project
developed by the

Consultation of Religious Communities

and

Shelter House
Iowa City, Iowa

Overflow Volunteer Website:
<http://plus.calendars.net/fumcshelter>

***Key information for Host Volunteers
is printed on the blue pages 10-20
in the Manual at the Host Site***

November 2009

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Phone Numbers

FIRE emergency:

Get guests out, call 911 and/or pull fire alarm

POLICE emergency:

Call 911

Mercy on Call

358-2767 If guests need get medical advice, available from 7am to midnight.

Shelter House

351-0326

Overflow Shelter Coordinator—Staff:

CJ Cash

319-541-1475 (home, daytime or evening) cj.vistajc@gmail.com

Winter 2009-2010 Hosting Schedule

Host Dates	Host Congregation	Support Congregation
Nov. 15 – 21	Congregational UCC	
Nov. 22 – 28 (Thanksgiving)	First Presbyterian	
Nov. 29 – Dec. 5	First Presbyterian	
Dec. 6 – 12	St Mary's Catholic	
Dec. 13 – 19	First Christian	Coralville UMC
Dec. 20 – 26 (Christmas)	First United Methodist	
Dec. 27 – Jan. 2	St. Mark's UMC	
Jan. 3 – 9	Trinity Episcopal	Zion Lutheran
Jan. 10 – 16	St. Mary's Catholic	
Jan. 17 – 23	St. Raphael Greek Orthodox	The Vineyard
Jan. 24 – 30	First United Methodist	The Vineyard
Jan. 31 – Feb. 6	St. Mark's UMC	
Feb. 7 – 13	Trinity Episcopal	Zion Lutheran
Feb. 14 – 20	Zion Lutheran	Trinity Episcopal
Feb. 21 – 27	Congregational UCC	
Feb. 28 – Mar. 6	First United Methodist	
Mar. 7 – 13	St. Mary's Catholic	
Mar. 14 – 20	First Christian	Coralville UMC
Mar. 21 – 27	Zion Lutheran	Trinity Episcopal
Mar. 28 – April 1	Zion Lutheran	Trinity Episcopal

Volunteer Coordinators

Overflow Volunteer Website

<http://plus.calendars.net/fumcshelter/>

Host Coordinators For Each Congregation:

Congregational UCC	Claire Ashman	338-4977	c.ashman@mchsi.com
First Christian Disciples/Christ	Dennis Watters	341-8645	danthony41@hotmail.com
First Presbyterian	Jeri and Greg Smith	430-5074	smith1232@q.com
	Nancy Stensvaag	338-0524	nstensvaag@me.com
First United Methodist	Sally Jablonski	354-4002	driftwoodoa@juno.com
St. Mark's United Methodist	Alan Elgar	351-9165	aelgar1321@aol.com
	Tom Shepherd	338-8703	tomshep@avalon.net
St. Mary's Catholic Church	Jim McCue	338-6134	jandmmccue@earthlink.net
St. Raphael Greek Orthodox	Amy Jongeling	331-2275	ajongeli@gmail.com
Trinity Episcopal	Judith Crossett	337-7943	judith-crossett@uiowa.edu
Zion Lutheran	Ann Roller		ann@lindentreewebworks.com

Support Coordinators For Non-hosting Congregations:

Agudas Achim Synagogue	Sue Weinberg	679-3120	weloveiowa@netins.net
Christ the King Lutheran	Steve Slezak	338-1325	stephen-slezak@uiowa.edu
Coralville United Methodist	Penny Rembolt	358-6951	penny-rembolt@uiowa.edu
Faith UCC	Scarlet Wilson	356-6435	wilsonscarlet@yahoo.com
New Life Community Church			
St Andrew Presbyterian	Becky Benson	358-1387	rebecca-benson@uiowa.edu
St. Thomas More	Lee Gullickson	331-5620	lig1218@hotmail.com
Unitarian Universalist	Gay Mikelson	354-1160	gay-mikelson@uiowa.edu
Wesley Foundation	Marsha Acord	338-1179	RevMarsh@inavia.net

Shelter House Background

Throughout this manual:

“Guest” refers to homeless persons who need shelter

*“Host” refers to congregations and volunteers who make the Interim Overflow Shelter work
Shelter House, the local homeless shelter, is abbreviated “SH”*

The Homeless Problem—To be without a safe, warm place to sleep, eat, and care for yourself and your children; to be without the security of familiar people and belongings.

Until recently, many people believed that only alcoholics or severely mentally ill people could become homeless. These stereotypes never accurately portrayed the homeless population, and certainly do not reflect today’s reality.

Women and young children make up 40% of the homeless population and are the fastest growing segment both nationally and locally. The loss of a home is a crisis for anyone, but especially for families. Parents must endure the heartache of being unable to provide a secure environment for their children. Without a home, children are deprived of a basic resource required for healthy development. One out of every four homeless persons is a child.

