

POSITION DESCRIPTION: Behavioral Health Specialist (ICS-204 Form)

Position: Behavioral Health Specialist	Section: Emergency Support Function 6
Position Supervisor:	
Work Location: Severe Weather Shelter or Center	
Shifts: See Sign Up Genius links	
24 Hour Shelter Contact: [24 Hour Shelter Phone - Site Specific]	ESF-6 Sheltering Lead: 503-988-8937

Unit Overview: The Emergency Support Function (ESF)#6 is responsible for coordinating all mass care and sheltering operations during a Multnomah County emergency response.

Position Responsibilities: Behavioral Health staff help to provide a safe and supportive environment for guests and staff at [Disaster Resource Center \(DRC\)](#). Behavioral Health staff should be well versed in trauma-informed care, de-escalation techniques, and the ability to perform tasks and provide guidance in these areas.

Working Environment:

Site- and shift- specific information will be provided in 'Know Before You Go' email from eoc.adminsection@multco.us ahead of each shift.

1. This location will provide adequate ventilation and hand hygiene supplies
2. We will monitor capacity during the days we are open and determine if additional action is needed.
3. Make every attempt to ensure this site is staffed sufficiently to appropriately handle the guest capacity. If you feel that staffing levels are not appropriate to maintain operations - notify the PIC (Person In Charge).
4. Assignment may include bending, sweeping/mopping/emptying trash, walking, standing for extended periods, and carrying less than 20 pounds (groceries/paper goods, sleeping pads, bins and other needed supplies).
5. Some guests may have chronic illnesses, and/or injuries and/or be experiencing ongoing mental health or substance use challenges.
 - a. For physical health concerns - if Medical Reserve Corps staff are on site, please consult them. If they are not onsite and it is an emergency, contact 911.
 - b. For support with behavioral health or substance use challenges - if Behavioral Staff are onsite, please consult them. **Call 503-988-4888 for the Multnomah County Behavioral Health Call Center (saved in PIC 24 hour phone).**
6. Pets may be present (potential allergens, fleas).
7. Be aware that loud discussion can escalate situations because of the need to talk over the sound.
 - a. Staff can also carry around a notebook, in case written communication is needed with other staff and guests.
8. Meals, snacks, and beverages will be provided as appropriate.
9. Personal Protective Equipment including face masks, nitrile gloves, puncture-resistant gloves, and fluid-impermeable gowns will be available.
10. Masks are not required for staff or guests but will be provided and all are welcome to wear them.

Ethics & Philosophy

1. Be patient, kind, and a good listener.
2. Create welcoming spaces and interrupt oppression.
 - a. Ensure the identity of the individual has no effect on the services we provide
3. Use supportive, person-first language and body language. Please be mindful of how your behavior can escalate or de-escalate any situation. Individuals staying in the shelter should be referred to as **guests**.
4. Use compassion, acceptance, and mutual respect.

Understanding [Vision, Mission, Values and Goals of Multnomah County](#)

Understanding [Core Concepts of Assertive Engagement](#) for working with guests and other staff

Understanding of [Equity Lens](#) and how to use it when planning, developing or evaluating a policy, program or decisions

Understanding how to inclusively [Lead with Race](#) for all operations and activities and applying a racial equity framework

Qualifications

1. Preference for background working with individuals who are experiencing homelessness
2. Familiarity with Street Roots ([resource guide](#)) and 2-1-1 Info (211 [website here](#))
3. Other information, including a Training Guide can be found on the [Emergency Shelter Roles & Requirements webpage](#).
4. Meets one of the following credentials, certifications, or licenses:
 - a. Mental Health and Addiction Certification Board of Oregon (MHACBO) requirement as Qualified Mental Health Associate (QMHA) or Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP). (Actual registration with MHACBO is not required, staff must meet requirements)
 - b. OR be [National Certified Peer Specialist](#) OR [Certified Community Health Worker](#)
 - c. OR MHACBO [CADC I](#) (Certified Alcohol Drug Counselor)
 - d. OR is a member of the Trauma Intervention Program, Northwest (TIPNW)
 - e. Please note, this includes anyone with Bachelor's or Master's Degree in behavioral health related studies

