

Office of Homeless Services Safer Shelter Initiative

Actions Taken to Ensure Shelters are Safe during the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Reduced bed density to ensure six feet of distance established for sleeping accommodations
- Immediate quarantine for shelter participants displaying symptoms of COVID-19
- Bed barriers installed at sites where the sleeping arrangements are congregate
- Procured PPE for all shelter sites; including masks, gloves, hand sanitizer
- Moved from congregate to grab and go meals in shelter
- Established COVID Screening process in consultation with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) at all access points for shelters so participants are screened prior to shelter entry
- Provided no touch thermometers at all shelters to perform daily COVID screenings on shelter participants and staff
- Provided the most updated information, education, and training to shelter providers on COVID-19, including the PDPH document entitled "[COVID-19 Guidance for Behavioral Health and Homeless Service Providers](#)"
- Always mandated social distancing occurs in shelter in all areas of the facility
- Mandated all shelter participants and staff to wear masks at all time while in shelter
- Provided educational posters and signs in strategic areas of the shelter to educate participants and staff on hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette
- Prohibited unauthorized visitors from entering the shelter premises
- Expanded testing in shelters with guidance from PDPH and partnerships with Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Provided weekly COVID -19 provider virtual meetings to provide the shelter provider community on COVID -related updates as it pertains to shelters
- Provided practical guidance from PDPH to be used after a confirmed or suspected COVID -19 case
- Provided PDPH officials access to assess the health and safety of OHS-funded shelters
- Transferred medically fragile participants at greatest risk from COVID -19 infection to COVID Prevention Space hotels
- Prohibited new admissions to a shelter location for 14 days after a confirmed positive COVID-19 case to ensure outbreaks were contained