There are many reasons for a family’s homelessness, but the primary cause is a lack of affordable housing. Hundreds of thousands of American families are caught in the increasing gap between family income and the cost of housing. Low-income renters are often only one paycheck or one emergency away from homelessness. The loss of a job, an increase in rent, the onset of sudden illness, the gentrification of a neighborhood, the absence of family support—any one of these can drive a family from their home into homelessness.

The Homeless Problem In Johnson County

Due in part to the VA and University Hospitals’ admirable care of indigent patients, we have a larger population of homeless persons than our total population alone would indicate. In 2002 the waiting list for Section 8 (federally subsidized) housing was two years, with 2000 applicants on the waiting list.

A 2002 report from nationalhomeless.org estimates that there are 3.5 million homeless with 1.35 million of them children; about 1/3 of these show up in shelters. The Iowa City Community School District estimates there are about 400 homeless children in Iowa City; 191 homeless children participated in a holiday gift program through HACAP (Hawkeye Area Community Action Program) in December 2003. Shelter House has seen a 180% increase in the number of families with children seeking shelter there since 1999.

Homelessness is a complex problem, which is addressed by many social service agencies in Johnson County, including Community Mental Health, Veterans Administration, HACAP Transitional Housing, Greater Iowa City Housing Fellowship, Crisis Center, and others.

When other efforts to procure shelter fail, homeless persons turn to Johnson County’s only general purpose shelter: Shelter House. Most nights, more homeless people seek admittance to Shelter House than the site can accommodate.

History of Shelter House (SH)

Shelter House is a private, secular, not-for-profit, community-based organization that is overwhelmingly funded by private and individual donations, and grants. The structure of SH allows the organization to respond to the issues of homelessness in our community on a grassroots level – removed from the costs of bureaucracy. SH is the only general use shelter in Johnson County, providing shelter to men, women, and children.

Shelter House has provided shelter and supportive services to the homeless of Southeast Iowa since 1983. Founded by a consortium of faith communities, the City of Iowa City, and human service agencies, it continues today with their support.

Shelter House has won several awards including the HUD "Good Practices" award and awards from the City of Iowa City and other organizations for its innovative approach to homelessness. Working with a network of community-based programs such as UIHC, Community Mental Health, and the VA, Shelter House helps clients eliminate barriers to employment and requires the development of good work habits and self care.

Today, Shelter House provides shelter, supportive services, and a jump-start to independence for 30 or more people at a time. Shelter House is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, excluding 11 AM to 5 PM on Saturdays and Sundays. It is a full service homeless shelter that strives to alleviate the problems experienced by the homeless. Staff members assist individuals with addressing barriers to economic independence such as unemployment, substance abuse, and mental illness. Staff work with clients on an individual basis to address housing, childcare, education, and general health needs. They collaborate extensively with the network of established community-based social services programs, UIHC, and the VA.

Shelter House Turns Homeless Away Most Nights

Only 29 people can sleep overnight at Shelter House due to safety and fire regulations.

Prior to February 2004, three to fifteen people were turned away daily by Shelter House due to lack of space. Others might have heard that the shelter was full and did not even ask for accommodations. As the weather becomes colder, the dangers for people sleeping in their cars, under bridges, or in steam tunnels increases. In order to have the health and energy to work toward self-sufficiency, people need to have a warm, safe place to sleep.

In 2003, Shelter House provided 11,331 nights of shelter (beds). They operated at capacity almost every night of the year and were forced to turn people away – men, women, and children – night after night, due to lack of space. In 2002, more than 1,200 men, women, and children were denied shelter in Johnson County, ranging from 3 to 15 a night during the colder months. This trend is not only expected to continue but to intensify, as those experiencing homelessness increase categorically across our nation.

Sending people away without a warm place to sleep is unconscionable in a community with our bountiful resources. The CRC Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter, which began in February 2004, uses community resources to alleviate this problem during winter months, until a larger Shelter House can be built.

Permanent, Long-Term Solution: A New, Larger Shelter House

Iowa City needs more capacity in its homeless shelter programs. A larger general shelter facility, adequately staffed by professionals, would meet our community's responsibility to assist people who are trying to achieve employment and adequate income to meet their housing needs. The Shelter House Board and the City of Iowa City are working together to secure land for a new, larger, Shelter House. However,

this new facility will not be available for at least two more years. Funds to construct the new shelter will be needed from many sources.

Interim, Short-Term Solution: CRC Involvement and Our Community Steps Up

Until this new facility is built, several churches and other sites, one site per week, staffed by volunteers, provide overflow shelter capacity to homeless individuals and families. From November through March, these sites serve as an extra bedroom for SH, as a place for people to sleep rather than be turned out into the cold. The current SH will continue to provide many services to these clients such as: some meals, laundry facilities, mail and message delivery, referrals, and showers.

