

RESOLUTION NO. 20230209-040

WHEREAS, Council identified homelessness as the top priority indicator in Austin's Strategic Direction 2023; and

WHEREAS, the City has experienced extreme weather events, such as severe cold and heat, and recognizes the necessity for emergency housing for its homeless residents; and

WHEREAS, on December 13, 2022, the City Council Audit and Finance Committee accepted and discussed the “Emergency Shelters for Dangerous Temperatures Audit,” which included three recommendations related to role clarification and service delivery at cold weather shelters and updates to City operational plans; and

WHEREAS, Council adopted Resolution No. 20180426-030 endorsing the Austin Action Plan to End Homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Council adopted Resolution No. 20190620-184 directing the City Manager to explore a variety of options to address homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the Council provided direction for improving inclement weather response and shelter in a 2022-2023 budget rider; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the need to assist families and individuals by providing temporary housing during extreme weather events; and

WHEREAS, vulnerable populations are at risk during all types of extreme weather events and may require emergency sheltering; and

WHEREAS, prior limited planning, low-temperature thresholds, and brief registration hours have had a significant negative effect on public safety agencies,

who have responded outside of regular business hours, on weekends, and during holidays, and on the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, community organizations have organized independently and parallel to the City to ensure unsheltered residents have equal access to shelters and services during inclement weather response; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to engage and collaborate with stakeholders and subject matter experts, including ECHO's Inclement Weather Work Group, the Cold Weather Shelter Work Group under the ATX Leadership Council and City departments directly engaged with unsheltered individuals, including the Homeless Strategy Division and Austin-Travis County EMS, regarding extreme weather events and shelter activation criteria and processes, including but not limited to the following considerations:

- The unique risk factors of vulnerable populations;
- The material, logistical and psychological barriers that prevent unhoused residents from having equal access to shelter;
- Ways to alleviate any uncertainty within the populations served by extreme weather shelters with registering and staying sheltered, including earlier activation of the shelters; working with community advocates to provide more notice opportunities to the public of shelter activation; evaluating the needs and requirements for registration including, but not limited to, accessibility, availability, hours, and location; expanding access to shelters for families; establishing an extreme weather shelter location in Del Valle; and pausing encampment cleanups at least 48

hours before shelter activation and 48 hours following shelter deactivation;

- Engagement with individuals who have lived experience to obtain feedback regarding their stay at extreme weather shelters;
- Consideration of partnerships to improve staffing of the shelters and staff training in de-escalation and trauma informed care;
- Opportunities for conducting coordinated assessments for people experiencing homelessness; and
- The lessons learned and the direction provided by the 2022-2023 budget rider for improving inclement weather response and shelter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is also directed to continue to implement the recommendations contained in the 2022 “Emergency Shelters for Dangerous Temperatures Audit” and to coordinate that implementation with the other directives contained in this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager will report back to the Council by June 15, 2023, on (1) recommendations to expand the City’s weather sheltering plan to include all extreme weather events and (2) the feedback and suggestions from the stakeholders and subject matter experts, in consultation with the ATX Leadership Council for Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care, and in alignment with the written standards for cold weather shelter developed by the Cold Weather Shelter Work Group, to address activation, registration, transportation and other issues related to

the City's response to sheltering during extreme weather events; (3) recommendations on how best to accommodate on-site and remote shelter registration and (4) recommendations on how to implement a waiver of shelter registration requirements in the case of a State of Disaster declaration by the City or Travis County or an extreme weather event.

ADOPTED: February 09, 2023

ATTEST:



Myrna Rios
City Clerk