City of Charlottesville Homelessness Response and Emergency Shelter Operations

Overview and Expectations

The City of Charlottesville recognizes that opening a temporary emergency shelter raises important questions for neighboring businesses and property owners. This information is intended to provide an overview of how the shelter is expected to operate, the organizations involved, and the measures being taken to support both shelter guests and the surrounding business community. Our goal is to communicate openly, establish clear expectations, and continue engaging with businesses as planning and implementation move forward.

About Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS)

The City is working to finalize an agreement with Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS) to operate the temporary emergency shelter at 2000 Holiday Drive, pending City Council approval of funding and the completion of all necessary registrations and approvals.

Founded in 1984, CASS is one of the nation's most experienced emergency shelter providers and the largest and longest-serving homeless emergency shelter organization in Arizona. For more than 40 years, CASS has operated low-barrier emergency shelters and connected thousands of people each year with housing, healthcare, employment assistance, case management, and other support services.

CASS operates emergency shelter programs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, serving single adults, families, veterans, and older adults. In Fiscal Year 2025, the organization provided nearly 286,000 nights of shelter, served approximately 3,700 people, and helped more than 450 individuals move into permanent housing.

The City is pursuing an agreement with CASS because of its demonstrated experience operating emergency shelters at scale, its emphasis on professional shelter management and case management, and its commitment to helping people transition toward permanent housing. If finalized, CASS's approach aligns with the City's goal of providing a safe, professionally managed temporary shelter while connecting individuals with the services they need to achieve long-term stability.

Working Within Charlottesville's Homeless Response System

If finalized, the temporary emergency shelter would not operate independently. CASS would work alongside the City of Charlottesville and our existing regional homeless response system, led by the Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH), the Continuum of Care (CoC) Lead Agency for the Charlottesville region.

As the Continuum of Care Lead Agency, BRACH coordinates the network of organizations that work together to prevent and reduce homelessness across Charlottesville and the surrounding region. This includes coordinating housing resources, maintaining the Homeless Management Information

System (HMIS), supporting coordinated entry, and bringing service providers together to ensure individuals are connected to the most appropriate housing and support services.

The shelter would also operate in coordination with local organizations including PACEM, The Haven, Region Ten, UVA Health, Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital, and other community partners already serving individuals experiencing homelessness. CASS would provide day-to-day shelter operations while working within this established network to connect guests with housing navigation, healthcare, behavioral health services, employment assistance, benefits enrollment, and other supports that help people move toward permanent housing.

Next Steps

The City recognizes the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with the surrounding business community. As planning progresses, we will continue providing updates, sharing operational information, and maintaining open lines of communication. Our commitment is to operate a safe, professionally managed facility while remaining responsive to the needs of neighboring businesses.

Resources

Connect Charlottesville

Continuum of Care Lead Agency

Central Arizona Shelter Services