The Homeless Overflow Shelter is not a permanent or ongoing program, but an interim overnight project to increase SH capacity until a larger facility is completed.

Funding

All faith groups find it in their mission to help people in need, but providing shelter is the responsibility of the entire community. By working together with non-CRC religious groups, service clubs, and fraternal and professional organizations, the Consultation of Religious Communities (CRC) believes there are enough resources in the community to provide both an interim overflow homeless shelter and a new, larger Shelter House. The CRC is committed to assisting Shelter House to secure a new location and the funding for a new facility.

The CRC is also seeking funding to assist the Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter to provide a temporary increase in Shelter House capacity. The increased funding would:

- Provide a safe, warm place for people to sleep in overflow shelters as they wait for space at SH
- Divert some people directly to other housing options through transportation, partial rent deposits, etc.
- Assist in maintaining Shelter House until the new facility opens. The current building is old and fragile, requiring heavy maintenance just to keep it open.

Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter

Introduction to the CRC Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter

The CRC Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter is sponsored by the Consultation of Religious Communities as an extension of programs at Shelter House. This interim program is designed to provide overnight sleeping accommodations during the coldest months of the year (November 1- March 31) for people who qualify for the Shelter House residency program, but who are turned away from overnight shelter because SH is filled to capacity. This interim overflow solution will continue until the new SH is completed.

Between February 1, 2004 and April 1, 2004, the Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter provided 354 nights of shelter to men, women and children who would have been turned out into the cold because Shelter House was filled to capacity.

Between November 1, 2004 and March 30, 2005, the Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter Provided 1,225 nights of shelter to 166 men, women, and children who would have been turned out into the cold because SH was filled to capacity.

How the CRC Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter Works:

Overflow Sites

Congregations or organizations willing to provide space as an overflow shelter site are inspected and appropriate arrangements made for safety and comfort of hosts and guests. In 2005-2006, there will be at least eight sites, which will rotate and serve for up to seven nights at a time. Iowa City and Coralville are providing police response and fire code/safety inspection.

Screening

To receive shelter, in the early evening, prospective guests must be present at Shelter House. The professional SH staff will gather information from them and decide if they are candidates for the SH programs. Persons who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, who have a record of non-compliance at SH, or who are not eligible for the SH program will not be accepted or sent to the Overflow Shelter.

Guests are given written "House Rules" that they read and sign (App. F) before they are transported to the Overflow Shelter. The SH staff confirms to the drivers that all guests transported to the Overflow site have been screened and accepted. People will only be go to the Overflow Shelter when SH is full.

Transportation

Drivers, using their own vehicles or vans owned by non-profits, drive the screened guests to the Overflow Shelter by 9:30pm. The next morning, the guests leave after 6:30am and are driven to Shelter House no earlier than 6:45am or on Wednesday mornings to Agape Café at Old Brick when UI is in session.

Overnight Shelter

The Overflow Shelter is staffed each night by three overnight host volunteers. The site host, must be very familiar with and have access to the entire premises. One host is designated the lead host. All three hosts have trained in emergency procedures, house rules and procedures, and general aspects relating to homeless persons. At least one host must be awake at all times and serve as a "fire watch."

Sleeping areas are large open spaces which allow for line-of-sight supervision of guests, while also allowing for separation of families, single men, and single women. Adjoining restroom facilities are ideal.

Bedding is provided by the CRC, and is laundered/cleaned by volunteers. Volunteers transport bedding from site to site on Sunday. This is a basic shelter program; there is no provision for evening meals, showers, or laundry at these temporary Overflow Shelter sites.

There are several boxes of basic supplies transported from site to site: a first aid kit, manuals and forms, a cell phone, and other materials. There is a "Checklist" (App. B) that should be checked nightly. The host coordinator should be notified if supplies are low, and this coordinator should refill the items or notify the Overflow Shelter Coordinator about needed materials.

Fire Watch

"A temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of a building or a portion thereof by one or more qualified individuals for the purpose of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, raising an alarm of fire and notifying the fire department."

Coordination

Beginning in the Fall 2004, a part-time Overflow Shelter Coordinator will provide some of the coordination, training, and community organization.

Training

All volunteers must be trained prior to hosting. The training is not required but is strongly recommended for drivers and all other volunteers. It is a goal to have a mix of volunteers from congregations, businesses, service clubs, fraternal organizations, and college students scheduled several weeks in advance.

Each host congregation should have a host coordinator who will oversee that particular site. This person will work closely with the Overflow Shelter Coordinator to ensure that the hosting week goes smoothly. In part, this host coordinator will make sure that all the volunteer spots are covered, that substitutes are found if there are last minute cancellations, and that materials are replenished as needed at the site.

Shelter House Responsibilities

What Shelter House Will Do Each Night

Guests needing shelter will go to Shelter House before 8:30pm to be vetted.

All guests must be eligible, ("vetted,") to come to the Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter

SH Staff will ensure that the guests served are eligible for the SH program.

