



# **Beds for Freezing Nights Operating Procedures**

**“Warm hearts, warm beds on freezing nights”**

Our mission: To provide a safe, warm place to sleep for those who wish to come inside during the coldest nights of the year.

**Revised 1/2023**

## **Introduction**

Cottage Grove's Beds for Freezing Nights (**BFN**) is an Oregon and IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. This program was founded by a coalition of community members representing social service nonprofit agencies, community organizations, Cottage Grove government officials, and individuals from various faith communities who came together to ensure that unsheltered people have shelter during extreme wintry weather. Day-to-day operations of the warming center are handled by various committees under the direction of the Board of Directors.

Unsheltered persons, especially those living with medical, mental health, or addiction issues are even more vulnerable in times of inclement weather. Our purpose is to ensure as best we can that all those who need and want shelter in extreme wintry weather have it. Everyone who is willing to follow our guest agreement is welcome.

This season will be different because the board members and any volunteers will be signed up as Community Sharing volunteers to operate under its liability insurance. BFN program leadership will also be volunteers yet referred to as staff in this document.

The normal warming shelter program **operates from November 15 to March 31** of the following year and seeks to open our shelter space on nights when the *average overnight* temperature falls to **29 degrees F. or below for six hours or more**. We activate on the recommendation of our Weather Tracker using multiple weather forecasting sources and in consultation with other BFN staff.

The goal of these Operating Procedures is to provide warm beds on freezing nights and to protect the health and safety of all involved – both guests and volunteer staff. To achieve this goal:

- We have trained staff on site during all hours of operation, with clearly defined roles and with a single on-site person, designated as the Site Lead, who will make final decisions about all operational issues, including the removal of non-compliant guests if that becomes necessary. We have additional crisis management personnel on call during all hours of operation.
- Staff have clear guidelines for all aspects of operations, including set up and use of space, check-in procedures for guests, securing of personal belongings, food service, health, and safety issues, caring for persons in physical or mental distress, and emergency procedures.
- We have a minimum of two staff members on site always. We have at least one certified staff member (site lead) on site always. Certified staff are volunteers who have completed at least one BFN volunteer training and have passed a criminal history background check. Ideally one has completed a Basic First Aid and CPR training prior to serving as a Site Lead. Site Leads must be certified.
- Our guest agreement contract clearly states rules and expectations for use of facilities. There are clear consequences for failure to abide by the agreement, up to and including expulsion from the shelter in extreme cases.
- **Minors under 18-years-old not are not allowed to stay in the BFN warming center.** If minor is not accompanied by a responsible adult, the minor will be referred to Station 7 in Eugene as the Looking Glass Rural Program Home will not be available by phone after 5:00 pm. If the minor is interested in going to Station 7, call the 24-hour Crisis Line phone number and follow directions to assist the minor until an authorized person arrives to take the minor to Station 7. This location can connect them with programs and services.

(For unaccompanied minors call Station 7's 24-hour Crisis Line at **1-888-689-3111**)

- The First Presbyterian Church allows dogs and cats only.
- Service animals that are fully under the control of their owner(s), are not posing any threat to other people or animals and are not disruptive to the operations of the shelter can accompany their owners into the warming centers. If the service animal does not meet the above behavioral norms, the owner and animal will be asked to leave the warming center until the animal can be brought into compliance. Guests whose service animals are obviously suffering from any health condition, including flea infestation or mange, may be required to sleep in an area separated from other guests for health and sanitation reasons.

## **1. Organizational Philosophy and Structure**

Beds for Freezing Nights (BFN) is non-sectarian and will comply with Community Sharing’s program guidelines. Through its mission of providing “warm hearts, warm beds on freezing nights,” BFN seeks to build bridges of understanding and mutual respect between those who have regular shelter and those who do not. It seeks *not* to be a top-down dispensary of charity from the supposed “haves” to the supposed “have-nots,” but a means to recognize and celebrate our common humanity.

BFN recognizes that guests may be from many and varied religious, socioeconomic, and educational backgrounds. Accordingly, attempts to change individual belief patterns or perspectives – although well-meaning – may be offensive to guests. Volunteers sign an agreement not to use Beds for Freezing Nights as an opportunity to pressure or attempt to manipulate guests. On a person-to-person basis, however, story-sharing, and personal interaction between volunteers and guests is not only strongly encouraged – it is essential to BFN’s mission of providing warm hearts, as well as warm beds, to those in need.

