

Restorative and Reentry Services, LLC

3734 Mount Blanc Circle

Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Email: cathleen@restorativeentryservices.com

monica@restorativeentryservices.com

(907) 342-5380

Emergency Cold Weather Shelter 3rd Party Oversight

Weekly Report for Week 19

Project Name: 3rd Party Emergency Shelter Oversight

Submitted to: Anchorage Assembly, Anchorage Mayor's Office, Anchorage Health Dept., and Shelter Operators (Henning, Inc. and The Alaska Hotel Group)

Date: Reporting period March 25 - 31, 2024

Date Submitted: April 3, 2024

Submitted by: Cathleen McLaughlin, JD/MBA

Monica Gross MD, MPH

A. Background

As required under Contract #2023003145, fully executed on November 17, 2023, RRS submits its Weekly report for Week 19. This report is for the period March 25 - 31, 2024.

B. Actions and Events During this Reporting Period

1. RRS focus is on operations at the 3 Emergency Cold Weather Shelter sites (CWS, The Alex Hotel, The Aviator).

2. Key topics:

A. **Client engagement.** The Emergency Cold Weather Shelter (ECWS) project is ending in the next 7 weeks (if funded). RRS, as well as shelter staff, are encouraging shelter clients to look towards this reality and make some plan for themselves. Some can self-resolve, others are unsure, and others do not have the means or capacity to self-resolve. Some clients state they simply plan to live outside after the ECWS closure because they do not know what else to do.

While conducting the client surveys, RRS finds that many clients of ECWS state they were in survival mode prior to entering the ECWS system. Since October 2023, RRS has spoken with many who entered the shelter system and now have found a sense of stability they did not have

before. Despite the laudable efforts of the shelter staff, housing specialists, 'Next Steps' and other housing programs, many shelter clients have few options after the ECWS closure available to them that will keep them stable. Many will return to 'survival mode' until ECWS commences next fall.

With this as the reality, RRS and the ECWS stakeholders need to recognize that exiting shelter is going to be challenging for many. Focus of all should be on how to make this transition as healthy as possible. To that end, decompression plans will continue to be made part of this weekly report.

B. All 3 ECWS sites are well-operated. All 3 sites continue to be operated well. Shelter operators have been responsive to requests for information in a timely manner. (Note: An on-going challenge has been transportation to CWS for individuals who want to enter the ECWS system but do not have a means to get to CWS. As noted in RRS's call log, individuals wanting shelter contacted the Ombudsman's office and/or RRS outside work hours wanting to go to CWS and there was no transportation option available. This is not a criticism of the ECWS system but a gap in services that should be recognized)

C. Review of exit data by RRS.

RRS does not have updated exit to housing data for this reporting period. RRS will report the exit data during next week's report.

One CWS client is flying to the lower 48 to reunite with family.

D. Decompression of ECWS Sites

RRS, the shelter operators, and AHD has agreed to include ECWS Decompression Updates in RRS's Weekly Report. The current plan, as of April 3, 2024 is that of the 574 shelter beds/cots, CWS will remain at 200 and Alex will remain at 100. The Aviator will begin decompressing beds from 274 to 168 on May, 1, 2024.

RRS recommends that all shelter staff and RRS begin proactively encouraging shelter users to discuss their individual exit plans with ECWS stakeholders as well as their external case managers. As noted above, some shelter clients have expressed to RRS during client surveys, that they have found a level of stability in the ECWS system. To simply return to 'survival mode' by exiting existing services to outdoor living should not be expectation for some who may have other options.

E. Client Call Log – This workbook continues to be used as the daily call log for RRS. It is submitted to AHD daily. Matters referred to AHD and the shelter operators generally relate to client concerns, former clients reaching out after leaving ECWS and wanting to return, community providers needing assistance in getting in contact with ECWS stakeholders, etc.

F. Incidences – One non-lethal overdose was reported at CWS.

C. Shelter Operations

1. Alex – Non-congregate

The Alex continues to be operated well. Next Step program continues as planned and scheduled. RRS does not have specific updated exit to housing data for this reporting period. No significant incidents were reported.

2. CWS – Congregate Shelter

CWS continues to be operated well. A mechanical issue arose during this reporting period regarding availability of functioning hand-washing area in the men’s bathroom. When the issue was identified by a CWS client and sent to RRS, RRS immediately notified the shelter operator and it was addressed within 24 hours.

3. Aviator – Non-congregate.

The Aviator continues to be operated well. Individuals at CWS continue to be moved to Aviator at this time. However, with the need to decompress from 274 beds to 168 by May 1, 2024, RRS expects there will be some alterations in the move-in and move-out process that RRS will report on in next week’s report.

D. Recommendations, Conclusions and Summary

RRS continues to recommend that ECWS stakeholders build positive momentum around shelter services, exit plans and solution-based practices. Closure of ECWS is currently set for April 30, 2024 unless extended by AHD and the Assembly until May 31, 2024, which is expected.

Any questions, please contact RRS through phone, text, or email at any time.

Respectfully Submitted, Cathleen N. McLaughlin, J.D./M.B.A. Monica Gross MD, MPH