For these eligible guests, the Overflow Shelter is merely additional bedroom space.

Before being driven to the Overflow Shelter, each person must fill out the House Rules form (App. F)

This document lists the do's and don'ts that they agree to (e.g., no smoking, no drugs, no alcohol, no leaving, no readmission)

SH staff will photocopy the guest's picture ID on the back of this form, and give the forms to the driver to give to the overnight hosts along with a roster of guest names.. If a picture ID is not available, the SH staff will write pertinent information on the back of this signed House Rules form that the guest has signed.

SH will verify that all children will arrive with a parent or legal guardian.

Guardians are responsible for providing diapers, food, and medicine for dependents.

Guardians are responsible for the behavior of their dependents.

See "Shelter House Rules for Guardians of Dependents" (App. G)

What Shelter House Will Do For These Guests During The Day

Overflow Shelter guests will be returned to Shelter House in the morning shortly after 6:30am

Once guests have been eligible for the Shelter House program, they have access to meals, laundry, showers, phones, etc at Shelter House. None of these will be provided by the Overflow Shelter.

Guests accepted for the Overflow Shelter are considered to be clients of Shelter House, and as space permits, they will become residents of Shelter House. If the resources are not available, people may need to wait their turn before receiving Shelter House professional services.

Volunteers

Volunteering: Diminishing the Hurt of Homelessness

The backbone of this CRC Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter is congregations opening their doors and people volunteering to serve. Volunteers in the Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter provide homeless families and individuals with basic human needs—shelter and safety—with a spirit of warmth and hospitality, treated as guests and accepted as they are. In this welcoming environment, guests are able to maintain dignity. The kindness of the hosts helps to diminish the hurt of homelessness.

Hosting guests in your congregation is a challenging yet rewarding experience. You will meet all kinds of people from all walks of life. You may see a worldview you may not have considered previously. Most guests will be easy to work with and grateful. Only a handful might present concerns. React with a combination of Midwestern friendliness and wariness.

All volunteers must sign the volunteer forms found in Appendix A: Hospitality Code, Volunteer Application, Pledge of Confidentiality. The Host Coordinator or Lead Host should look at the drivers license to make sure the name and birth dates are legible on their Volunteer Application. Shelter House has requested that the Overflow Project coordinator run a background check on volunteers therefore it is important that the volunteer form include the person's full name and birth date.

Five Basic Requirements To Be A Good Volunteer

#1—Use common sense in emergencies and in dealing with people

If you have common sense, use it. Nothing more needs to be said here.

#2—Remember the host qualities: “Fair, funny and firm”

Fair: reasonable expectations, treat everyone pretty much the same

Funny: homelessness is high stress, try to keep a good sense of humor

Firm: even though you want to help, you must be willing to say

“No, you can't do that here and if you do, you're gone!”

#3—Treat homeless adults as adults, as guests, and with dignity

Respect the privacy of your guests: introduce yourself, but don't pry or hover

See beyond stereotypes—this experience will put a human face on the tragedy of homelessness

Guests are meeting many people each day, each week, not to mention spending the night with other guests who are strangers. This is overwhelming for anyone, but especially so when homeless.

Some guests are optimistic and open about their situations. Others feel ashamed, humiliated, and alienated from everyone. However guests cope with their displacement, they find themselves dependent upon others to support their basic needs and the needs of their children.

Many homeless people feel helpless and frustrated and may express these feelings by withdrawing or acting in an angry or confrontational manner. Some may find it difficult to accept the goodwill of volunteers or to show appreciation. Some may not have the social skills to interact in the way volunteers might think is appropriate.

Be understanding of guests as they go through this severe crisis in their lives

Recognize and be sensitive to the frustration and anger that guests may feel. How a guest feels or reacts usually has absolutely nothing to do with the volunteer, but rather with how difficult they find their particular situation

Be open to different lifestyles and different values without judging and criticizing.

Relate to guests as individuals worthy of trust, respect, and utmost courtesy

Do small acts of kindness

#4—Remember your role is: “Not to solve, but to serve”

An overnight stay is not the setting for solving problems.

Quiet time and sleep are the priorities for the night, so conversations should be brief and should occur only before lights out and after waking in the morning.

During a brief conversation, be a good listener. Ask if you can pass concerns on to Shelter House staff in the morning. Pass information on to Shelter House on the form that goes back in the morning.

Be a good listener, even though your role is not as counselor:

By listening carefully, you are accepting the guests as they are

Reflect back (repeat out loud) what you hear

Actively listen with ears, eyes, heart, mind and body

Clarify things you don't understand

Don't assume others see things the way you do or think the way you do

Don't express your opinions readily

Summarize what you hear in conversation

#5—Maintain your guests' confidentiality

The Overflow Shelter guests' right to confidentiality and privacy must be preserved .