During the 2022-23 warming shelter season, all aspects of BFN operations will be managed by experienced BFN leadership within Community Sharing’s committee and volunteer structure. Day-to-day operations of the warming center are run by a committee with a coordinator answerable to the committee leadership under the oversight of Community Sharing. Chairpersons of these committees are referred to as “coordinators.” The primary operational committees of BFN are as follows:

**Administration & Finance Committee Coordinator - Ruth Linoz (541) 315-5276**

**Email: [rlinoz@southlanetransit.com](mailto:rlinoz@southlanetransit.com)**

Leads the production and review of official BFN operational documents (e.g., Operating Procedures manual, including pertinent forms) pursuant to BFN/Community Sharing temporary collaboration. Serves as the liaison with warming center host and government officials. Receives and records donations of money; maintains donor database; and assures that annual legal filings are timely. The Treasurer of the nonprofit corporation is a member of this committee.

**Fundraising Committee Coordinator– Ruth Linoz (541) 315-5276 [rlinoz@southlanetransit.com](mailto:rlinoz@southlanetransit.com)**

Develops and directs fundraising events in collaboration with Community Sharing for the benefit of the continuation of the warming shelter program. Funds will be directed to BFN and supply donations to Community Sharing for 2022-23 season. Works with Administration and Finance Committee to develop draft budgets for presentation to the committee.

**Logistics Committee Coordinator – Steve Nisewander (541) 954-4841 cell**

**Email: [nisewander53@gmail.com](mailto:nisewander53@gmail.com)**

Responsible for overall operations of all sites, including obtaining/maintaining supplies, establishing procedures for guest check-in and check-out, making sure that all facilities are in good working order, and that each site will have appropriate staffing. In conjunction with the other coordinators, sets in motion 48- and 24-hour activation process when a wintry weather event happens. Serves as the liaison with site hosts and emergency personnel. The **Logistics Coordinator** and **Scheduling Coordinator** work closely with the **Weather Tracker**, who is responsible for signaling when a wintry weather event is likely to cause an activation.

**Volunteer Coordinator – Michelle Thurston (541) 953-7163 [Thurston.mn@gmail.com](mailto:Thurston.mn@gmail.com)**

Maintains a current and accurate roster of all volunteers, certified and regular, for use in staffing sites. Helps a volunteer through the process steps and tracks progression until completion to determine who is certified or not. Coordinates background checks with Community Sharing. Arranges training on BFN procedures and guest management. Develops and distributes to volunteers a volunteer manual containing information pertinent to BFN.

**Weather Tracker: Coordinator- Mike Fleck (541) 913-9040 cell [mike@communitysharing.com](mailto:mike@communitysharing.com)**

Monitors numerous weather tracking websites and services to predict when a weather event may precipitate the need to open the center. Confers with the **Scheduling Coordinator** and **Logistics**. Continues to monitor predicted nighttime temperatures throughout the notification period and through an activation. Backup is **Don Strahan (541) 913-4470 [donstrahan@yahoo.com](mailto:donstrahan@yahoo.com)**

**Scheduling Coordinator: Coordinator – Johanna Zee (805) 421-6027 [johannazee@gmail.com](mailto:johannazee@gmail.com)**

Maintains database/list of all BFN volunteers as a “clearinghouse” for coalition member e-mails and notifications. Assures that communications are in place between Scheduling Coordinator and eligible volunteers to fill shifts during activation events; serves as initial contact for 72-hour activation notification from Egan Warming Center. Works closely with the **Weather Tracker** and **Logistics Coordinator** in initiating an activation and with the **Media Coordinator** who assures that notice of activations is provided to the press and public at large.

**Media Committee Coordinator – James Markus (541) 942-2373 [Email: pastorjim@tlccg.com](mailto:pastorjim@tlccg.com)**

Disseminates information on behalf of BFN to media sources, including newspapers, radio, and organizational newsletters, with input from committee leadership. In conjunction with Logistics and Volunteer Coordinators, provides notification of activation events to local media and to the public. The Secretary of the corporation either chairs, or is a member of, this committee.

## **2. Activation Procedures**

We follow the three-phase activation protocol of the Egan Warming Center in Eugene, which sends out its first alert whenever the temperature is predicted to drop to 29° F. The **Scheduling Coordinator** is on the Egan e-mail alert list and receives notification of proposed activations. Activations may be for multiple nights in a row.

*Please note that at times, weather systems move too rapidly to permit strict adherence to this protocol. In such cases, it may be impossible to provide 72-hour notice, and all notice periods are compressed.*

### **72-Hour Alert**

- Weather is monitored by the **BFN Weather Tracker**. The **Weather Tracker**, considering any warnings from any BFN volunteers or coordinators that extreme weather conditions are forecast, monitors numerous weather websites including KEZI, Accuweather, NOAA Radar, and others. If

the **Weather Tracker** determines that an extreme weather event is likely to happen, the **Weather Tracker** informs the **Scheduling Coordinator** that the warming center should activate.