Required

All Shelter roles listed require Bloodborne Pathogens training

For Multnomah County Employees

[Bloodborne Pathogens Training for Emergency Shelters Workday Module](#)

For Non-County Staff

[Bloodborne Pathogens for Emergency Shelters PDF](#)

[Disaster Resource Center Online Videos](#) (Approximately 3 hours)

If you are unable to watch the videos in this playlist, at minimum please watch the 10-minute [Portland NET/TPI Intro to Warming Shelters](#) (10 minutes)

[Naloxone Training](#) (30-45 minutes)

Emotional/Psychological First Aid Training (Approx 6 hours to complete, free and online)

- [Option 1](#) - John Hopkins University
- [Option 2](#) - The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, *available in Spanish*

Please note Qualifications noted above

Recommended

Basic Adult First Aid/CPR/AED Training

[De-Escalation Training](#) (Approximately 3-4 hours)

Safety Message

1. Events that may lead to conflict:
 - a. Any loud or escalating noise inside or around the facility
 - b. Touching a guest or a guest's items without permission - NEVER attempt to restrain or physically engage with a guest
 - c. Surprising a guest from behind
 - d. Waking a guest abruptly
2. Do not accept or serve home-prepared foods.
3. During general clean-up be mindful of sharp objects:
 - a. Wear nitrile gloves underneath **puncture resistant gloves** when emptying trash
 - i. If you are unable to find puncture resistant gloves, ask the PIC to request these from ESF-6 Sheltering Lead immediately
 - b. Empty trash frequently so that bags are not completely full and difficult to pick up.
 - c. If an incident occurs with a sharp object, follow the Sharps Protocol found [here](#).
4. If any emergency occurs, contact 911 as appropriate, and notify the PIC
 - a. Bring a flashlight when greeting first responders.
 - b. Guide responders into the space to guest.
 - c. Document your observations and role related to the incident.
5. Call 911 if needed, reference [Safety and Emergency Response Handbook](#) and follow Incident Reporting and Protocol - Found [here](#)
6. Ensure safety protocols are followed:
 - a. Work with staff members throughout each shift to provide friendly reminders that they should either take a break to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer regularly.
 - b. Work throughout each shift to ensure there are enough cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment
 - i. If there is a shortage, alert your Person in Charge promptly
- c. Ensure that surfaces and frequently touched items/areas are cleaned regularly.
- d. In the event of any exposure, notify the PIC and seek emergency medical attention immediately. If you're a Multnomah County employee, contact the [24-7 Nurse Triage Care Line](#).
- e. Alert the PIC of potential biohazards.
 - a. Do not interact with potential biohazards if you have not completed the required Bloodborne Pathogen training.
 - b. If sharps are found in the shelter, tools are available to handle sharps and move them into containers.
 - c. In the event that blood or other potentially infectious material (OPIM) are observed on surfaces, alert the PIC and the affected area should be cordoned off.
 - i. PIC will initiate the process to clean the affected area and request contractor support if needed.

Behavioral Health Staff Responsibilities

1. Provide emotional/psychological first aid for all staff and guests as needed.
2. Check in with the PIC (Person In Charge) to learn about ongoing challenges with guests and assist them in processing any feelings they may be experiencing.
3. Support services provided at these locations will be focused on:
 - a. providing trauma informed care to guests experiencing behavioral health crisis

- b. Provide active listening and engagement
- c. Provide psycho-education
- d. Validate common reactions and experiences
- e. In collaboration with the Call Center (**503-988-4888**), screen and refer individuals who may need more in-depth crisis support.
- f. Counsel on disaster related issues
- g. Behavioral Health staff are encouraged to initiate contact with guests to offer support as guests may not reach out for help.
 - i. Some ways to initiate contact:
 - ii. offering snacks, water, asking to join in activities,
 - iii. ask to join them (while maintaining appropriate distance) while they are at the charging table, etc.
- h. Behavioral Health staff are also encouraged to check in with staff and offer support, if there are no guests to engage.
- i. If there are no guests present or interested in engaging, staff can also support the cleaning and/or sanitizing of common areas in the DRC and other general cleaning.