All information obtained from or about a guest is privileged communication. Sharing information about a guest with any outside source without their specific permission is inappropriate and unacceptable.

Issues and concerns should only be discussed with the Shelter House staff and the Host Coordinator.

It is natural to want to discuss your volunteer experiences with your family and friends, but even when your conversation is in the strictest confidence, you should avoid giving names and other details that might identify guests.

Remember: every volunteer has signed the Shelter House Pledge of Confidentiality

List of Volunteer Positions: Each volunteer “reports” to the person a level above them

Shelter House Staff: Leon DeBoer

CRC Members

Overflow Shelter Coordinator: CJ Cash

Host Coordinator and a Support Coordinator (1-2 for each Congregation site)

Volunteers to host overnight

Volunteers to set-up

Volunteers to take down beds and clean up the site

Volunteers for transportation, evening and morning

Volunteers to do recognition of volunteers

Volunteers to move beds and supplies to new site on Sunday

Volunteers to do laundry

Ideas for Recruiting Volunteers

Ask each volunteer to recruit another volunteer

Invite Shelter House, CRC, or an Overflow volunteer to an adult forum or to speak at your service

One or more months before hosting, place sign-up notice in monthly bulletin

Place a sign-up board in a central location

Announce the upcoming host week from the pulpit

Recruit for specific skills because people want to know what they are expected to do

Call or e-mail people who have volunteered previously, even offering them first choice to sign up for dates

Ask groups to sponsor a night or a week.

Have a volunteer fair representing many service opportunities

Place stories in newsletter about the experience a volunteer had

Add all volunteer names to a mailing list and to the Shelter House volunteer data base

Volunteer Training and Support

Once recruited, volunteers will be trained to be successful and comfortable in their roles. Training ensures the smooth functioning of the CRC Interim Homeless Overflow Shelter. Training takes place at designated locations a short time before the congregation hosts. All overnight host volunteers from the host and support congregation MUST attend a training session before volunteering. Volunteers do not need to retrain each year, but are welcome to attend training sessions

Training will include:

- General information
- Increased understanding about homelessness
- Guidance in host / guest relationships
- Specifics about certain host sites
- Emergency procedures

A laminated instruction sheet will be available to hosts which lists procedures and contact information, and provides some advice on handling situations that may arise while hosting.

All volunteers must sign the volunteer forms found in Appendix A: Host Coordinator or Lead host must verify that the applicant's birth dates and full names are legible and correct.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Support Coordinators' Duties (1-2 per Support Organization that is partnering with a Host Organization)

Works with Host Coordinator to help provide Host Coordinator's duties

Host Coordinators' Duties (1-2 per Host Organization)

Coordinates all aspects to ensure that the host site's program runs smoothly
Communicates with host site staff

Involved in planning the accommodations for guests

Notifies Overflow Shelter Coordinator if there are changes in space or other limitations

Schedules volunteers

Recruits and coordinates volunteers to:

- Host overnight
- Transport guests
- Provide extra morning and evening hosts if necessary
- Move beds and supplies to new site on Sunday
- Do laundry on Sunday and some Wednesday when UI students are not available (talk to Meg)

Attend or assist with training sessions for hosts and drivers

Verify that all Volunteer Applications are legible and that the full name and birth dates are as shown on drivers license

Provide schedule confirmation and reminders to volunteers

Talk to lead host each day about previous night

Report problems and unusual incidents to the Overflow Shelter Coordinator(Meg) and/or Shelter House

On the last night (Sat. pm – Sun. am), check all supplies and replenish as needed or notify Meg. Indicate on the Supply Box Checklist (App. B) the number of each item that is being transferred.

Provide Volunteer Recognition

Each Host or Support Coordinator will be responsible for volunteer recognition for their location

Thanking volunteers is important. Some ways are:

- Annual dinner or event, or recognition at the Shelter House annual meeting in the spring
- Congregational dinner recognizing volunteers

Thank-you notes or personal thank you from clergy and host/support coordinator
Ask effective volunteers to help with training or write an article for your newsletter
Distribute a Certificate of Appreciation from Shelter House, CRC, or your congregation

Host Coordinator—Prepares For Host Week

All hospitality areas should be clearly defined—guests need to understand which areas are available to them, and the host congregation should be comfortable with the intended use of the building

One Month Before:

- Recruit and schedule volunteers

- Schedule training session

1-2 Weeks before:

- Hold training session or make sure that each volunteer has attended one training session

- Schedule delivery of beds and supplies

- Confirm all volunteers

Monday before:

- For Iowa City congregations/sites, a list of all overnight hosts (i.e.the Fire Watch list) must be submitted to CJ Cash – cj.vistaic@gmail.com

Friday-Sunday before:

- Remind volunteers of their upcoming shifts

- Clean / straighten all areas to be used

- Confirm sufficient bathroom supplies, paper cups

Sunday:

- Have youth make and put up welcome signs

- Receive beds and supplies

At end of week:

- Make sure that supplies are replenished or notify Overflow Coordinator (Meg)

- Move recorded logs to back of manual and switch new forms to beginning of manual

- Remove surplus papers that have accumulated in manual throughout week

- Save relevant site specific instructions behind your church's tab

Overnight Hosts—Requirements (3 hosts per night)

At least one host must be female and at least one host must be male

“Lead Host” will be designated by the Host Coordinator

- Lead host should have the qualities of “fair, funny, and firm”

- Lead host will take charge if any difficult situations arise with the guests

“Site Host” for the host site:

- Site host has keys, knows the site, can find cleaning and bathroom supplies

- Site host has information from the site custodian about what he/she should know

- Site host may be the person who is designated as the Lead Host.