- The **Scheduling Coordinator** then confers with the **Logistics Coordinator** to identify which host site is available for activation.
- After consulting, the **Scheduling Coordinator** issues a 72-Hour Alert to all volunteers that the warming center is on standby for an activation with a request to sign up for shifts. Volunteers will be asked to confirm their availability in the event the center does open.
- To avoid confusion, information is NOT released to the public or media at this point, since Oregon weather is notoriously changeable.
- The **Community Sharing website manager** also receives a 72- hour alert notification from the **Scheduling Coordinator** to update the BFN website of a possible BFN activation and continues to update the status as needed.

#### **48-Hour Alert**

- The **Scheduling Coordinator** arranges staffing of the site(s), including designation of one person each shift who will serve as the Site Lead, and assures that each shift has the required number of staff persons on duty.
- The **Scheduling Coordinator** attempts to ensure that each shift has one male and one female on site volunteer for each shift.
- The **Scheduling Coordinator** provides a courtesy notice to the **Media Coordinator** that activation is likely.
- The **Logistics Coordinator** confirms that the site is ready for use and that adequate supplies are on hand.

#### **24-Hour Alert**

- **Weather Tracker** provides the group with weather status for proposed activation date.
- **By 3:00 PM**, the **Scheduling Coordinator** confirms with the **Logistics Coordinator** before issuing the 24-Hour alert that BFN is activating.
- After confirmation, the **Scheduling Coordinator** issues an official 24-hour alert to the **Media Coordinator**, volunteers, and the **BFN website manager** that BFN will be opening at 7:00 p.m. the following day.
- The **Media Coordinator** assures that a flyer with information about warming center activations has been posted at designated areas in Cottage Grove and notifies the City of Cottage Grove, police department, fire and rescue service and selected warming site that BFN will be opening at 7:00 pm the following day. All BFN Committee Coordinators will be copied with the 24-hour activation notice.
- The **Media Coordinator** also issues notices/articles to appropriate media outlets about the opening of the center, including notifying Community Sharing so that their public messages can be modified to reflect the opening of the center.
- The **Scheduling Coordinator** sends a Volunteer Staffing Log to the **Logistics Coordinator or designated person** as a reference for the nights of the activation.
- The **Logistics Coordinator or designated person** inserts a Volunteer Staffing Log into the Operations Manual notebook prior to the opening of the center on the nights of activation.

### 3. Basic Shelter Schedule

There are three shifts each day of each activation event. Volunteers for shifts should plan to arrive about 10-15 minutes before the start of their shifts (those arrival times are included below).

<b>Setup Crew:</b>	6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
<b>Shift ONE:</b>	6:45 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
<b>Shift TWO:</b>	10:45 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.
<b>Shift THREE:</b>	2:45 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.
<b>Breakdown Crew:</b>	6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.
<b>Laundry Crew:</b>	7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (approx.)

#### **5:30 PM Logistics Coordinator delivers supplies**

Supplies not stored onsite are picked up, delivered to, and unloaded at the warming site. The **Logistics Coordinator** takes pictures of the rooms and areas to be used for reference when the **Breakdown Crew** returns the spaces to its original arrangement. Locate the BFN cellphone & charger and ensures that it is turned on upon arrival at the warming site. The cellphone is given to the Shift One volunteers as soon as they arrive.

#### **6:00 PM Setup Crew arrives (optional for some activations or if volunteers sign up)**

Assist the Logistics Coordinator in getting check-in areas, sleeping areas and signage placed according to the map for the warming center site. At First Presbyterian Church, a few dog kennels stored in the outside shed will be setup in a hallway.

#### **6:45 PM All Shift One volunteers report**

A Shift One volunteer immediately checks for messages on cellphone. To turn the phone on: press the red "End" key and hold until the main screen appears. To check for messages: press and hold the "1" key and follow the instructions. If there is no message nothing else is required.

Shift One volunteers complete setup per activation checklist for each warming site (located inside the marked Operations Manual notebook).

**Setup Crew will place *only a few cots* unless there is clearly a demand for more.** Additional cots can be added as needed if more guests arrive. Volunteers place sheets over cots, place pillowcase on pillow, issue one blanket and write guest's name on 3 x 5 card to be placed on floor by cot. Men and women guests will sleep in separate areas.

#### **7:00 PM Shelter Opens for guests**

Check-in guests and distribute food bag to each guest. Mark sign-in sheet receipt of food bag.

