

## HOOD RIVER SHELTER SERVICES (HRSS) 2021-2022 Operations FAQ Sheet

### **Overview**

The mission of Hood River Shelter Services (HRSS) is to compassionately provide a safe place to meet the basic needs of those without shelter during the winter. HRSS has operated a winter Warming Shelter in the community for the past eleven years.

### **Where will the Warming Shelter be located this winter?**

Shelter operations will be based around Pallet Shelter individual shelter units located at 1733 Oak Street. These units will be supported by services mobilized on site including meals, clothing, bedding, toiletries, and hygiene services. Social, health, and housing professionals will also provide services onsite.

### **What is a Pallet Shelter?**

Pallet Shelters are durable, portable, and dignified emergency shelter units. Made of highly durable aluminum and composite materials, they defy the elements and create a comfortable living space (see accompanying Pallet Shelter brochure).

### **When is the Warming Shelter open?**

The shelter is open during winter from mid-November through mid-March.

### **How many people will be staying at the Warming Shelter?**

HRSS owns 13 shelter units, for a maximum occupancy of 26 shelter guests. Shelter staff will be on site during all hours of shelter operations.

### **Will there be individuals staying on site throughout the day?**

This year the Shelter will be open 24 hours a day from mid-November through mid-March. These expanded hours will provide a daytime option for our shelter guests as well as provide for expanded connections with social, health, and housing services. Transportation by Columbia Area Transit (CAT) will allow shelter guests to arrive and depart the shelter.

### **How will HRSS comply with COVID health and safety guidelines?**

HRSS staff operate the Shelter under the direction of COVID guidelines for shelter services from the Center for Disease Control and the Oregon Health Authority. Shelter operating procedures including guest check-in, cleaning and sanitization are reviewed by the Hood River County Health Department.

### **How will the area be monitored?**

HRSS staff will be on site during all hours of shelter operations. Video surveillance may also be mobilized to provide enhanced monitoring and security.

### **Do the Pallet Shelters have smoke detectors and will there be fire extinguishers on site?**

Each Shelter has a hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide detector and a fire extinguisher. HRSS is in communication with Hood River Fire/EMS and will ensure Fire Department approval prior to opening.

### **How does HRSS plan for safety and security of the site and surrounding area?**

When a guest arrives for the first time during the winter, a staff member reviews the Guest Agreement with them and the guest signs before staying their first night at the Shelter. Shelter Operating Procedures and Guest Agreement will clearly outline the boundaries of the Shelter as well as other site-specific considerations. Clear guidelines will be incorporated into the Guest Agreement, including respecting private property in the neighborhood surrounding the Shelter. If and when agreements are broken, HRSS staff work with guests to revisit the agreements and arrive at consequences until agreements can be met.

### **Will there be bathrooms and showers onsite?**

Onsite there will be mobile bathrooms, hand washing stations, and shower and laundry services.

### **Which utilities or services will the Pallet Shelters be connected to?**

The Pallet Shelters will be connected to electric service only. This is for operations of wall-mounted heaters that are installed in each unit. There is also a hardwired smoke and carbon monoxide unit mounted in each shelter unit. Garbage and internet service will also be provided onsite.

### **How will meals be provided?**

HRSS will provide three meals a day on site at the shelter. HRSS is a partner agency with the Columbia Gorge Food Bank and provides Shelter meals with support from the food bank & local restaurants.

***What happens if it snows? Are the shelters comfortable enough in bitter cold?***

HRSS has snow removal procedures incorporated into the site maintenance plan. The Shelters are each equipped with a wall-mounted heater, stay comfortable even in severe winter weather, and are rated to comply with local snow and wind load ratings.

***Where will a person park when they are staying at the shelter?***

Some shelter guests may arrive at the shelter in their own vehicles. Our site plan includes an off-street parking area for shelter guests, staff and volunteers.

***What organizations partner with Hood River Shelter Services to support the Warming Shelter?***

HRSS is supported by many community partners, including but not limited to The City of Hood River, Hood River County, Hood River County Health Department, Providence Memorial Hospital, Mid-Columbia Community Action Council, Columbia Area Transit, Columbia Gorge Food Bank, Columbia Gorge Health Council, Bridges to Health Pathways, One Community Health, Hood River County Library District, Mid-Columbia Center for Living, Gorge Ecumenical Ministries, and local faith communities, businesses, restaurants, and law enforcement.

***Where can I learn more information?***

Website: [www.hoodrivercares.org](http://www.hoodrivercares.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/gorgecares/](https://www.facebook.com/gorgecares/)

***Who can I reach out to with my questions or concerns?***

HRSS staff: [info@hoodrivercares.org](mailto:info@hoodrivercares.org)

**STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FROM COMMUNITY PARTNERS OF HRSS**

"The Sheriff's Office has seen first-hand the benefit that HRSS brings to our community. As a small county, we often struggle with lack of resources or sustaining the resource we do have. HRSS is a critical partner agency for our public safety efforts, providing a resource to a population that is often at risk."

Sheriff Matt English, Hood River County Sheriff's Office

"The City of Hood River recognizes that Hood River Shelter Services (HRSS) provides an important service during the winter months and that, by providing shelter to community members with unstable housing, HRSS provides a benefit to the City as a whole."

Mayor Kate McBride, City of Hood River

"There is a need for expanded services for the unsheltered year-round in partnership with the wider community. As part of Hood River Valley Christian Church, my experience in partnering with Hood River Shelter Services was very positive. The shelter guests were very expressive of appreciation. My interaction with staff and volunteers was all positive as attitudes and actions toward guests were respectful and helpful."

Mary Anne Parrott, Member, Hood River Valley Christian Church, Shelter Location Winter of 2020-2021