- Site host should know how to:

 - Restore power in building

 - Redirect guests to the safest places in case of tornado or severe weather

 - Know the address of the entry for emergency vehicles

Minimum age:

- Lead host and site host must be at least 21

- Other hosts must be at least 18

- All must attend a training session prior to hosting

Overnight Hosts—Duties

Report problems or unusual incidents to host coordinator
Call Shelter House if immediate problem arises
Call police if person needs to be removed from host site

Several days prior to hosting, the lead host should:

- Call all volunteers to remind and confirm their availability for the night
- Confirming by e-mail with a positive reply is sufficient

Each evening, at 7:30pm, lead host should:

- Call Shelter House to determine
 - if there will be guests needing the Overflow Shelter that evening
 - if and how many child and infant car seats will be needed
 - if there are children, remind Staff to tell the parent to bring supplies for the child

If there will be no guests, the lead host should:

- Call to cancel the scheduled volunteers for the night
- Call the host coordinator, the site staff (pastor or janitor), CJ Cash.

If car seats are needed, they will be at SH and staff should be able to help secure them.

Hosts should be at their Overflow Shelter by 9:00pm

- Arrange some set-up prior to guests arriving

- Plug in and turn on the cell phone

- Transportation volunteers should arrive at SH between 9:15 and 9:25pm, depending on driving time to be able to get guests to overflow site by 9:30pm

- Lead Host verifies that all volunteers have signed the volunteer forms found in Appendix A, and that the applicant's birth dates and full names are legible and correct as it appears on their driver's license

When guests arrive:

- Hosts should wear nametags (first name is sufficient), greet guests, and introduce themselves
- Don't be concerned if guests don't introduce themselves.

- Point out emergency exits and identify a place outside the building where all guests and hosts will meet in case of fire to make sure everyone has made it out of the building

- Point out bathrooms

- Designate segregated sleeping areas:

- Single men separate from single women,
- Family groups together and separated from others
- Dividers cannot be used per Fire Marshall

- State time for lights-out (approximately 30 minutes after they arrive)

- State morning wake-up time (30 minutes before pickup)

- Try for a 10pm lights out so that people get ~8 hours sleep (10pm-6:15am)

- Tell everyone:

- What needs to be moved and set up for sleeping
- What will need to be done in the morning before leaving

- Hosts should work alongside the guests to set-up

- If someone doesn't help at all, list their name on the morning report to Leon

- Have individual plastic bags for guests to put their stuff while they sleep

- Use masking tape to mark the plastic bags with guest's name and date

- Place bags in secure place during the night

All hospitality areas should be clearly defined—guests need to understand which areas are available to them

A few minutes before lights out/quiet time:

- Remind guests that lights-out will soon begin
- Remind guests to use bathroom
- Remind guests of wake up times
- Ask if there are any last minute details to be addressed

Lights out—quiet time:

- This is a time for guests to sleep, not to chat
- Account for all guests (head-count)
- Call Shelter House Staff person once everyone is settled to confirm the number of guests and that everyone is settled in

Through-out the night:

Fire Watch: One host must stay awake at all times

A second host should be awakened if the awake host is checking on anything!

At 11pm, 1am, 3am, and 5am, do a walk-through near each guest with a flashlight which is covered with your hand to provide minimal light.

Log in that each walk-through has occurred.

Watch for “no deaths, no fires, no babies”

No deaths: watch that there is no threatening behavior

No fire: a fire watch person is awake at all times.

No smoking is the rule, and no one leaves to smoke outside

No babies: guests must act in a minimally adult way.

If not, and if guests make bad choices, they are choosing to leave.

No sex is allowed, not even consensual sex

In the morning:

Wake up guests at 6:15am, i.e. 30 minutes before they will be picked up

Host hands out bags to ensure each guest gets own personal belongings

Put away bedding

On Wed. and Sun. mornings: bedding is collected to be laundered (see p.20 for instructions)

Other mornings, put bedding in guest's bag for next night if s/he intends to return

Don't allow guests to leave their personal belongings during the day because:

There may be space for them at Shelter House the next night, or

They might not choose to return to the Overflow Shelter, and

The site will not be held responsible for these belongings.