\*\*\* If a dog stays in a kennel, a volunteer needs to contact Alison Center (541) 515-2635 right away so she knows that a kennel needs to be cleaned in the morning.

#### **IMPORTANT: If no guest(s) sign in by 10:00 p.m.,**

1. The designated Shift One site leader will call (or leave a message for) **all** scheduled volunteers for Shifts 2 and 3, **Scheduling Coordinator** and the **Logistics Coordinator** that BFN is *deactivating for that evening/morning only*.
2. The Shift One volunteers or **Logistics Coordinator** will close the site by following the deactivation checklist inside the notebook (stay until **Logistics Coordinator** arrives).
3. Be sure the facilities are locked, secured and all signs and other check-in materials are placed back in the BFN supply box before you leave.

- 10:45 PM**     **Shift Two volunteers report.**  
**Shift One signs out**
- 11:15 PM**     **Lights Out for guests**
- 2:45 AM**     **Shift Three Volunteers Report.**  
**Shift Two signs out**
- 6:00 AM**     **Wake Up guests**  
Make sure hot beverage service is ready
- 6:30 AM**     **Begin check out for guests**  
**Breakdown Crew** arrives to begin cleanup and closing procedures.
- 7:00 AM**     **Shift Three volunteers log out by or before 7 am**  
All guests required to leave by this time.
- 7:30 AM**     **Laundry volunteers pickup laundry and coins for machines.**  
They are instructed where to deliver the cleaned laundry.
- 8:30 AM**     **Complete clean up and close shelter by host site deadline**
- Store all supplies
  - Do not forget signs!
  - Lock up facility

**Post Activation Procedures:**

- The **Logistics Coordinator** puts the Volunteer Staffing Log in the Operations Manual notebook to be retained in the organization records of activations and provides a copy to the **Scheduling and Volunteer Coordinators** who will collect all Log Sheets for each day of the activation so that volunteer hours can be accurately recorded.
- The **Scheduling Coordinator** may request feedback from all volunteers, coordinators and Board members following some activation events, and will send this feedback to all coordinators and Board members for later debriefing.

**4. Site Prep and Setup Procedures**

The **Logistics Coordinator** or designated appointee will supervise the set-up of the site. Site Leads must be certified volunteers who have passed a background check and completed BFN training.

**The Site Lead for each shift will be the decision-maker in the event of questions or conflicts.**

There is a setup checklist and map for each facility for setup and closing. Any questions should be directed to the **Logistics Coordinator** or contact person for the particular site (see emergency contacts list).

**Volunteer staff will all wear identifying nametags.**

**The Site Lead's tag will clearly identify her/him as Site Lead.** This Operations Manual notebook will be onsite, as well as a one-page list of emergency contact numbers.

Basic site setup steps include the following:

- Move unnecessary furnishings to designated storage areas.
- Set up cots so that heads and feet of adjacent mattresses/cots are nearest – no “head-to-head” proximity.
- Be sure each sleeping area has Kleenex and a trash can.
- Set up an “isolation area” if necessary to isolate obviously ill guests from others. If available, use room dividers.
- Set up check-in table, food service area, games table, and open seating in communal area.
- Post signage. Signage will include multiple copies of Guest Agreement and a site use map.
- There are church site maps in the will show designated sleeping areas (general, women and families, sick area), hospitality areas, restrooms, emergency exits, smoking areas, and any other important site features.
- Final walkthrough of the site by setup crew and first shift volunteers before opening doors for check in.

## **5. Guest Check in Procedures**

(For unaccompanied minors call Station 7’s 24-hour Crisis Line at **1-888-689-3111**)

- **All guests must check their bag(s) in – no exceptions.** This is a health and safety rule and is **not optional**.
- Shift One check-in volunteer needs to make sure that guests’ information sheets are completely and legibly filled out. Offer to help guests if they are reluctant to fill out the sheet or appear to be having difficulty. Guests must use their real names.

- Following CDC health guidelines per Community Sharing - Ask questions:

- Are you sick?
- Have you been recently ill?
- Do you have any open sores?

If the person says s/he is sick or has been recently ill, or seems to be sick, ask if we may take temperature. Use stick-on thermometers, if available. People who appear to be ill, have elevated temperatures, or have other contagious conditions (e.g., MRSA) are directed to the isolation area. Everyone uses hand sanitizer.