General Position Duties

1. Arrive on time and stay for the duration of your shift.
2. Familiarize yourself with the facility. This will help you provide directions to guests and assist with any cleanup or other tasks that may come up during your shift.
3. Maintain situational awareness. Notify the PIC of any concerns as soon as they are discovered.
4. Check in with the PIC prior to leaving the facility even for brief periods of time. Remember to Sign in and out (prior to leaving the shelter, even for brief periods of time)
5. Obtain and use your personal protective equipment (PPE):
 - a. Masks can be utilized when in the presence of others. Extras are available on site for staff who need them.
 - b. Please keep at least one pair of nitrile gloves with you in case they are needed.
6. Attend the incoming, and outgoing, shift briefing with the PIC. The shift briefing should cover the following:
 - a. Incoming
 - i. Personal introductions for familiarity with co-workers
 - ii. Phone number for PIC
 - iii. Operational or site updates
 - iv. Concerns or critical information from previous shifts
 - v. Review cleaning policies/processes
 - b. Outgoing
 - i. Review the shift to obtain information that should be shared with incoming/future shifts
 - ii. Ensure any concerns or questions are addressed from shift operations
 - iii. Save time for questions from staff
7. Ensure that the needs of the guests are being met
8. Problem-solve as issues arise and elevate issues to the PIC as needed
9. Notify the PIC if you observe any low supply inventory, support the equitable distribution of supplies for guests (refer to [Distribution Guidance](#))
10. Inform the PIC if any property damage is observed.
11. Work in a team environment with other staff and a variety of outreach workers, first responders, volunteers, and others who may come to the shelter to provide assistance.
12. Assist in set-up, and tear-down the space:
 - a. Setup the shelter space during the first shift, following guidance provided by PIC (if needed).
 - b. Demobilize the shelter space during the final shift, following guidance provided by PIC (if needed).
 - i. NOTE: Demobilization does not include collecting used blankets or guest belongings.

Special Instructions

1. Bring snacks and drink plenty of fluids.
2. You may need to be outside and/or work with cleaning products (including bleach solution) during your shift, please dress accordingly. **Close toed shoes are required.** Additional recommendations:
 - a. Comfortable clothing that allows for movement
 - b. Durable clothing that you don't mind getting dirty
 - c. Layers (for example, short sleeves with a jacket)
 - d. Possession of a personal Cellular phone is recommended, though sharing use with guests is highly discouraged.

Staff are permitted to dress in a way that corresponds with their gender identity and/or gender expression.

3. It is important to talk to someone regarding any response related to stress. The following are tips to limit stress:
 - a. Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing by healthy eating, rest, exercise, and relaxation.
 - b. Talk with someone about your feelings - anger, sorrow, and other emotions - even though it may be difficult.
 - c. Call the **Multnomah County Behavioral Health Call Center** 503-988-4888
4. Maintain appropriate boundaries with guests,
 - a. do not offer to help guests outside of the facility setting (personal gifts, rides in your car, stays on your couch, etc.)
 - b. Intimate (sexual) relationships with guests are not allowed
5. Respect the privacy of other staff and guests - **unless it is a safety issue**, then report it to PIC (if it is an emergency, call 911)
6. Photography is not allowed in the site unless coordinated through Communications

Equipment & Supply Needed: Possession of a personal cell phone during shift is recommended, though sharing use with guests is highly discouraged. Please provide this cell phone number when registering for a shift, to ensure timely communication when needed.

Directions and Parking Information (include photos of entrance, Google map): Site- and shift-specific information will be provided in 'Know Before You Go' email from eoc.adminsection@multco.us ahead of each shift.

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Date: 12/17/24