Record the count of all guests leaving, either on their own or driven to Shelter House

No earlier than 6:30am:

Drivers will pick up the guests and arrive at SH no earlier than 6:45am

Any Incident Reports should be sent to SH with the driver

Attendance list and Rules for SH that each guest signed should be sent to SH with the driver

Once guests have left, the Lead Host should:

Call Host Coordinator

To report on previous night

To report supplies that need to be replenished by evening

Do a walk through of the site

To ensure that all guests have gone

To ensure the site is left in good or better shape than on arrival

TRANSPORTATION & OTHER VOLUNTEERS

Transportation Volunteers—Requirements

Drivers must be at least 21

It is recommended but not required that they attend a training session

Must provide their driver's license expiration date, and confirm that they have liability ins.

Must fulfill the requirements specified by the church if using a church van

Transportation Volunteers—Duties

Remember:

Transportation is a “closed loop.”

No stops are allowed between Shelter House and the Overflow Shelter

On Wed. mornings when UI is in session, guests can be dropped at the Agape Café at Old Brick

When you drive:

In the evening: arrive at Shelter House between 9:15 and 9:25pm

Verify that the SH staff gives you a signed “House Rule” sheet for each guest

In the morning: arrive at the Overflow Shelter at 6:30am

Sometimes the morning pick-up time might vary due to morning activities at the Overflow Shelter. Drivers should confirm morning pick-up times with their Host Coordinator

All drivers should:

Greet guests and introduce yourself

Have everyone buckle up!

Make an additional pick-up:

If there are not enough car seats for children or

If there are not enough seat belts for everyone to use individually

Transporting Children: See Iowa's Child Restraint Law, App. S

Use provided car seats for infants and children

Infants under 1 yr and under 20# must be secured in a rear-facing child seat

Toddlers/preschoolers over 1-6 years old, 20-40#, should be in a forward facing seat with harness straps at or above shoulders—NOT a seat belt

Children 6 to 11 years old must be secured in a child restraint system or by a safety belt

Children should never ride in the front seat

Volunteers to move cots and supplies to new site on Sunday

Need to be willing and able to lift and move all items from one site to new site

Arrange to get into both buildings with your Host Coordinator and next site's Host Coordinator

Never leave items outside the building

What Should I Do...

Remember to be Fair, Funny and Firm, and to use common sense...

Call Shelter House immediately for advice if you are in doubt about anything that occurs!

Shelter House 351-0326 or if you can't reach SH, call Leon DeBoer 354-0635 (home)

Never give Leon's home # to guests!

REPORTING PROCEDURE –If Any Situation or Incident Needs to be Reported

Document the following situations and document any other out-of-the ordinary situations

Fill out the Incident Report (App. D).

Send Incident Report back to Shelter House with driver in the morning

Note all incidents and illness on the Host Log (App. C)

Lead host should tell the Host Coordinator during morning call

Notify the Overflow Shelter Coordinator in the morning

If There Is A Medical Emergency Or If A Guest Is Ill?

Use a combination of good common sense and adhere to the Universal Precautions page (App. E)

If a guest is ill, always ask "Do you need to go to the Emergency Room?"

If the guest asks to go to the ER, honor the request and make arrangements to get the person there.

Call 911 for an ambulance if the need is urgent

or call Shelter House and ask them to call for a cab. SH will give the cab a code so SH is charged

Call Shelter House to tell them when a guest is sent to the hospital, usually send to University Hospital ER

If a guest returns from the emergency room, s/he must show the emergency room discharge papers to be re-admitted into the Overflow Shelter. Do not re-admit if you suspect that the person has been drinking, etc.

Mercy On Call is available for advice until midnight 358-2767

The First Aid kit contains aspirin, Tylenol and ibuprofen. Due to liability issues, do not offer these to guests, but if they ask, you can give out these over-the-counter medicines to them.

Follow Reporting Procedure for all illness and distribution of over the counter medicines.

If There Are Signs That A Guest Is Suicidal?

If a guest is showing signs of being suicidal, find out "do you have a plan?" and "do you have a means?"

Ask if guest wants to go to ER. Call the police if guest is a danger to themselves.

Call SH or Leon to inform staff and for advice

Follow Reporting Procedure for your suspicions and your responses

If A Guest Disregards The Guest Rules? ("Shelter House Discipline Matrix", App. H)

Shelter House has a series of consequences for violations ranging from: smoking or using offensive language, to failure to attend dependent children, to possession of weapons.

Determine if should be discussed immediately, reported to police, or merely recorded on Incident Report form and sent back to Shelter House (Leon) in the morning.

If an incident is violent or threatening, the guest can be asked to leave or the police can be called (**911**) to remove the guest.

Follow Reporting Procedure

If There Is Conflict Between Guests?

Living closely with new people can be difficult. Most guests support and care for one another, but tensions may mount and conflicts can occur within families and between individuals or families. If intervention is required, the host should talk to both parties individually, and act as mediator.