- **Be sure each guest signs the Guest Agreement on the back of the guest information sheet and logs the time s/he came to the center and the time s/he leaves on the Guest Sign-In sheet for that day.**
  - Each guest completes and signs an Intake Form/Guest Agreement Contract and is logged in to the site via paper registration.
  - Make sure every guest understands and signs the Guest Agreement Contract.
  - Any guest who refuses to sign the guest agreement cannot be admitted to the center.
  - Guest intake forms can be used on consecutive nights for the same person, update tag numbers for each night
- **Each guest receives an ID tag that can be pinned to their clothes (to help avoid loss).** The same number is used on additional tags that are fastened to the guest’s personal belongings, including bicycle or cart, knapsack, etc. All personal belongings are stored apart from the sleeping areas in locked storage.



- **Guests should be reminded that they will *not* be able to access their belongings during their stay and should take out any supplies they will need overnight at time of check-in, including any necessary prescription medications.**
- The log-in sheet notes how many tags are issued to each guest.
- Each guest will be shown the locations for hospitality, food service, smoking, rest rooms, and appropriate sleeping areas.
- Guests are invited to use cots provided – they may **not** use furniture at the site.

**Guests who refuse to follow the rules will be asked to leave unless they agree to comply.**

## **6. Guest Check-Out Procedures**

- Guests turn in their ID tags; their belongings are located, tags are removed, and the items returned to guests.
- Guests are encouraged to have a warm beverage and snack (if available) before departing.
- If available, each guest is given one gift card to a local eating establishment.
  - These cards are given only to guests who have stayed overnight at BFN.
  - Mark sign-in sheet a card was received or declined.
- Soiled sheets should be put in large plastic sacks for **Laundry Crew** to take. Used recycled fiber blankets, disposable pillowcases, and pillows (if not covered by a pillowcase) should be thrown away.
- Inform **Logistics Coordinator** if supplies of any bedding materials are running low.
- **Cleaning crew** will be trained how to use the handheld fogger machine that has non-toxic disinfectant to sanitize cots and areas each morning. Surfaces will air dry and don't need wiping.
- Be sure all supplies are returned to storage cart(s), intake materials to BFN storage box(es), and all furniture is returned to its customary position (see map or pictures taken before setup).
- Lock up or request lock-up from **Logistics Coordinator** or designated site contact.

## **7. Volunteer Procedures**

- **Volunteers log-in** – put name on sign in sheet upon arrival at the center, indicating check-in time, what shift they are covering, and (if applicable) their area of duty (e.g., check-in, food service, hospitality, security, etc.)
- **Volunteers log out** – **Do not forget to log out!!** on the log sheet. Each volunteer notes their checkout time at the end of their shift. They may also make comments on any noteworthy event(s) or conditions (e.g., missing, or faulty equipment or supplies; guest incidents; successful interventions/procedures; etc.)

- The **Volunteer Coordinator** will keep a roster of all volunteers' contact information and an individual file for each volunteer containing the volunteer's original application, any background checks, the signed volunteer agreement, and any other relevant information.
- *Volunteers' personal information, including the results of any background checks, is confidential. Only the **Volunteer Coordinator**, her/his immediate helping staff, and the volunteer him/herself shall have access to this information, unless there is a legal need for BFN committee leadership or Community Sharing to also review this information.*
- Other information in the Volunteer Application Form such as shift availability, special training, preferred volunteer work, and other general information is not confidential and may be made available to BFN coordinators to arrange staffing.
- The **Volunteer Coordinator** will keep a record of volunteer hours served. Information in this log is not confidential and may be shared with BFN leadership, potential funding sources, media, and other public and private agencies. The number of volunteer hours logged is valuable information for donors, to garner public support and grant applications.
- The **Volunteer Coordinator** will develop and offer volunteer training opportunities – including CPR and first aid certification – for new and returning volunteers at least once prior to the opening of BFN each year, and additional times as may be needed. Works in cooperation with available resources through BFN connections and Community Sharing.
- A Volunteer Manual containing BFN information and procedures and other information pertinent to serving as a BFN volunteer will be given to each volunteer who completes a BFN training. The manual may be updated and supplemented from time to time.

# BEDS FOR FREEZING NIGHTS FORMS

These are the forms that are regularly used by volunteers.  
Copies are available from the Logistics Coordinator

## Volunteer Forms

Volunteer Application:

- Volunteer Agreement
- Volunteer Request for Background Check
- Volunteer Log-In Sheet
- Volunteer Staff Member Record

## Guest Forms

- Guest Intake
- Guest Agreement
- Guest Check In/Check Out Log
- Pet Agreement (First Presbyterian Church ONLY)

## Set-up and Staff Information Forms

- Mobilization Checklist
- Health Policies and Procedures
- Instructions how to get BFN cellphone messages
- Emergency Contact Numbers