



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Dianna Grey, Homeless Strategy Officer *dianna*

THROUGH: Stephanie Hayden-Howard, Assistant City Manager

DATE: March 10, 2023

SUBJECT: Closure of The Salvation Army's Downtown Shelter – Client Relocation

This memo is intended to provide an update on the relocation of clients from The Salvation Army's Downtown Shelter and Social Services Center in advance of its impending closure, which was originally slated for March 15th. See the previous March 7th [memo](#) for additional background.

During the March 8th Public Health Committee meeting, City Council committee members expressed concern about the likelihood of all clients being placed by the March 15th closure date and requested that The Salvation Army (TSA) extend its downtown operations to allow for safe placement of all clients, with reasonable compensation from the City of Austin if needed. Committee members also requested that Homeless Strategy Division staff ensure that TSA clients who had been offered relocation to shelters in other cities be offered a local option. The Interim City Manager authorized the Homeless Strategy Division (HSD) to exhaust all options to find placements for clients, ensuring that none are left without a shelter alternative.

Updates from The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army's local advisory board has agreed to extend its downtown shelter operations for up to 30 days, at a cost of up to \$100,000. Should all clients be relocated in less than a month, the cost will be pro-rated.

TSA has also agreed to actively coordinate with HSD and other service partners to facilitate placement of clients. Should case management not be available in new temporary housing settings, TSA staff will continue to provide that service to its clients. TSA will also consider transferring unused furnishings and supplies, as needed to support the transition.

Relocation Planning

This morning (Friday, March 10th), staff from the Homeless Strategy Division and other service provider partners visited clients and case managers at the downtown shelter to give an overview of relocation options and answer questions as to the process going forward. The immediate goal is to

provide clients with the assurance that they will be offered somewhere to go before the shelter closes, and that clients previously accepting transportation to a shelter in another city will be afforded a local option.

Based on the Homeless Strategy Division's understanding of the clients still needing placement, the goal was to identify capacity for at least 48 individuals. Shelter or housing locations for at least 48 people have now been identified. Based on conversations with partner organizations, HSD believes that all current clients of the Salvation Army can be offered relocation within the next 30 days.

Finding resolution to this crisis in such a short period of time has only been possible through the dedication, collaboration and creativity of our community partners, with over a dozen organizations offering bed capacity, funding, and other resources and support.

While the destination of individual people will be determined in the coming days, we anticipate that remaining Salvation Army clients will be accommodated in a variety of settings which are likely to include:

- **Other local shelters** including Northbridge, Southbridge, the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH), and the Austin Shelter for Women and Children
- **Apartments** already secured by a service provider, with supports to include rental assistance and case management
- **Transitional housing programs**
- **Board and care homes**
- **Hotel stays** arranged through a nonprofit partner (in cases where only short stays are needed before another placement)

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Next Steps

Primary tasks for the coming days include communication and dialogue with TSA clients, completing the process of matching clients to available locations, and coordinating logistics of program intake, transportation, and move-in.

The Homeless Strategy Division will report on progress weekly, with the next update expected on Friday, March 17th, and continuing until all shelter clients are accommodated. Please do not hesitate to contact me at dianna.grey@austintexas.gov, with any questions.