If a conflict becomes physical, ask the guest to leave the premises.

Do not put yourself, another volunteer, or a guest in harm's way.

At no time should anyone, guests or hosts, be subjected to physical or verbal abuse.

If the guest does not leave, call the Shelter House Staff for advice or the police directly.

Follow Reporting Procedure

If Someone Wants To Smoke?

No smoking is permitted in or outside the Overflow Shelter. Once guests leave Shelter House, there is no smoking until they are returned to Shelter House in the morning. Once at the Overflow Shelter for the night, guests may not leave or go outside for any reason, not even to smoke.

If they do go out, they cannot re-enter (again, the "firm" part of fair, funny and firm")

Follow Reporting Procedure for anyone who leaves

If There Are Children Brought To The Overflow Shelter?

Children must be with their parent or guardian (Shelter House Rules for Guardians of Dependents, App. G) Parents are responsible for their children and are expected to bring all the supplies that will be needed for their child during the night.

Family groups will be kept together

If There Are Parenting Issues?

All parents have a wide range of parenting styles and skills. Some hosts may have difficulty observing what they consider (or what indeed is) poor parenting. Parents are responsible for their children.

If the host feels something is amiss in parenting, speak with the parent first. If that does not resolve the problem or if the hosts are uncomfortable addressing the situation, call Shelter House for advice.

If there is enough concern to talk with the parent, then notify the Shelter House Staff by documenting the situation on the Incident Report.

Follow Reporting Procedure and include a description by the adult volunteer who witnessed the situation

If There Is Suspected Or Witnessed Child Abuse?

Witnessed or suspected child abuse must be reported immediately to the Shelter House Staff for appropriate referral.

Consult with Shelter House if the situation cannot wait until the morning.

Follow Reporting Procedure

If Someone Comes On Their Own To The Overflow Shelter?

Do not admit anyone who has not come through the Shelter House vetting / approval process, even if it is cold and you have room—this is the “firm” part of “fair, funny and firm”!

Send the person to Shelter House to be approved (vetted)—you are not responsible for getting them to SH

Not one but two hosts should talk to someone who arrives without approval, to ensure that there is no misunderstanding that the person cannot come in without going to SH first

Follow Reporting Procedure

If Shelter House Wants To Send A Guest To The Overflow Shelter During The Night?

If Shelter House does approve someone during the night, the staff will first call to make sure that you have room and to tell you that someone is being sent over.

This new guest would arrive by cab directly from Shelter House with paperwork from Shelter House. Shelter House will make arrangements for cab payment.

Add this guest to your total guest count for the night on the nightly Host Log Sheet (App. C)

If A Host Wants To Invite A Guest To A Church Service?

Although many individuals volunteer as an expression of their faith, a discussion of personal beliefs with guests is inappropriate and should be avoided, unless the guest initiates the subject. Volunteers may then invite guests to worship services and may offer to provide transportation if the guest seems interested. This invitation may only be made in a very low-keyed manner, very straightforward, brief discussion, not pushed on the guest in any way and not repeated.

If I Am Concerned About Liability?

Per **Iowa Code 613.19. Personal liability:** “A director, officer, employee, member, trustee, or volunteer, of a nonprofit organization is not liable on the debts or obligations of the nonprofit organization and a director, officer, employee, member, trustee, or volunteer is not personally liable for a claim based upon an act or omission of the person performed in the discharge of the person's duties, except for acts or omissions which involve intentional misconduct or knowing violation of the law, or for a transaction from which the person derives an improper personal benefit. For purposes of this section, “nonprofit organization” includes an unincorporated club, association, or other similar entity, however named, if no part of its income or profit is distributed to its members, directors, or officers.”

In addition: Many congregations have liability insurance which covers acts and omissions of their members when engaged in official congregational activities.
The CRC also has personal injury and property damage liability insurance.
If you have other questions, you may want to check with your insurance agent or attorney.

If there Is Bad Weather?

Listen to the weather radio, found in the supply box

Decisions related to winter weather should be made by the SH Staff, the Site Coordinator and/or Hosts.

Laundry

Bedding is Laundered on Wednesday and Sunday

Laundry will be sorted on Tuesday and Saturday evenings by the Overflow Shelter Coordinator, CJ Cash, 319-541-1475 cj.vistajc@gmail.com.

Spray bleach any used pillows and return to the bin of clean pillows

Procedure for Returning Clean Laundry to the Site

Return laundry in clean, new plastic bags.

Clean laundry should never be placed back in the dirty laundry bags or trash can

Immediately sort the clean bedding into the bins designated for clean pillowcases, clean blankets, etc

If there is a trash can used for dirty laundry, before a new trash bag is inserted in the garbage can:

Spray the container thoroughly with bleach spray.

Allow to dry.

Line garbage can with a clean plastic bag.