

County of Santa Clara
Office of Supportive Housing
3180 Newberry Dr. Suite 150
San Jose, CA 95118
(408) 793-0550 Main
(408) 266-0124 Fax



Pilot Expansion of North County Shelter Program Frequently Asked Questions

April 17, 2018

Where is the shelter?

The shelter is located at 999 Hamlin Court, Sunnyvale, near the intersection of Mathilda and Ross Avenues.

How long has the Hamlin Court property served as a shelter?

The County of Santa Clara purchased the property in late 2015. In the fall of 2016, the County Office of Supportive Housing began using a portion of the property as an emergency shelter during the cold weather season. The Sunnyvale Armory was the site of the shelter for over 25 years.

Why is the County piloting the expansion of a year-round shelter?

The 2017 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey showed the number of homeless individuals and families in Northern Santa Clara County rose by 19% since 2015. In the current cold weather season, more than 680 individuals and 57 families were referred to the Sunnyvale Shelter, yet only 38% of the referrals could be accommodated. Additional beds and an expansion to year-round operations will enable the County to provide much-needed shelter to additional homeless individuals and families. Community members and those experiencing homelessness spoke of the lack of shelter in North County.

How many beds does the shelter have?

The shelter houses up to 125 persons, including families. Males, females, and families each have a separate section and on-site security for the safety of all present in the shelter. The permanent expansion of the shelter would include facility improvements in order to operate during the summer season and an additional 50 beds.

What are the hours of operation?

The shelter operates from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 a.m. Quiet hours are from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Shelter staff are on site from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. and Outreach staff are on site or in the local neighborhood during the daytime. Clients may come on site beginning at 4:00 p.m.

What are the requirements for referral and staying at the shelter?

Men and women wishing to stay at the shelter must be 1) literally homeless, 2) claim residency (where one stays the most time or one's last permanent residence) in one of the following areas: Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, or Sunnyvale. If occupancy permits, residents from other areas in the County can be accepted, 3) referred from one of 11 North County providers such as: Sunnyvale Community Services, Lifemoves, Our Daily Bread, CSA of Mountain View, and Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

Which agency manages the shelter and provides services there?

HomeFirst Services of Santa Clara County manages the shelter operations, referral process coordination, outreach, basic needs services and light case management. Medical care, medical social work, employment workshops, benefits enrollment, and other services are provided by other agencies, community groups, church groups, and volunteers.

What types of measures are in place to prevent loitering and/or trespassing on private properties in the vicinity and to prevent crimes (theft, drug use/sales, harassment, violence, etc.) from occurring in surrounding neighborhoods/ parks?

At intake, on-site staff inform the clients about the shelter rules. Staff oversee the clients as they arrive and leave the shelter. Shelter staff and security patrol the neighborhood during the day to monitor and prevent clients from loitering. Any inappropriate behavior will be addressed. If necessary, the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety will be contacted to address any problems.

Is the onsite parking adequate for shelter staff, volunteers, and shelter clients who have cars? Yes

How many spaces will be provided? 51

How many staff and volunteers are expected on a daily basis? Up to 20

What is the relationship between the City of Sunnyvale and the County on this project? Does the City decide if this is approved or can the County take action on its own?

This is a County project. The County engages the City as appropriate and keeps the City staff informed on all developments.

What type of traffic safety measures/controls are in place to avoid vehicle/ pedestrian conflicts during peak hours of client arrival/departure?

Site provides shuttle services mornings and evenings. On-site staff oversee the clients as they arrive and leave the shelter. Staff monitor client behavior at the nearby bus stops. Staff also patrol the nearby neighborhood to ensure that clients do not loiter and monitor for any inappropriate behavior.

Will other services/vehicles, like the County mobile health unit (dental van) and/or any mobile shower and mobile laundry trucks be coming to the site?

The County mobile medical van makes weekly visits to the County Winter Shelter site and clients from this site can access those services. The shelter occupants will access showers and laundry in the facility.

What is the County's budget for operating this shelter during the pilot expansion?

The cost to operate the shelter for 12 consecutive months is approximately \$2 million. This estimation includes the start-up costs related to operating a year-round shelter. The current pilot expansion period will be used to determine the true operating budget.

Where do I get more information regarding the shelter?

Any questions or concerns regarding the North County Shelter Program should be referred to Michelle Covert, Homeless Concerns Coordinator with the County Office of Supportive Housing at 408-793-0501 or email Michelle.Covert@hhs.sccgov.org.

Who can neighbors call 24/7 if there are urgent concerns or problems regarding the facility and/or its clients?

The site 24-hour phone number is 408-497-1247. The County staff person's # is 408-878-5298.